

THE MAGIC FERRET

by

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INT. SCIENCE LAB - NIGHT

A research lab filled with caged animals of all sorts.

FRANK, 30s, large and muscular, enters the lab wearing a button up blue jumpsuit and a 'Lab Assistant' name tag.

He fills the water bottles for each cage as he greets the animals by their identification placards.

FRANK

Here you go, 1784.

Frank arrives at an empty cage. The bars have been bent just wide enough for a small critter to escape.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Oh, no. Not Specimen 1989-F!

Frank drops the water bottle and sprints out of the lab.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Dr. Murray! Emergency, Emergency!

EXT. SCIENCE LAB - CONTINUOUS

A large sign on the building reads TELEKINESIS RESEARCH LAB.

THUNDER and LIGHTNING suggest this is not a nice place.

A bush shakes. The rustling becomes intense until emerging from the bush we meet Specimen 1989-F.

A very cute FERRET.

INT. SCHOOL CLASSROOM - MORNING

Children's drawings of various animals line the top of a chalkboard.

MRS. RASSENTI, 40s, watches eagerly from her desk at the front of the class as RANDY, 8, finishes his Show and Tell.

He holds a roll of toilet paper up for the class to see.

RANDY

...And there you can see the piece of wood in the toilet paper. My mom said I'm lucky I didn't get a sliver right up my --

MRS. RASSENTI
 -- That's fine. Thank you Randy.

The class giggles. Randy bows and takes his seat.

MRS. RASSENTI (CONT'D)
 Okay, and next we have... Sam.

SAM, 8, small for his age, unruly mop of hair. He's dressed to the nines - sport jacket, bow tie, everything a little too big and purchased at the local thrift store.

Sam strides to the front of the class, ignoring the groans and whispers of his classmates.

PEYTON, 9, blonde hair pulled back tight with a hot pink scrunchie, rolls her eyes. Her desk is pushed up against the desks of her two best friends, SAVANNAH and TAYLOR, also 9.

PEYTON
 Here comes another stupid *magic* trick.

The girls laugh wickedly.

Mrs. Rassenti points at Peyton, bringing immediate silence.

Sam arrives at the chalkboard. He faces his audience.

SAM
 Prepare to be amazed. I, the Great Sambini, will perform the greatest of magic.

Sam slowly writes his name on the chalkboard.

"T-H-E G-R-A-T-E--"

Peyton laughs.

PEYTON
 (to her friends)
 He can't even spell his own *name*.

Sam continues.

"S-A-M-B-I--"

Sam stares at the board for an excruciatingly long moment.

MRS. RASSENTI
 "N".

SAM

Oh, yeah!

"T-H-E G-R-A-T-E S-A-M-B-I-N-I"

Sam spins around, unruffled by what would normally be a humiliating experience.

SAM (CONT'D)

And now, I will need a volunteer
from the audience!

The kids stare at Sam in silence.

Peyton, Savannah and Taylor pop bubble gum in unison.

MRS. RASSENTI

I volunteer, Sam.

Sam fans out a deck of cards on Mrs. Rassenti's desk.

SAM

Pick a card, then show it to the
audience.

She does.

Randy falls asleep, head resting on the toilet paper roll.

SAM (CONT'D)

Now put it back...

She puts the card back into the deck. Sam reshuffles.

SAM (CONT'D)

(shows a card)
Is *this* your card?

MRS. RASSENTI

(clapping)
Yes! Amazing, Sam!

The school bell RINGS. The kids rush out in a mad dash, snickering and laughing, nearly knocking Sam over as he bows.

PEYTON

(to her friends)
What a nerd!

MRS. RASSENTI

Samuel, your writing needs some
improvement.

Sam collects his cards from the desk.

MRS. RASSENTI (CONT'D)

Do you have anyone at home who can help you practice?

SAM

My parents are on tour doing magic shows. My Dad says if I can get a 'B' average, I can go to Magic Camp this summer!

MRS. RASSENTI

You're a long way off from a 'B' average.

Sam stops organizing his cards.

SAM

Can my Aunt and Uncle help me? I'm staying with them.

MRS. RASSENTI

Yes. I'll give them a call. We'll make sure you get that 'B'.

SAM

Great!

Sam grabs the rest of his things from his desk.

Mrs. Rassenti watches him with a growing look of concern.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - AFTERNOON

Sam is at his locker, the inside of which is adorned by various pictures of magicians, mostly David Copperfield.

Savannah and Taylor huddle around Peyton, a few lockers away. They are joined now by VIOLET, 10, a passive girl, a bit taller than the others.

Violet peeks at Sam's colorfully decorated locker.

PEYTON

Are you looking at that nerd?

Peyton blocks Violet's view.

VIOLET

(sarcastic)

Yeah. Because magic is sooo cool.

The girls laugh.

BING BONG!

The voice of the school principal booms over the PA system.

MR. WINSTON

(on the PA)

Gooooood afternoon teachers and students! Just a reminder that the always spectacular Student Showcase Extravaganza is this Friday at one o'clock!

INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - SAME

MR. WINSTON, 50's, overtly positive demeanor, addresses the school on the PA system.

MR. WINSTON

And the winner of this year's contest will compete at the riveting Regional Talent Show! Isn't that just fantastic?

DANNY Cho, 9, tucked in plaid shirt, bops a few more musical notes on a xylophone.

BING BONG BING!

MR. WINSTON (CONT'D)

The winner will also receive an automatic 'A+' in Arts, which will be applied to their overall grade average.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - SAME

Sam's eyes light up as he listens.

MR. WINSTON

(on the PA)

So if you want to avoid summer school, sign up for the Student Showcase Extravaganza! Mr. Winston, out!

BING BONG BING BONG BING!

SAM

(to himself)

An 'A+'? That's my ticket to Magic Camp!

PEYTON

(loud)

Maybe the great *Dumbini* will do one of his lame card tricks!

Her gang all laugh - except Violet, who glares at Peyton.

SAM

My tricks aren't lame! I'm going in that show, and everyone is going to love my act. You'll see.

Peyton gets right up in Sam's face.

PEYTON

Well, last year I was the Audience Choice Award winner. And this year my act is even *more* amazing. Your little *card tricks* won't stack up, *Dumbini*.

SAM

Anything is possible when you believe in magic.

Violet gives Sam a 'seriously?' look. Is this kid for real?

PEYTON

You *must* be a magician, because every time I see you, I want to disappear!

Peyton and her gang head off cackling. Violet hesitates, but Savannah nudges her so she obediently follows.

Sam looks at a poster inside his locker:

"TANNEN'S MAGIC CAMP, THE MAGIC BEGINS JULY 9 - 16"

Followed by the inspirational quote:

"THOSE WHO DON'T BELIEVE IN MAGIC, WILL NEVER FIND IT."

He closes his locker, determined to prove Peyton wrong.

INT. AUNT GEMMA'S HOUSE - DAY

AUNT GEMMA, 45, colorful feather earrings, rouge sweater and about 6 different necklaces, sits in a La-Z-Boy chair as she sips a green smoothie from a glass pitcher. She has wavy long red hair with one grey streak in the front.

In a matching chair, admiring himself in a small handheld mirror, is a red and green African parrot.

This is UNCLE JACKSON.

Sam enters, dumping his backpack on the floor.

GEMMA
How was school, Sammy?

SAM
Fine.

GEMMA
And Show and Tell?

SAM
Those kids don't understand magic.

GEMMA
Oh no, I suppose they wouldn't.
Magic is only enjoyed by a certain
type of person, and there's not
many of those around these days.

SAM
Lots of people like magic!

GEMMA
If you say so, Sam.

SAM
I'm gonna enter the talent show on
Friday! Uncle Jackson, can you
help me with my routine?

Jackson flies onto Sam's shoulder.

JACKSON
BRAWK! Showtime!

GEMMA
Jackson used to be a magician. Not
a very good magician, as you can
see. Look at him now. He's a
parrot. I'm married to a parrot.
Let that be a lesson to you, Sam!

Sam takes off out the back door, not listening to Gemma.

GEMMA (CONT'D)
Stay in the yard, you two!

Gemma puts a hand on the telephone, hesitates, then goes back to sipping her smoothie.

EXT. BACKYARD - LATER

Sam has set up a row of cards on the picnic table. He wears a tattered top hat and a red bow tie.

Jackson faces Sam, next to a castle of red solo cups.

SAM
(showing a card)
Is this your card?

JACKSON
BRRAWWK! Lame.

Jackson kicks a cup, knocking over the castle.

SAM
Hey!

JACKSON
Tricks are for kids.

SAM
I am a kid!

GEMMA (O.S.)
Jackson! Your show is on!

Jackson flies off and meets Gemma at the back door, who carries him inside.

SAM
Hey! Who's gonna help me
practice?!

Sam places his hat on the table and scratches his chin.

Out of nowhere, a GUST OF WIND picks up the hat and carries it over the back fence!

SAM (CONT'D)
Woa! Come back here!

Sam chases the hat to the back alley behind his house.

EXT. ALLEY - MOMENTS LATER

Sam's top hat is sliding along the ground!

He chases it, then picks it up, to reveal...

...the ferret! Also known as Specimen 1989-F.

SAM
Holy crapoly!

The ferret CHIRPS, a sort of chortling sound, then stands on its hind legs.

SAM (CONT'D)
How did you get here?

The ferret scampers up to Sam and puts one paw on his shoe. Sam picks it up and holds the ferret in front of his face.

SAM (CONT'D)
Are you lost?

Sam looks around. Nobody in sight.

The ferret licks his cheek.

GEMMA (O.S.)
Sammy!

Sam tucks the ferret inside his shirt.

SAM
Don't worry, I'm wearing deodorant.
(yelling)
Coming Aunt Gemma!

Sam grabs his hat and hurries back to the house.

INT. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Sam tip toes down the hallway past the living room where Gemma is watching TV with Jackson. He zooms up the stairs.

INT. SAM'S ROOM - LATER

Sam's room is full of magic related posters, glow in the dark stars, stuffed animals and action figures. Also, a lot of cardboard boxes.

Sam sits cross legged on his bed. The ferret hops around playfully on the blanket, enjoying his soft surroundings.

Sam laughs.

SAM

I wish I could keep you! But my
Uncle Jackson is allergic to pets.
Which is kinda funny because he's a
parrot.

The ferret digs at Sam's shorts. He picks him up.

SAM (CONT'D)

It's a long story. So, what should
I call you?

The ferret stares blankly. Blinks.

SAM (CONT'D)

How about...

Sam scans around his room. His eyes land on a child's
drawing of SNOT MAN, a giant green booger in red spandex.

SAM (CONT'D)

...Booger?!

The ferret sneezes, shakes his head.

Sam wipes the snot from his face.

SAM (CONT'D)

Yuck. Okay, maybe not...

Sam looks again, this time at the David Copperfield poster
behind his door.

SAM (CONT'D)

I know...Copper! Like David
Copperfield, the greatest magician
ever!

COPPER chirps and licks Sam's cheek.

GEMMA (O.S.)

Sammy! Come set the table please!

Sam jumps off the bed.

SAM

You stay here, okay Copper?

Copper chirps, spins in a circle.

SAM (CONT'D)

Good boy.

As soon as Sam is gone, Copper slides down off of the bed.

He slips, and lands with a THUD on the floor!

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Sam, Gemma and Jackson eat macaroni and cheese around a small kitchen table.

Jackson is on a place mat, nibbling a plate of seeds.

SAM
Did Uncle Jackson ever have a pet?

JACKSON
BRAWK! No pets.

Jackson is flinging seeds off of his plate with his beak.

GEMMA
Why would you ask that?

Gemma places the loose seeds back on Jackson's plate.

SAM
Well, Uncle Jackson was a magician,
and magicians always have
assistants. Maybe I --

GEMMA
(interrupting)
-- Jackson is allergic to animals.

Jackson tilts his head at Gemma. She avoids eye contact.

GEMMA (CONT'D)
Eat your seeds, Jackson.

SAM
I know, but --

GEMMA
-- Don't worry about being like
everybody else, Sam. Just be
yourself!

As Sam ponders this, Jackson slowly creeps over and snatches a macaroni off of Sam's plate.

GEMMA (CONT'D)
Jackson! Your cholesterol!
(to Sam)
And how are you doing with writing?
Report cards are next week.

SAM

Mrs. Rassenti says I'm going to get
a 'B' average.

GEMMA

That's great news!

SAM

May I finish my dinner in my room?
I want to study.

GEMMA

(impressed)
Yes, you may!

Sam leaves with his plate of food.

Jackson runs circles around a glass of water.

GEMMA (CONT'D)

You could learn a thing or two from
that boy about table manners!

INT. SAM'S ROOM - NIGHT

Copper stands on his hind legs on Sam's bed as --

STUFFED ANIMALS, ACTION FIGURES AND TOY TRUCKS FLOAT MID AIR!

The toys are orbiting around Copper when Sam opens the door.

SAM

Holy Crapoly!

Copper looks at Sam.

The floating objects halt their orbit, hovering in the air
for a moment, then drop to the floor!

THUMP! CRASH! BANG!

GEMMA (O.S.)

Sammy!?

Gemma's footsteps can be heard coming up the stairs.

SAM

Uh, quick, hide!

Teddy bears fly up from the floor over to the bed,
surrounding Copper. He blends in with the teddy bear faces -
a perfect camouflage.

Sam's eyes go wide.

GEMMA (O.S.)
I'm coming, Sammy!

Gemma opens the door. Sam spins around.

GEMMA (CONT'D)
Everything okay? I heard a bang...

SAM
I... dropped my plate!

Sam is still holding the plate of macaroni in his hands.

Thinking fast, he drops it.

The plate SMASHES and macaroni goes everywhere.

GEMMA
Sammy! You better clean that up
before Jackson sees it. He could
get hurt.

SAM
Yes, Aunt Gemma.

GEMMA
And clean up your toys while you're
at it! It's a mess in here!

Gemma leaves. Copper chirps. A teddy bear falls over.

SAM
Phew. That was a close one.

INT. SCIENCE LAB - OFFICE - DAY

The walls are adorned with various diagrams of the human brain and posters about DNA and telekinesis.

DR. MURRAY, 50s, wild long white hair and a white lab coat, sits at his desk. He speaks into a telephone as he works carefully to remove a piece from the classic game OPERATION.

DR. MURRAY
(into the phone)
I can assure you that everything is
going according to plan.

Frank sits in a chair, sweating as he watches Dr. Murray come dangerously close to touching the edges of the game board.

A clock TICKS on the wall.

An angry voice mumbles on the other end of the phone.

Dr. Murray continues the 'operation' with focused intensity.

DR. MURRAY (CONT'D)
 General Miller, I have proven
 without a shadow of a doubt that we
 can tap into the creature's power
 of telekinesis.

Dr. Murray successfully removes an ice cream cone shaped game piece and places it onto a metal tray on his desk. DING!

Frank wipes his brow and relaxes into his chair.

DR. MURRAY (CONT'D)
 Yes, General. We begin our
 operation on Friday at one o'clock,
 er, thirteen hundred hours. Yes.
 Goodnight, sir.

Dr. Murray hangs up the phone and turns to Frank.

DR. MURRAY (CONT'D)
 Frank, do you understand the
 magnitude of our problem?

FRANK
 Can you repeat the question please?

Dr. Murray stands. Frank stands too.

DR. MURRAY
 If you don't find that telekinetic
 fur ball by noon tomorrow, you will
 be fired.

FRANK
 But --

Dr. Murray throws the tiny ice cream cone at Frank's face.

FRANK (CONT'D)
 Ow!

DR. MURRAY
 -- no buts!

FRANK
 But --

DR. MURRAY

Ah ah ah!

FRANK

Er, uh, how am I gonna find a
little bitty ferret, boss?

DR. MURRAY

Specimen 1989-F has a microchip
implanted in his neck. Take this
tracker. He can't hide for long.

Dr. Murray hands Frank a small COMPUTER TABLET complete with
antenna and big red button.

A rubber BRAIN KEYCHAIN is attached.

FRANK

You got it, boss!

Frank leaves.

Dr. Murray works to remove another game piece shaped like a
tiny horse, but accidentally touches the edges.

BUZZ BUZZ BUZZ!

DR. MURRAY

Blast! Stupid game.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Frank touches the tablet screen, it lights up.

The screen reads:

PLEASE UPDATE YOUR OPERATING SYSTEM TO CONTINUE.

FRANK

Aw, man...

INT. SAM'S ROOM - NIGHT

Sam finishes putting away his toys in a box, then sits on his
bed and picks up Copper.

SAM

Okay, you've got a lot of
explaining to do.

The top hat floats up from a shelf and lands squarely on
Sam's head. Sam's mouth nearly hits the floor.

SAM (CONT'D)
Wow! Are you... *magic*?

Copper chirps, then rolls over just like a dog.

SAM (CONT'D)
Holy crapoly! You should be my assistant! Together we can win the talent show and I'll get to go to Magic Camp for sure!

Copper licks Sam's face, in approval.

SAM (CONT'D)
Just don't tell Aunt Gemma.

MONTAGE - VARIOUS

A) INT. SAM'S ROOM - DAY - Sam practices various card tricks. Copper makes the cards fly around the room. Sam laughs.

B) EXT. BACKYARD - DAY - Sam sets up a magic show on the picnic table. He performs for a row of teddy bears.

He pulls Copper out of his magic hat.

C) INT. LIVING ROOM / SAM'S ROOM - DAY - Copper steals the TV REMOTE from Jackson and adds it to a collection of items under Sam's bed: shoes, keychains, etc.

D) INT. SAM'S ROOM - DAY - Sam attempts to juggle three balls. Copper 'juggles' three huge sports balls.

Gemma opens the door.

The sports balls drop and roll to Gemma's feet.

Copper burrows under a blanket to hide.

GEMMA
Have you seen the clicker?

SAM
Nope!

GEMMA
Hmmm, that's strange...

E) EXT. BACKYARD - DAY - Copper makes the magic hat fly onto Sam's head, the cape ties itself around Sam's neck.

Sam feels like a real magician. Copper has a red bow tie.

F) INT. SAM'S ROOM - NIGHT - Copper curls up to sleep in Sam's sock drawer, surrounded by colorful silk scarves inside of the magic hat. Sam turns out the light.

A star shaped night light illuminates the room as glow in the dark stars on the ceiling shine down.

END OF MONTAGE

EXT. SAM'S BACKYARD - DAY

Sam and Copper are practicing a trick at the picnic table.

An EYEBALL peeks through a hole in the fence.

Someone is spying!

IN THE ALLEY

Violet peeks through the hole, watching Sam and Copper.

Violet drops her school books. She bends to pick them up.

When Violet stands back up, she peeks through the hole again, but this time Sam and Copper are gone!

VIOLET
(to herself)
Where'd he go?

Sam appears next to Violet.

SAM
Hi!

Violet drops her books again in surprise. THUD.

VIOLET
Hi. I wasn't spying, I was just noticing this fence. I think it's made out of the same wood as the one at my house. Do you know what kind of wood it is?

SAM
Um, like tree wood I think.

VIOLET
I know *that*.

Violet rolls her eyes.

SAM
Do you wanna see a magic trick?

VIOLET
(sarcastic)
Oh yeah, I just love magic.

Sam doesn't pick up on Violet's sarcasm.

SAM
Great! My name is Sam, by the way.

VIOLET
I'm Violet.

SAM
Aren't you friends with Peyton? I don't think she'd like you hanging out with me.

VIOLET
Who said we're hanging out?

SAM
Nobody.

Sam digs his shoe into the dirt.

VIOLET
You were going to show me a trick.

SAM
Yeah! Come on!

Violet collects her books, makes sure no one is watching, then follows Sam into his backyard.

SAM'S BACKYARD

Sam removes teddy bears to clear a lawn chair for Violet.

Copper chews on a rubber ball on the table.

VIOLET
Um, is that a ferret?

SAM
Yup! This is Copper! He's my assistant. We're entering the Student Showcase Extravaganza!

VIOLET

Oh really? Who *isn't* entering the Student Showcase.

SAM

Have you ever done it?

VIOLET

Not since I was a baby. I'm 10 now. I stayed back a grade so I could learn everything twice.

SAM

Wow, you must be really smart.

VIOLET

Yeah, I read a lot of books. So like, what does he eat?

Sam shrugs.

SAM

Meat and stuff.

VIOLET

Oh really? I thought he was a vegetarian ferret until you told me that.

SAM

No, he hates vegetables. Like me! Copper's helping me with my magic act while I help him find his owners.

VIOLET

Cooooooooool. So, are you gonna show me this magic trick or what?

Sam jumps onto the picnic table and strikes a magician pose.

SAM

Prepare to be amazed!

Violet looks around, hoping no one witnesses her presence.

SAM (CONT'D)

Prepare to be dazzled!

Sam removes his top hat and places it on top of Copper.

VIOLET
(to herself)
Prepare to change your name and
move to another country, Violet.

SAM
I will now make this ordinary
ferret disappear!

VIOLET
(unenthused)
Yaayyy...

Sam waves his wand over the hat.

SAM
Abracadabra!

He turns it over to reveal...

Copper, who has not disappeared.

Violet can't help but smile.

SAM (CONT'D)
Oops. Let's try that again.

Sam concentrates his 'powers' as he massages the air above
Copper with his hands.

The hat floats up into the air and lands on Violet's head!

VIOLET
How did you do that?!

SAM
A magician never tells.

VIOLET
Oh really?

Copper clambers up Sam's pant leg and into his arms.

SAM
We're going to win the talent show,
and then my parents are gonna send
me to Magic Camp!

Sam hops off the table.

VIOLET
What happens if you don't win?

SAM
I'd have to go to summer school.

VIOLET
Peyton is gonna love this.

SAM
You think so?!

VIOLET
No. I mean she'll hate it.

Violet smiles.

VIOLET (CONT'D)
Could you use another assistant?

INT. LIVING ROOM/HALLWAY - DAY

Jackson nuzzles in Gemma's arms as they both snore loudly in her armchair. Jackson whistles in his sleep, blowing air against Gemma's feathery earrings.

SAM
(whispering)
Shhh, don't wake them up.

Copper bounds down the carpeted hallway. Sam follows.

They arrive at a BLUE DOOR underneath the stairs.

SAM (CONT'D)
Up there. You see it?

A KEY rests on top of the door frame.

Copper stands on his hind legs to see it.

SAM (CONT'D)
Do your thing.

The key twitches, then slides off and falls down towards Sam -

He catches it!

SAM (CONT'D)
Got it!

Gemma stirs, but is still asleep.

GEMMA

(mumbling)

No, Jackson, you can't bring your rubber ducky to bed.

Sam carefully turns the key in the lock.

It CLICKS as it locates.

GEMMA (CONT'D)

You should wear a tuxedo. A bird tuxedo. You'd be so handsome.

The door creaks as Sam pushes it open.

He picks up Copper and quietly slips downstairs like a ninja.

INT. BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

The light from a single window illuminates a dark and dusty basement, full of boxes, aged flyers and spiderwebs.

Sam inspects the various odd toys and magic show props.

SAM

This is my Dad's stuff. He's a really famous magician. He's on tour right now with my mom.

Sam picks up a dusty framed photograph.

Copper chirps. A GUST OF AIR clears away the dust to reveal -

THE GREAT GARY GARBONZO and his assistant, MELISSA.

Sam sneezes.

SAM (CONT'D)

That's him.

In the photograph, Gary Garbonzo is performing for an excited group of children at a birthday party.

Sam continues to look around.

SAM (CONT'D)

We have to come up with a trick to impress the judges.

Copper sneezes!

A HULA HOOP falls from a hook on the wall and rolls towards Sam. It lands at his feet. Sam picks it up.

SAM (CONT'D)
What's this for?

He glances to a poster on the wall. It's Gary the Garbonzo, and he appears to be levitating a woman through a hula hoop.

Sam looks at the hoop in his hand, then back to the poster.

SAM (CONT'D)
Wow.

Melissa smiles at Gary with love in her eyes.

Sam is transfixed.

SAM (CONT'D)
That's my mom. She'd love you.

Copper scratches at Sam's arm, signaling he wants down.

Copper runs up to a TREASURE CHEST. It's blue, with gold latches. Copper scratches at the latches.

The latches RATTLE and SHAKE, but they're padlocked shut.

SAM (CONT'D)
What's in there, Copper?

The door at the top of the stairs CREAKS open. It's Gemma!

GEMMA
Sammy! Get out of there!

Copper scrambles on top of some boxes and squeezes out the partially opened window.

SAM
Sorry! I just --

GEMMA
-- It's not safe down there Sammy!
You could step on a rusty nail.

Sam frantically looks for Copper but can't see him anywhere.

GEMMA (CONT'D)
Sammy. Get your butt up here!

He runs up the stairs to Gemma who closes the door.

It LOCKS.

Copper peers in the window. He sniffs, then runs off.

EXT. TOWN CENTRE STREET - DAY

A yellow Smart Car is parked outside an ice cream parlor on a moderately busy city street.

INSIDE THE CAR

Frank sits at the driver's seat, his wrestler sized body cramped like a sardine in a tin.

He licks a blue ice cream cone as he looks down at the tablet computer. A green icon shaped like a ferret moves around on a map of the city. As the icon moves, it BEEPS. BEEP BEEP!

FRANK

Now I gotcha...

Frank's ice cream SPLATS onto the tablet!

FRANK (CONT'D)

Oh no!

Frank puts the tablet down and exits the car.

On the ice cream coated screen, the icon continues to move.

BEEP. BEEP. BEEP.

EXT. AUNT GEMMA'S HOUSE - FRONT YARD - SAME

Copper digs up dirt around a row of garden gnomes.

He runs through the grass and down the walkway as Violet arrives on her bicycle.

VIOLET

Hey, Copper.

Copper chomps on the rubber tire.

VIOLET (CONT'D)

Oh really?

She picks him up.

VIOLET (CONT'D)

Silly ferret. You are kinda cute though. I guess.

EXT. ICE CREAM PARLOR - SAME

Frank emerges from the parlor with a new ice cream cone. He licks with delight, big goofy grin on his face.

A KID on a skateboard zooms past Frank, which causes him to drop his ice cream cone on the sidewalk! SPLAT!

FRANK

Hey!

KID

Sorry mister!

Frank turns back into the parlor. Third time's a charm.

INT. SAM'S BEDROOM - SAME

Sam sits on his bed, looking at a photograph of him with his parents. They are all dressed as magicians.

Sam wipes a tear.

CRACK. A stone hits the window. Sam doesn't notice.

SAM

I wish you guys were here.

MEOW. A cat is floating in the air outside the window!

SAM (CONT'D)

Mr. Whiskers?

Sam rushes to the window.

SAM'S YARD BELOW

The cat falls into the bushes. MEOWWWWWWW!

It runs off, unscathed.

Sam appears in the window and looks down to see Violet - and she's holding Copper!

SAM

You found him!

VIOLET

What?!

Sam opens the window.

SAM

Where did you find him?!

VIOLET

He found me. Come on, we've got work to do. I mean, if you still care about the talent show or whatever.

SAM

I'm supposed to be doing my homework.

VIOLET

This is homework.

Sam closes the window and disappears.

INT. SCHOOL LIBRARY - DAY

Sam and Violet walk down the aisle of the CONJURING ARTS section of the library. Copper follows along at Sam's feet.

SAM

Wow, I never knew they had magic books in here.

VIOLET

Oh really? Probably because you've never been in the library before.

Violet pulls a book from the shelf.

VIOLET (CONT'D)

How about this one, 'Hiding the Elephant'?

SAM

Nah. Better start smaller.

She pulls another.

VIOLET

'The Amateur Magician's Handbook'?

SAM

I'm not an amateur!

Violet rolls her eyes.

VIOLET

Yeah, you're a professional magician alright.

LIBRARIAN'S DESK

An uptight female librarian, 30s, hears the kids.

LIBRARIAN
Shhhhhhhh!

BEHIND THE BOOK SHELVES

Sam ducks down behind the books.

SAM
(whispering)
Oops..

VIOLET
(whispering)
Shhh...

Copper climbs into a book case against the wall and disappears behind the books.

Sam realizes Copper is gone.

SAM
Copper?!

LIBRARIAN'S DESK

LIBRARIAN
Shhhhhh!

BEHIND THE BOOK SHELVES

Copper's head pokes out from between two books on the top shelf. He chirps.

Sam and Violet look up.

A thick book pulls out from the shelf and floats down into Sam's hands.

THE BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO TELEKINESIS.

SAM
Beginner's guide
to...Tele...Tele...

VIOLET
Telekinesis.

SAM
What's that?

VIOLET
It's when you can move things with
your mind.

SAM
Like Copper!
(to Copper)
Is that what you have?

Copper chirps and disappears behind the books again.

VIOLET
Obviously.

Violet pulls out another book.

VIOLET (CONT'D)
Here. 'Secrets of Magic Revealed'.

Many magicians are on the cover, including Copperfield.

SAM
Wow.

LIBRARIAN'S DESK

A book FLOATS IN THE AIR past the librarian without her
noticing.

BEHIND THE BOOK SHELVES

A new book lands on the floor in front of Sam and Violet.

Copper puts a paw on it.

101 GAMES TO PLAY WITH YOUR FERRET.

SAM
(reading)
One hundred one games to play with
your fe...fe...

VIOLET
Ferret. Want me to help you with
your reading?

SAM
You can do that?!

LIBRARIAN (O.S.)

Shhhhhh!

EXT. SCHOOL - SAME

Frank's car is parked outside the school in the parking lot.

Frank stands in the bushes outside a window.

He licks the tablet to clear the ice cream from the screen.

The ferret icon is just on the other side of this wall!

FRANK

I got you now...

Frank steps on a large rock and climbs into the window. He struggles to squeeze his massive body inside.

INSIDE THE WINDOW

An empty locker room.

Frank grabs onto a nearby locker and pulls his body through the window, one inch at a time.

FRANK

I gotta stop eating so much ice
cream.

Peyton enters wearing basketball shorts and a tank top.

She sees Frank in the window.

Frank sees her.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

A blood curdling SCREAM echoes down the halls.

JERRY, 60s, the school janitor, grabs his mop and runs towards the locker room.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jerry arrives as Peyton runs SCREAMING out the door.

Frank is still stuck in the window.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Hi.

JERRY
Talk to the mop!

Jerry slaps Frank in the face with the wet mop.

FRANK
Ahhh! Stop! Stop!

Frank is getting a wicked face wash with the dirty mop.

JERRY
I've had it with you creeps!

Jerry pushes Frank out of the window with the mop.

EXT. SCHOOL - CONTINUOUS

Frank lands on his back in the bushes with a THUMP.
He scrambles to his feet and runs to the parking lot.
A PARKING ATTENDANT places a ticket on Frank's car.

FRANK
Get out of my way!

Frank pushes the attendant out of his way and crams himself back into the car.

PARKING ATTENDANT
Have a nice day!

Frank speeds off.

INT. SAM'S TREEHOUSE - DAY

Sam and Violet flip through one of the magic books.

SAM
Invisible wires? I can't believe
it!

VIOLET
Did you think he was really flying?

SAM
(defensive)
No. Of course not... We shouldn't
be reading this. A true magician
never reveals his secrets!

Sam shuts the book.

VIOLET

Oh really? Is that what they teach you at Magic Camp?

SAM

Not just that! They teach you stage magic, and coin magic, and silk magic, and --

VIOLET

-- I wasn't asking for the history of magic.

SAM

Sorry. They even have celebrity guests! I'm writing a letter to David Copperfield, so he'll know I'll be at the camp this summer.

VIOLET

He'll never read your letter.

SAM

He might!

Violet flips through a magazine. She finds a photo of actor/magician Harry Anderson holding a ferret.

SAM (CONT'D)

Wow, look at that!

VIOLET

He uses ferrets in his act?

SAM

Guess I won't be the first.

VIOLET

It's hard to be original.

Copper drinks from a bowl of water. He dunks his head underwater like he's snorkeling. He comes up for air and shakes his head, water sprays everywhere.

SAM

Copper!

Violet wipes the water off of her arm.

VIOLET

Do ferrets like rubber? I noticed that Copper really likes chewing on my bike tires.

SAM

That must be why he always steals
the remote control. It drives my
Aunt Gemma crazy.

The kids laugh.

SAM (CONT'D)

What if we did a levitation trick?

VIOLET

We can't do that. It's too hard.

SAM

You can do anything you set your
mind to!

VIOLET

Oh really? Anyways, I have to get
home for dinner.

SAM

Okay, see ya tomorrow?

VIOLET

I guess so.

Violet climbs down the ladder and exits the treehouse.

Copper climbs into Sam's lap.

SAM

Ready to try some of those games?

EXT. SAM'S BACKYARD - MOMENTS LATER

A different EYEBALL peers through the fence hole.

Copper digs up dirt in one of Gemma's flower beds.

SAM

Copper!

Copper stops, sniffs the air. He runs towards the fence.

EXT. ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

Frank stands ready with a metal cage to catch the ferret.

Inside the cage is a plate with a big juicy raw steak.

FRANK

No one can resist a juicy steak.

The ferret icon approaches Frank on the tablet. BEEP!

Frank puts down the tablet and hides behind a car.

Copper squeezes under the fence.

SAM (O.S.)

Copper! Come back!

Frank watches as Copper approaches the cage.

FRANK

That's it, take the bait.

Copper notices the tablet computer with a RUBBER BRAIN KEYCHAIN attached.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Wait, no, don't touch that!

Copper bites down onto the keychain and runs back under the fence, dragging the tablet computer with him!

BEEP BEEP BEEP!

FRANK (CONT'D)

Oh no!

Frank watches in horror.

EXT. SAM'S BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

Copper runs through the grass, dragging the tablet which hits quite a few bumps and rocks along the way.

He enters the garage door.

SAM

Wait!

INT. AUNT GEMMA'S HOUSE - STAIRCASE - CONTINUOUS

Copper bounds up the stairs, still dragging the tablet!

CLUNK, CLUNK, CLUNK.

INT. SAM'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Copper adds the tablet computer to his stash under Sam's bed.

Socks, shoes, the TV remote control, a rubber ducky, etc.

Sam enters the room and picks Copper up, not noticing the tablet.

SAM

You have to be careful. Auntie
could have seen you!

INT. SCIENCE LAB - NIGHT

Inside a wire cage on the counter, a white RABBIT wears a tiny helmet with red and blue wires connected to the sides.

A carrot sits on a plate a few inches outside of the cage.

Dr. Murray tents his fingers, eyes wide with anticipation.

DR. MURRAY

That's it, Specimen 4571. Activate
the powers within you!

The carrot doesn't move.

DR. MURRAY (CONT'D)

Push the carrot. You can do it.

The rabbit twitches its nose.

FRANK

Maybe he's not hungry.

Frank bites down on a carrot. CRUNCH!

DR. MURRAY

Silence!

Dr. Murray continues coaxing the rabbit.

DR. MURRAY (CONT'D)

Use your mind.

FRANK

Come on, Flopsy!

DR. MURRAY

I told you not to name the animals.
They're specimens, not pets.

A computer BEEPS.

DR. MURRAY (CONT'D)
 What are you doing here, anyways?
 I need that ferret by tomorrow!

FRANK
 About that... I sorta lost the
 tracker...

DR. MURRAY
 You what?!

Dr. Murray chases Frank out of the room, beating him with Frank's half eaten carrot.

THE PLATE SLIDES OVER TO THE CAGE.

Flopsy nibbles the carrot.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Sam places his backpack on the floor next to his desk.

He's just about to sit down --

MRS. RASSENTI
 No bags in the classroom, Sam.
 Please hang it up in the cloak
 room, with your jacket.

SAM
 (to himself)
 Oh, crap.

CLOAK ROOM

Sam opens his backpack. Copper's face pokes out.

SAM
 (to Copper)
 You have to stay here for now. I'll
 come check on you whenever I can.

He zips up the bag, leaving just a bit open for Copper to get air. He hangs up his bag and heads back to class.

Sam stops, goes back to his bag, opening it up.

Copper pops back up.

SAM (CONT'D)

I mean it. Stay here. No getting into trouble.

MRS. RASSENTI (O.S.)

Everything okay in there, Sam?

SAM

Coming!

(to Copper)

Be good.

Sam tucks his buddy in, this time forgetting to close his backpack enough. He heads back into the classroom.

It takes barely a second before Copper slips out of the backpack and heads out into the hall.

INT. SCHOOL HALL - MOMENTS LATER

Copper pokes his head out from the cloak room and into the hall. The coast is clear. He makes a run for it.

Sneaking from locker to locker, having a sniff at each one.

He sniffs the air, and follows his nose to..

INT. SCHOOL CAFETERIA - CONTINUOUS

An empty cafeteria. Copper sneaks his way in.

The LUNCH LADY fills metal trays with chicken nuggets.

A nugget falls on the ground. Copper dashes towards it!

The Lunch Lady snatches it up and tosses it in the trash before he can get to it.

INT. CLOAK ROOM - LATER

The school bell RINGS.

MRS. RASSENTI

Enjoy your lunch, children!

Sam enters the cloak room and checks his bag - NO COPPER!

SAM

Holy crapoly!

Sam bends down, looking for Copper amongst the piles of backpacks and jackets.

SAM (CONT'D)
 (whispering)
 Copper?

The kids spill into the cloak room, grabbing their bags and heading off for lunch.

Violet arrives.

VIOLET
 Why are you on the floor?

SAM
 I lost Copper!

VIOLET
 You brought him to school?

SAM
 I was afraid he'd get into too much trouble if I left him at home!

VIOLET
 Well this way worked out much better.

SAM
 Come on, we gotta find him!

VIOLET
 Fine.

Violet and Sam search the cloak room.

Mrs. Rassenti notices they are the only two left.

MRS. RASSENTI
 What are you two up to?

Nothing!

SAM

Nothing!

VIOLET

MRS. RASSENTI
 Go have your lunch. I'm locking the classroom.

SAM
 Yes, Mrs. Rassenti.

Sam and Violet leave.

INT. CAFETERIA - MOMENTS LATER

The cafeteria is full of boys and girls eating their lunch, chatting loudly.

Danny Cho holds a tray of food and approaches Peyton at the 'cool girls table'.

PEYTON
Uh, hello?

Danny places his tray on the table, swings his xylophone to the front using the shoulder strap and holds his mallets.

PEYTON (CONT'D)
Are you gonna say something or just stand there?

BING BONG! BING BONG! BING BING BONG BONG!

Danny bops several musical notes.

PEYTON (CONT'D)
That's what I thought.

Peyton laughs.

SAVANNAH
He doesn't speak, he just bops that weird piano thing.

TAYLOR
So sad.

Danny's crushed. He takes his tray and sulks away.

PEYTON
It's called a xylophone, Savannah.

SAVANNAH
I didn't see a touch screen.

The girls laugh.

SAVANNAH (CONT'D)
What?

From under the table, Copper watches Peyton dunk a chicken nugget in an overly liquidy BBQ sauce.

PEYTON
Ugh. Nasty.

She drops the nugget on the floor in disgust.

Copper makes a run for it and brushes past Peyton's leg.

Peyton SCREAMS! She jumps onto her seat and points.

PEYTON (CONT'D)

A rat! A giant rat!

All the girls scream in unison, jumping up onto their seats.

Copper darts through the kid's legs, nugget in his mouth.

SAVANNAH

Oh my god! It could have rabies!

As Copper makes his escape,

CHICKEN NUGGETS RISE FROM PLATES AND HIT KIDS IN THE FACE.

TAYLOR

Who threw that?!

COPPER HAS USED HIS TELEKINESIS TO INSTIGATE A FOOD FIGHT!

Randy pulls the fire alarm, sprinklers come on.

Pandemonium erupts.

INT. SCHOOL HALL - CONTINUOUS

Copper runs out of the cafeteria right past a WET FLOOR sign and Jerry the janitor. He mops the floor.

Jerry blinks, rubbing his eyes.

JANITOR

Was that... ?

Copper slips and slides across the wet floor, coming to a stop right at Sam and Violet's feet.

SAM

Holy Crapoly!

Sam and Violet shuttle Copper away.

INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - SAME

Danny Cho runs into the office and sets up his xylophone.

Mr. Winston adjusts his tie.

MR. WINSTON

Ready?

Danny holds his mallets at the ready. Nods.

BING BONG!

Mr. Winston presses the button on his microphone.

MR. WINSTON (CONT'D)

Good afternoon, teachers and students! It has come to my attention that there's a giant rodent running loose in the school. Not to worry! The exterminator is on his way and everything is going to be A-Okay.

BONG BING! Danny bops a few notes on the xylophone.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The halls are empty. Peaceful. Then --

-- the doors from the cafeteria swing open and screaming children pour into the halls!

MR. WINSTON

(on the PA)

In other news, the Student Showcase Extravaganza is just one day away! Who will win the coveted 'A+' grade in Arts and qualify for the Regional contest? Find out tomorrow at the Student Showcase Extravaganza!

Peyton opens her locker and takes out a lacrosse stick.

PEYTON

I hate rodents.

She hunts for the ferret.

EXT. SCHOOLYARD - SAME

Violet and Sam duck behind an annex.

SAM

That was a close one!

VIOLET

Bringing Copper to school was a great idea. Now what are we gonna do? We can't go back inside.

Sam dries Copper's wet fur with his shirt then lowers him into his backpack.

SAM

We could go practice our levitation trick?

VIOLET

But you haven't even learned how it's done yet. Remember that book I showed you the other day? Did you even bother to look at it?

SAM

I looked at the pictures.

VIOLET

Well, that's a step in the right direction. So, what do we need?

SAM

I know this place we can go where my Dad gets all of his props! I bet they have what we need.

Kids scream in the background.

VIOLET

Well, it's better than hanging around here.

Copper chirps.

SAM

Cool! Let's go!

VIOLET

Yipee.

Sam and Violet head off as Peyton creeps along the school wall wielding her lacrosse stick.

INT. AUNT GEMMA'S HOUSE - DAY

Aunt Gemma trims a bonsai tree when the phone rings.

AUNT GEMMA

(into phone)

Yes, hello? This is she...

Jackson pecks at the tree. Gemma shoos him away.

AUNT GEMMA (CONT'D)
 How could he just disappear? A
 rat? Oh, heavens no. Sam doesn't
 have any pets. A 'C' average?
 Yes, yes, I understand. Thank you
 for informing me, Mrs. Rassenti.

Gemma hangs up the phone.

AUNT GEMMA (CONT'D)
 Time to find out what our little
 Sammy has been up to!

Jackson flies onto Gemma's shoulder. They leave the room.

INT. BASEMENT - TOP OF THE STAIRS - MOMENTS LATER

The door to the basement creaks open.

Gemma looks down at the darkness below.

JACKSON
 You can do it!

GEMMA
 Oh, Jackson. I don't think I'm
 ready.

Gemma clicks on a flashlight. The beam of light highlights
 various items in the basement.

The posters. The sawing a woman in half box. And finally,
 the blue treasure chest with golden latches, still locked.

AUNT GEMMA
 Not today, Jackson.

She closes the door. It locks.

INT. MR. WILLARD'S MAGICAL EMPORIUM - DAY

A neat magic store loaded with trinkets and toys.

Glass display cases hold magical ropes, cards, balls, cups,
 handkerchiefs and more. White doves in a cage. Capes and
 wands. Disappearing rabbit boxes and magical top hats.

SAM
 Wow.

Sam presses his face against a glass case.

VIOLET
I didn't know places like this
existed.

SAM
I know! Isn't it awesome?!

VIOLET
Not really.

SAM
My Aunt won't let me come here.
She hates magic.

Sam picks up a top hat and tries it on.

VIOLET
Oh really? Why?

SAM
My Uncle Jackson used to be a
magician, but one day he screwed up
a trick and he turned himself into
a parrot.

VIOLET
Your Uncle is a parrot?

SAM
Yeah. Pretty neat, huh?

Sam checks out a fancy cape.

VIOLET
Your family is very odd.

MR. WILLARD, 60s, a charismatic magician and owner of the
store, pops up from behind the counter. Sam and Violet jump.

MR. WILLARD
Shouldn't you children be in
school? Hmmmm?

SAM
Hi! Uh, we're on our lunch break.

MR. WILLARD
I see. Tell me something.

Mr. Willard leans over and whispers for dramatic effect.

MR. WILLARD (CONT'D)
Do you believe in magic? Hmmmm?

VIOLET
Sam thinks he can learn the
levitation trick.

SAM
I can!

Mr. Willard smiles.

MR. WILLARD
Levitation, hmmm? Follow me.

Mr. Willard waltzes behind a curtain. The kids follow.

INT. VIOLET'S GARAGE - LATER

A red curtain with gold strings creates the backdrop in Violet's garage.

Copper stands on a velvet platform with golden frayed edges.

Violet holds the pink striped hula hoop from Sam's basement.

VIOLET
I think the metal piece goes
here...

She adjusts a metal stand.

SAM
No, see, the hoop goes over it like
this...

Sam attempts to pass the hula hoop over the stand but clunks when it hits the metal.

VIOLET
Check the book again.

Copper makes the magic book fly over and land in Sam's hand.

Violet comes over to help him read.

OUTSIDE THE WINDOW

Peyton, Savannah and Taylor are astonished as they peer through a window in Violet's garage and witness the flying book.

SAVANNAH
Oh my gosh, did you see that?

TAYLOR
How did they do that?

Peyton's face is beet red. She pushes the girls aside to get a closer look.

PEYTON'S POV

Copper has three red plastic balls juggling in space around his head. Violet and Sam are laughing.

BACK TO SCENE

Peyton crosses her arms and huffs.

PEYTON
It's the rat from school! The one that tried to bite me!

SAVANNAH
I think that's a ferret.

PEYTON
What are you, a zoologist?

TAYLOR
How is it doing that? Is that an illusion or something?

The girls look on with confused faces.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
Maybe we need 3-D glasses.

SAVANNAH
Whatever it is, I bet they're gonna win the Student Showcase Extravaganza!

TAYLOR
Yeah, better luck next year, Peyton!

PEYTON
We'll see about that, Dumbini...

The girls slowly lower down away from the window in unison.

INT. PRINCIPALS'S OFFICE - DAY

Mr. Winston sprinkles fish food over an aquarium.

Peyton sits in a chair in front of his desk.

PEYTON

Mr. Winston, you have to do something about this! It just isn't fair to me - er, the other contestants.

Mr. Winston watches as the fish attack the food.

MR. WINSTON

(re: fish)

Aren't they lovely? Each fish, working together, towards a common goal. If only our schools were as simplified as theirs.

PEYTON

Fish don't go to school, Mr. Winston.

MR. WINSTON

I see you've been paying attention in your biology class, Peyton.

PEYTON

Huh? Biology is for high school kids. I'm telling you, the ferret has magical powers. You have to disqualify Sam!

MR. WINSTON

Oh, don't be silly. There's no such thing as a magic ferret. Here, have a lollipop!

Mr. Winston plucks a lollipop from a jar on his desk and hands it to Peyton. She promptly sucks on it.

MR. WINSTON (CONT'D)

There's no need to be jealous of Sam, Peyton. You are all winners, just for showing up!

PEYTON

I don't want an award for showing up! I want to win!

MR. WINSTON

Yes well, times certainly have changed, haven't they?

Peyton doesn't get it.

MR. WINSTON (CONT'D)

You'll just have to come up with an act that will impress the judges. Now run along, I'm sure your mother is waiting to pick you up.

Peyton stomps off, dropping her lollipop in the trash can on the way out. Mr. Winston notices.

MR. WINSTON (CONT'D)

Well, that's just wasteful.

At the window, we see Frank has been watching.

EXT. SCHOOL PLAYGROUND - DAY

Peyton sits alone on a jungle gym. She's listening to music on her headphones and sings along to a Mariah Carey song.

PEYTON

(singing)

Why you so obsessed with me...

Other children are being picked up by their parents in the parking lot nearby. Peyton looks longingly.

Danny Cho walks by with his xylophone. He stops in front of Peyton and bops a few notes. BING BONG?

PEYTON (CONT'D)

Go away, Danny.

Danny lowers his head and walks away, getting into a car with his mother who tussles his hair lovingly.

PEYTON (CONT'D)

*Got you all fired up, with your
Napoleon complex,
Seein' right through you,
Like you're bathin' in Windex.*

Frank watches Peyton from a chain link fence. He whistles to get her attention. Peyton recognizes him from the incident at the girl's locker room.

PEYTON (CONT'D)

Ahhhh! Stranger! Ahhh!

Peyton's screams are high pitched and annoy all the other children around. They cover their ears.

PEYTON (CONT'D)
(to the kids)
Thanks a lot, nerds.

Frank motions for Peyton to come over to the fence.

FRANK
It's okay! Come here!

Peyton tucks her headphones away and approaches the fence.

PEYTON
You're that creep from the other
day! I'm going to tell my Mom,
she's on her way to pick me up --

FRANK
-- No, no, don't do that! I'm not
going to hurt you. I have a
special present for you!

PEYTON
That's exactly what a creep would
say! Ahhhh!!!!

Peyton screams again, as high pitched as she can.

A flock of crows fly away. The kids still ignore her.

FRANK
No! It's about the ferret. You're
right, it is magic!

PEYTON
I knew it! Wait, how do you know
about that?

FRANK
It doesn't matter, just listen. I
need you to get me that ferret.

PEYTON
I thought you said you had a
present for me, not a job!

FRANK
You get me the ferret, and the boy
can't win the talent show or
whatever. Right?

PEYTON
Right...

Peyton thinks.

FRANK
What do you say?

PEYTON
Why do you want the ferret?

FRANK
Oh, it's my Uncle's pet ferret.
He's really sad now, he misses him.
That little boy stole him. I just
want to bring him home!

PEYTON
Why would anyone want a ferret as a
pet?

FRANK
Beats me. So, are you in?

PEYTON
Is Miley Cyrus actually Hannah
Montana?

FRANK
Uh...

PEYTON
That means yes, stupid.

Peyton runs off.

EXT. THE BLUE BRIDGE - DAY

Sam and Violet walk across a field of buttercups towards
Sam's house. Copper runs and hops in the grass, chirping
with delight.

SAM
This is gonna be the best magic
show ever!

VIOLET
Oh really? Well, my mom says she's
going to film it so she can show it
to her relatives and stuff.

SAM
I wish my parents were here to
watch me too.

VIOLET
Yeah, where are they now?

SAM

Mom called me last night from California. She said they had to do some extra tour dates so they won't be home till next week.

VIOLET

Bummer. Well, my mom can show them the video.

SAM

That would be awesome! My Dad is gonna be so proud when he sees me.

As Sam and Violet approach a small blue bridge that goes over a creek, they notice Peyton and her friends are hanging out on the other side.

SAM (CONT'D)

Uh oh...

Sam looks to grab Copper but he has already run towards the bridge.

VIOLET

This isn't going to be good.

Copper runs along the bridge. Sam and Violet run behind him.

PEYTON

Well, what do we have here?

Peyton picks up the ferret with disgust from the nape of his neck and passes him to Savannah. Savannah puts Copper into a pillow case.

SAM

Hey! Give him back, that's my ferret!

PEYTON

He's my ferret now, Dumbini.

VIOLET

Peyton, give him back.

PEYTON

Why, so you two can cheat at the talent show tomorrow with your *magical ferret*?

Taylor and Savannah laugh.

SAM
He's not magic. He's my best
friend.

Violet grabs for the pillow case. Taylor pushes her back.

PEYTON
That's not what Violet told us.
She said that he has magical
powers, and you're going to use him
to cheat at the talent show.

VIOLET
Oh really, Peyton?

PEYTON
Yes really, Violet.

SAM
Violet wouldn't say that!

PEYTON
Thanks for your help, Violet, but
we can take it from here.

SAM
You're lying!

SAVANNAH
Violet's a nerd, just like you,
Sam. See, look at her old yearbook
photo from her last school.

Savannah hands Sam a photo of Violet, wearing braces and
glasses and frizzed out hair.

VIOLET
Seriously? You just happened to
have my yearbook with you?

PEYTON
We thought it was time Sam knew the
truth.

TAYLOR
Never trust a nerd. My Grandma
told me that.

SAM
I don't care what she did. Just
please give me back my ferret.

PEYTON

Sorry, Dumbini. You'll just have to find a *new* trick to pull out of your hat.

Peyton closes a gate as Taylor snaps on a bike lock!

Violet and Sam are trapped and helpless as the girls hop on their bikes and ride off.

SAM

Copper! I'll find you, Copper, I promise!

SAVANNAH

(mocking)

I'll find you, Copper! I promise!

Sam watches the wriggling pillow case disappear into the distance.

VIOLET

I'm sorry, Sam.

Violet walks away, leaving Sam alone on the bridge.

EXT. ALLEY - DAY

Frank leans against a dumpster. He wears all black clothing and a ski mask.

Peyton and her cronies arrive on their bikes.

PEYTON

What are you wearing?

FRANK

(removing his mask)

Did you get the item?

PEYTON

What do *you* think?

Savannah passes the pillow case to Frank. Copper chitters and squirms inside.

FRANK

Boss will be so happy!

PEYTON

I thought you said it was for your Uncle?

FRANK

Oh uh, yeah, my Uncle is my boss!

Frank darts off and disappears around the corner.

SAVANNAH

Maybe we should practice our routine some more, just in case?

PEYTON

Ha. It's in the bag.

TAYLOR

Oh yeah. Like the ferret. I get it.

Peyton shakes her head as she rides off with the girls.

INT. FRANK'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

The wriggling pillow case sits on Frank's passenger seat.

Frank is on the phone with Dr. Murray.

FRANK

I got him, Dr. Murray!

DR. MURRAY (O.S.)

It's about time! Now bring him to me! We must prepare for tomorrow!

FRANK

On my way!

Frank hangs up the phone. He looks at the pillow case.

It's stopped squirming.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Are you okay, little buddy?

He unties the top of the pillow case and pulls out Copper.

He holds him out in front of his face.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Don't worry. Dr. Murray isn't going to hurt you. He just wants to show this military guy how special you are!

Copper chirps, kicks his legs, trying to break free.

The driver's side visor drops down and a collection of CD's pelt Frank in the forehead!

FRANK (CONT'D)
Ahhhh! Why'd you do that!!?

Frank puts Copper back in the pillow case.

FRANK (CONT'D)
You're staying in there until we get back to the lab.

Frank starts up the car and drives away.

INT. AUNT GEMMA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Sam slinks in the front door. Gemma has been waiting.

GEMMA
Sammy, where were you? I've been worried sick.

She hugs him tight.

The joy and light is drained from Sam's face.

SAM
I'm sorry, Aunt Gemma. I messed everything up.

GEMMA
Your teacher called. She said you left school early today? And she thinks you have some sort of pet rat? What's going on?

Sam slumps into a chair. Jackson hops onto the arm.

SAM
I had a ferret. I found him. And he was my best friend. And now he's gone.

Sam tries to hold back tears.

GEMMA
Gone? Where did it go, Sam?

SAM
This mean girl at school, Peyton, she stole him. She found out he was going to be my assistant at the talent show so she took him.

GEMMA

I'm sorry, Sam. Maybe it's better that you don't compete. Mrs. Rassenti told me that your grades have been suffering since your parents went out of town.

SAM

But our act is so good! And if we win I would get an 'A+' in Arts.

GEMMA

You can't neglect your studies, Sam. Do you know how your father got to be such a great magician?

SAM

(reciting)
Hard work and dedication...

GEMMA

Well, yes, but also reading! Your father read every magic book he could get his hands on. He still does.

SAM

I went to the library. I even...

GEMMA

...What?

SAM

I went in the basement and I borrowed some of Uncle Jackson's magic props.

GEMMA

Sam! I told you never to touch Jackson's things!

SAM

But they're really cool! And I want to win! I have to go to Magic Camp, Aunt Gemma!

GEMMA

Your parents left me in charge and that means you have to obey my rules. And what was my first rule?

SAM

No lying...

GEMMA

That's right, no lying. And how many lies have you told me?

SAM

Only like, four!

GEMMA

Four! That's four too many, young man. Now go upstairs to your room and think about what you've done.

Sam storms upstairs.

Gemma sits in the chair and picks up the telephone.

GEMMA (CONT'D)

Hello, yes, I'd like to be connected to Mr. Garbonzo's room, please. Thank you.

Jackson walks down the hall and hops up the stairs.

INT. SCIENCE LAB - NIGHT

A menacing SNAKE hisses inside a metal cage.

It strikes against the metal bars!

Next to the snake's cage is another cage with a scared looking Copper, backed into a corner.

FRANK

Aw. I think he's scared.

Dr. Murray places some wires and gadgets on a steel counter.

DR. MURRAY

Yes, well, we can't have him using his powers to escape again. These Faraday cages will prevent him from using his telekinesis until we need him to!

FRANK

Wow, that's neat.

A SKYPE CALL POPS UP ON THE COMPUTER. Dr. Murray answers.

It's GENERAL MILLER, stern, 50s, military uniform.

DR. MURRAY

Ah, General Miller! I have good news for you. The ferret is ready for your examination!

GENERAL MILLER

When was it *not* ready, doctor?

DR. MURRAY

Ah, never! Always been ready. Ready as ever.

GENERAL MILLER

Good. My comrades and I are very excited to see what you've done. We have important plans for this specimen.

DR. MURRAY

Wonderful! When does your plane land?

GENERAL MILLER

Eleven hundred hours tomorrow.

DR. MURRAY

I'll send my assistant, Frank, to pick you up.

GENERAL MILLER

Very well. See you tomorrow, doctor.

The Skype call closes.

FRANK

What are they going to do with him?

DR. MURRAY

Huh? Oh, they're going to give him a lovely home, Frank. Don't you worry.

Copper tries to climb the walls of the cage but falls.

The snake hisses. Copper stays back.

INT. SAM'S ROOM - NIGHT

Sam lays on his bed. He writes a letter.

"DEAR MR. DAVED COPERFELD..."

The R's are backwards.

A TAP TAP on his door.

SAM

Go away.

TAP TAP TAP TAP TAP!

Sam jumps out of bed and opens his door.

Jackson waddles into the room and flies onto Sam's bed.

SAM (CONT'D)

I wish Copper was here.

Jackson nuzzles up to Sam's hand. Sam strokes his head.

KNOCK KNOCK!

SAM (CONT'D)

Who is it?

VIOLET (O.S.)

It's me. Can I come in?

Sam opens the door and Violet walks in.

SAM

Hi.

VIOLET

Hi.

Sam sits back on the bed and picks up his pencil.

VIOLET (CONT'D)

I'm sorry that Peyton did that to you. It wasn't right. I promise I didn't tell her about Copper.

Sam continues writing his letter.

SAM

Is it true you used to be a nerd?

VIOLET

Peyton thinks everybody's a nerd. But that's just because she's jealous of people that are happy and have hobbies and stuff.

SAM

Like magic?

VIOLET

Duh.

Sam laughs.

SAM

So you're not working with Peyton?

VIOLET

Yeah right. Sam, we can't let Peyton win. We have to get Copper back, and blow them away at the Student Showcase tomorrow.

Sam finally looks up.

SAM

But how? We have no idea where Copper is. I can't perform without him. I should just forget about Magic Camp.

Sam crumples up the letter and throws it on the floor.

Jackson jumps onto the floor and pulls out the tablet computer from Copper's hidey hole under the bed.

SAM (CONT'D)

What's that?

Violet picks it up.

VIOLET

It's a tablet. Is this yours?

SAM

No. I don't have one. Copper must have found it.

Violet presses the home button and the screen lights up, showing the map of the city and the green ferret icon.

VIOLET

Woa. It's a map. And look at this little ferret.

SAM

Do you think that's Copper?

VIOLET

It says here this tablet belongs to Dr. Murray, Telekinesis Research Laboratory, 303 Fairfax Lane!

SAM
That must be where Copper came
from! He musta escaped!

Violet takes out her cell phone and opens up a map
application. She cross references the maps.

VIOLET
According to Map Quest, that's
where Copper is right now.

SAM
Peyton gave Copper to this Dr.
Murray? Why?

VIOLET
How am I supposed to know?
(checking her phone)
But it says here that Dr. Murray
experiments on all sorts of animals
at his research lab. Oh. This
isn't good.

Jackson SQUAWKS!

SAM
We have to save Copper! But, I'm
supposed to stay in my room...

VIOLET
Oh really? I have an idea.

EXT. SAM'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

A rope made of sheets and colored handkerchiefs tied together
drops down outside of Sam's window.

Violet and Sam look down from the window. Sam looks scared.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Aunt Gemma is doing a crossword in her Laz-Y-Boy chair.

Behind her, the sheet rope swings, as Violet carefully climbs
down like a professional gymnast.

SAM (O.S.)
Ahhhh!

SAM DROPS DOWN PAST THE WINDOW AND LANDS IN THE BUSHES!

Aunt Gemma continues with her crossword, oblivious.

INT. SCIENCE LAB - SAME

Copper's cage is now centered on the stainless steel counter.

Various wires run inside the bars and attach to a small metal helmet on Copper's head.

Copper lies on his side, eyes open, breathing heavily.

DR. MURRAY
Bring me the operating tools.

FRANK
Yes, boss!

Frank exits the room.

DR. MURRAY
(to Copper)
It will all be over soon, you fine specimen you. Our scientific findings will make history! This is for the greater good!

Frank returns and hands the Operation game to Dr. Murray.

DR. MURRAY (CONT'D)
Not the game, you idiot! My scalpels! My operating tools!

FRANK
Oh. But what do you need those for, boss?

DR. MURRAY
I'm going to remove the brain of Specimen 1989-F.

Copper SQUEAKS. A florescent light flickers.

FRANK
What!? You can't do that! I thought you said you weren't going to hurt the animals.

Frank towers over Dr. Murray, his size intimidating.

DR. MURRAY
Oh, it won't hurt at all. I'm simply going to remove the brain so I can perform a series of tests.

Dr. Murray points to various testing gadgets on the counter, test tubes of brightly colored liquids, wires, syringes, etc.

DR. MURRAY (CONT'D)
 When I'm done, I'll place the brain
 back in the ferret's head.

FRANK
 And he'll be back to normal?

DR. MURRAY
 Yes. Just like... *magic*.

FRANK
 Well... alright.

Frank backs off. He sticks a finger through Copper's cage
 and strokes his back.

FRANK (CONT'D)
 Did you hear that little guy?
 You're going to be just fine.

DR. MURRAY
 It's for the greater good.

Dr. Murray hides some papers with diagrams detailing the
 operation.

The pictures make it clear that Copper *will not survive*.

EXT. SCIENCE LAB - SIDE ENTRANCE - DAY

A SECURITY GUARD, 40s, overweight, sits on a chair reading a
 magazine called "YO-YO CHAMPIONS OF THE WORLD".

Sam and Violet peek around a corner of the building.

SAM
 We're never gonna get inside.

VIOLET
 Don't be so pessimistic, Sam.

Violet takes a pair of glasses from her backpack and puts
 them on.

SAM
 You do look kinda nerdy.

VIOLET
 Oh really?

Violet sticks out her tongue at Sam playfully.

Sam and Violet approach the guard.

VIOLET (CONT'D)

Hi, our school is having a tour of the science lab and we accidentally got lost. Can you help us get back inside?

The Guard lowers his magazine.

SECURITY GUARD

Sorry kid, only authorized personnel through this door.

VIOLET

Thank you.

They duck back around the corner.

VIOLET (CONT'D)

Yeah, that was a bad plan.

SAM

Give me my cards.

VIOLET

This is no time to practice magic.

SAM

Trust me!

Violet hands Sam a deck of cards from the bag.

They approach the Guard again.

SAM (CONT'D)

Uh, hey mister, would you like to see a magic trick?

The Guard lowers his magazine again.

SECURITY GUARD

Okay. Sure.

SAM

Great! Prepare to be amazed.

Sam shuffles his cards mid air, but his fingers slip and they fly everywhere.

SECURITY GUARD

Wow. Amazing.

Sam and Violet duck back around the corner.

VIOLET
Is that the best trick you got?

SAM
Let me try again.

Sam approaches the Guard again. This time the Guard puts his magazine down on the chair and stands, arms crossed.

SECURITY GUARD
What is it this time?

SAM
Hey mister, I think you've got something behind your ear.

SECURITY GUARD
Oh yeah?

Sam can't reach.

SAM
Can you bend down, please?

The Guard takes a few steps towards them and bends down.

Sam pulls a red YO-YO from behind the Guard's ear!

SECURITY GUARD
Hey, not bad!

The Guard plays with the yo-yo, too distracted to notice that Sam and Violet have slipped inside the door behind him.

INT. SCIENCE LAB - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Sam and Violet sneak down the brightly lit hallway.

VIOLET
It was lucky you had a yo-yo with you.

SAM
I didn't, I stole it from his pocket.

VIOLET
Oh really? Not bad.

SAM
How are we gonna figure out which room Copper is in?

They pass a door labeled TELEKINESIS RESEARCH LABORATORY.

VIOLET

That's a good place to start.

The sound of voices from within the lab, getting closer.

DR. MURRAY (O.S.)

Don't let him out of your sight!

A shadow approaches the glazed window on the door.

The kids bolt for the next closest door and dart inside.

It's labeled DR. MURRAY'S OFFICE.

INT. DR. MURRAY'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Dr. Murray enters, singing an up beat tune.

DR. MURRAY

(singing)

*Like a surgeon, hey,
Cuttin' for the very first time,
Like a surgeon,
Here's a waiver for you to sign!*

Sam and Violet are squeezed together under Dr. Murray's desk.

DR. MURRAY (CONT'D)

*Hey, like a surgeon,
Cuttin' for the very first time,
Like a surgeon,
Organ transplants are my line!*

Dr. Murray sits down, feet inches away from the kids.

He picks up the phone and dials.

DR. MURRAY (CONT'D)

Greetings, General Miller! Yes,
everything is going well. I am
about to perform the surgery now.

Sam gasps. Violet covers his mouth with her hands.

DR. MURRAY (CONT'D)

Well, yes I know you're coming
tomorrow but...yes, I understand.
Well I suppose I could wait...

Dr. Murray squeezes a stress ball shaped like a brain.

Sam and Violet breathe a collective sigh of relief.

DR. MURRAY (CONT'D)
 Right. Not a problem, I will
 reschedule the surgery to thirteen
 hundred hours tomorrow. Yes, I'll
 be removing the brain. Alright.
 See you then, General.

Dr. Murray hangs up the phone. He gets up and leaves.

SAM
 He's talking about Copper! He's
 gonna kill him!

VIOLET
 We won't let that happen.

SAM
 We have to save him. He's counting
 on us!

VIOLET
 Oh really? Come on.

Sam and Violet sneak back into the hallway.

INT. SCIENCE LAB - MOMENTS LATER

Sam and Violet creep into the seemingly empty laboratory.

VIOLET
 (whispering)
 Do you see him?

SAM
 Not yet. Copper? Copper?

VIOLET
 Shhhh!

Copper lets out a faint chirp sound from his cage.

SAM
 Copper!

Violet and Sam rush to Copper's cage.

He's laying down, still wearing the little metal helmet.

SAM (CONT'D)
 What have they done to him?!

The snake hisses!

VIOLET
Great, I love snakes.

Sam tries to unlock Copper's cage when TWO LARGE HANDS GRAB HIM AND VIOLET BY THEIR COLLARS AND LIFT THEM INTO THE AIR!

FRANK
Who do we have here?

Sam and Violet SCREAM!

FRANK (CONT'D)
Shhh! I'm not gonna hurt you.

SAM
Let me down!

VIOLET
Stranger danger! Stranger danger!

FRANK
I'll put you down, but only if you promise not to scream again.

The kids nod. What choice do they have?

Frank lowers them down to the floor.

FRANK (CONT'D)
You kids shouldn't be in here. If Dr. Murray catches you --

SAM
-- He stole my friend! He's gonna kill him! He was singing about it!

FRANK
Who? Specimen 1989-F?

SAM
He's not a specimen, he's a ferret, and my best friend.

VIOLET
We have to rescue him. Look at him. He's sick.

Frank looks at Copper. He does look poorly.

FRANK
Dr. Murray isn't going to hurt him, he's just doing some tests.

SAM

He's going to take his brain!

FRANK

How did you know that?

VIOLET

So it's true!

FRANK

Yes, but he's going to put it right back in again afterwards! He'll be good as new. The military is going to give him a really nice home!

DR. MURRAY (O.S.)

Frank! What are these children doing in here?!

Violet drops her glasses.

Dr. Murray steps on them, crushing the lenses.

VIOLET

My glasses!

FRANK

They're trying to rescue the ferret, but I told 'em he doesn't need rescuing, because you're not going to hurt him. Right, boss? Tell them.

DR. MURRAY

Well, I could tell them that. But then I'd be lying.

The kids gasp.

Sam tries the lock on Copper's cage again but it's no use!

FRANK

But you said that he would be fine? You said you would put the brain back in, and that General Miller was going to give him a good home!

DR. MURRAY

Oh, listen to yourself, Frank. You're like a child. Do you really think a creature could survive without its brain?

Frank thinks...

DR. MURRAY (CONT'D)

Our research is going to change the world, don't you get that? There must be sacrifices. Would you rather I experimented on humans? Or you, perhaps? Well, your brain wouldn't be sufficient of course --

FRANK

-- You lied to me!

Sam and Violet pick up Copper's cage and back into a corner.

Frank moves towards Dr. Murray, towering over him, backing him into another corner as he speaks.

FRANK (CONT'D)

You promised me you wouldn't hurt the animals! You said they were all going to lovely homes, with children, and families.

A few more steps....

DR. MURRAY

Yes, well, sometimes lies have to be told, for the greater --

FRANK

-- No! No more greater good!

Frank backs Dr. Murray against a cage containing a GORILLA.

DR. MURRAY

Frank, now think about this, who gave you a job when you were fired from In-N-Out Burger?

Frank grabs the keychain from his belt and opens the gorilla cage, AND PUSHES DR. MURRAY INSIDE!

DR. MURRAY (CONT'D)

No! Frank! I command you to stop what you're doing right this instant!

Frank locks the door to the cage.

The large ape inspects Dr. Murray's hair.

Dr. Murray shakes the bars.

DR. MURRAY (CONT'D)
 Let me out of here! You're going
 to ruin everything, you stupid ape!

The Gorilla growls.

DR. MURRAY (CONT'D)
 Not you, not you.... Nice monkey...

Frank darts over to the kids and unlocks Copper's cage. Sam
 removes the metal hat and wires and hugs his buddy close.

Copper chirps, a little more life in him now than before.

SAM
 Thank you so much, mister!

FRANK
 My name's Frank. What's yours?

SAM
 I'm Sam, and this is Violet, and
 this is Copper.

FRANK
 That's a much better name than
 Specimen 1989-F.

VIOLET
 Totally.

FRANK
 Sorry about your glasses.

VIOLET
 It's okay, I only use them as a
 disguise.

SAM
 Frank, do you think you could do us
 one more favor?

EXT. SAM'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Frank's yellow Smart car pulls up in front of Sam's house.

INSIDE THE CAR

Sam and Violet are in the back seat.

Sam holds the cage with Copper on his lap.

FRANK

You kids gonna be okay?

SAM

Yeah. I just gotta get Copper out of this metal cage and back into his comfy bed.

FRANK

Good idea. That's a 'Faraday' cage. It prevents Copper from using his *special powers*.

VIOLET

Oh really? How does it work?

FRANK

Something about blocking brain waves. You'd have to ask Dr. Murray about that one. When he's done his date with Ethel the Gorilla.

Everybody laughs.

SAM

Thanks for helping us, Frank.

VIOLET

What about all the other animals?

FRANK

Don't worry, I have a real good home in mind for them. Good luck at the talent show, kids!

Sam and Violet get out of the car.

OUTSIDE SAM'S HOUSE

Frank's car drives off.

VIOLET

I better get home. That 'Do Not Disturb' sign on my bedroom door only works for so long.

SAM

Okay. See you tomorrow?

VIOLET

Uh, obviously. It's the talent show tomorrow.

SAM
Holy crapoly! I almost forgot!

Violet smiles.

VIOLET
And Sam?

SAM
Yeah?

VIOLET
You were a really awesome magician
today. And an even more awesome
friend.

Violet hugs Sam tight and kisses him on the cheek.

Sam blushes. Copper chirps.

Violet walks off as Sam heads into his house.

INT. SAM'S BEDROOM - LATER

Sam is asleep on his bed. Copper is curled up like a prawn,
sleeping next to Sam's feet.

Aunt Gemma peeks in, with Jackson on her shoulder.

AUNT GEMMA
Will you have a look at that.
Isn't he as cute as a button?

Gemma's eyes notice Copper. She gasps, then sighs.

AUNT GEMMA (CONT'D)
How sweet.

She tip toes over and tucks Sam into his blanket. She folds
over the corner of his quilt and tucks in Copper, too.

AUNT GEMMA (CONT'D)
Goodnight, Sammy.

Jackson flies onto the floor and walks under Sam's bed,
pulling out the TV remote control by his beak.

AUNT GEMMA (CONT'D)
So that's where the clicker went!

Gemma turns off Sam's light and leave the room with Jackson.

INT. SCIENCE LAB - SAME

Ethel the gorilla is fast asleep, her large, heavy arms wrapped around Dr. Murray, who is wide awake.

Dr. Murray attempts to lift Ethel's arms off his body, but this only causes her to tighten her grip. He gives up.

INT. SCHOOL THEATRE - DAY

The school theatre bustles with activity as students and teachers put up decorations. Cardboard stars painted with shiny silver paint hang from strings high above the stage.

BACKSTAGE

Peyton, Taylor and Savannah practice a choreographed routine.

PEYTON

And one, and two, and twerk it,
girls!

The girls attempt to twerk it. Taylor slips and falls.

PEYTON (CONT'D)

Again!

Other children are practicing their various talents for the competition. Randy juggles three balled up pairs of socks. A boy holds a ventriloquist dummy on his lap. A group of girls practice break dancing on some flattened cardboard boxes. A girl recites a monologue from Romeo and Juliet.

IN THE THEATRE

The audience is gradually filling up with proud parents, teachers, and students from different grades.

Danny Cho sets up a video camera in front of the stage.

MR. WINSTON

Oh, this is so exciting, isn't it,
Danny?

Danny nods.

MR. WINSTON (CONT'D)

You don't say much, do you Danny?

BING BONG!

Danny bops a few notes on his xylophone. Mr. Winston smiles.

BACKSTAGE

Sam and Violet are dressed in snazzy magician's costumes.

Sam wears a black sheet as a cape and his tattered top hat. He holds Copper, who wears his dashing red bow tie.

SAM

Wow, looks like we have a lot of competition.

VIOLET

Oh really? Did you think we'd be the only ones performing?

SAM

We're the only ones doing an awesome levitation trick!

VIOLET

Yeah, you're probably right.

In the distance, Peyton notices Sam has Copper back. She is fuming, and hence doesn't notice Savannah doing a cart wheel towards her. The girls tumble to the floor.

PEYTON

Watch it!

INT. AUNT GEMMA'S HOUSE - DAY

Aunt Gemma sits at her kitchen table with Jackson.

She reads the letter that Sam wrote to David Copperfield.

"DEAR MR. DAVED COPERFELD,

MY NAME IS SAM AND YOU AR MY BIGEST HIRO..."

For the first time ever, Jackson speaks with a HUMAN VOICE.

JACKSON

Gemma.

AUNT GEMMA

What is it, sweetie?

JACKSON

You know how much I love you. But you have to move on from what happened.

AUNT GEMMA

I do not!

She folds up Sam's letter and sticks it in an envelope.

JACKSON

Our nephew needs you.

AUNT GEMMA

He's off doing that foolish *magic*.

JACKSON

He's following his dreams, Gemma.

AUNT GEMMA

Magic is the reason I lost you.

JACKSON

I'm right here.

AUNT GEMMA

You know what I mean.

JACKSON

You have to support him. Believe in him, so he can believe in himself! Let him be free.

Gemma gives Jackson a kiss on the cheek.

EXT. AIRPORT - ARRIVALS - DAY

General Miller stands at the pick up area at the airport.

He looks at his watch impatiently. He dials his phone.

INT. SCIENCE LAB - SAME

Dr. Murray's cell phone vibrates on the steel counter. The noise jolts Dr. Murray awake.

DR. MURRAY

No! The General!

Frank unlatches a rabbit cage and transfers the rabbit into an animal carrier.

FRANK

I hope you learned your lesson, Dr. Murray.

DR. MURRAY

I did not! Now let me out of this cage!

FRANK

I will let you out. Later. After I release all the animals.

DR. MURRAY

Think about what you're doing, Frank. Do you really want to give up this job?

FRANK

Yup!

Frank pets the snake as he transfers it to a wooden box.

EXT. AIRPORT - ARRIVALS - SAME

General Miller shoves the phone back in his pocket.

He steps onto the curb and hails a taxi.

INT. SCHOOL THEATRE - BACKSTAGE - DAY

Copper drinks from a dish of water on a make-up counter.

VIOLET

Looks like he's feeling better!

SAM

He just needed to be with his family.

Sam pets Copper.

INT. AUNT GEMMA'S BASEMENT - SAME

Gemma has made it to the bottom of the stairs in the basement. Jackson rides on her shoulder.

She looks longingly at the flyers and posters of Jackson, as a human, in his prime, as a great magician.

GEMMA

You were so handsome in that cape.

JACKSON

Do you remember who gave me that
cape?

Gemma pats Jackson's head.

GEMMA

I did.

Gemma approaches the blue chest with gold latches.

She kneels down, takes a key from around a chain on her
necklace, and unlocks the latches. She opens the chest.

INT. SCHOOL THEATRE - SAME

The theatre is almost full now. The lights dim.

A spotlight illuminates Mr. Winston as he walks out.

MR. WINSTON

Hello, teachers and students... and
parents! Are you ready for the
Student Showcase Extravaganza?!

The crowd CHEERS and WHISTLES.

Danny captures it all on camera.

BING BONG!

MR. WINSTON (CONT'D)

We've got a great show for you
today. There will be dancing.
There will be singing. There will
be...twerking?

Peyton's PARENTS cheer in the front row.

MR. WINSTON (CONT'D)

Yes, well. Please, a round of
applause for our judges! Mr.
Montgomery, the boy's grade six
basketball coach!

The boy's basketball team stands, high fiving each other.

MR. WINSTON (CONT'D)

Mrs. Clarkson, our ESL teacher!

Children of different ethnicities rise and cheer.

MR. WINSTON (CONT'D)
And our special guest, a Hollywood
celebrity, Mr. Pauly Shore!

PAULY Shore waves to the audience. A few people clap.

MR. WINSTON (CONT'D)
And remember parents, the winner
will not only advance to the
Regional Talent Show, but they will
also receive an automatic 'A+' in
Arts, which will be applied to
their overall grade average!

BACKSTAGE

Sam and Violet watch eagerly with anticipation.

VIOLET
I see my parents!

Sam looks down. He knows his parents won't be there.

BEGIN TALENT SHOW MONTAGE

Various kids perform their acts to cheers and applause.

Peyton does a very inappropriate Miley Cyrus routine a la
Little Miss Sunshine. Her Parents cheer. Teachers gasp.

END MONTAGE

BACKSTAGE

As Peyton walks past Sam she gets in his face.

PEYTON
Good luck topping that, Dumbini!

ON THE STAGE

MR. WINSTON
Wasn't that just fantastic?

The crowd erupts.

MR. WINSTON (CONT'D)
Okay, and now, our final act.
Please welcome to the stage... The
Great Sambini!

The kids in the audience groan.

BACKSTAGE

Sam is frozen.

VIOLET

Sam?

SAM

I can't do it. Aunt Gemma was right. Magic isn't for everybody.

VIOLET

Oh really?!

ON THE STAGE

The principal squirms.

MR. WINSTON

...Ah, the Great Sambini?!

The audience whispers, growing impatient.

BACKSTAGE

VIOLET

We can do this. Just like in the garage. You can do anything you set your mind to. Remember?

SAM

You listen to me?

Just then, Gemma steps out of the shadows.

GEMMA

Sammy? I have something Jackson would've wanted you to have.

Gemma gives Sam a box. He lifts off the top.

SAM

Holy crapoly!

Sam pulls out an official looking magic hat and cape.

SAM (CONT'D)

Was this Uncle Jackson's?

GEMMA

Yes, it was, sweetie. He can't wear it now, but you can. And you deserve to look your best when you win this talent show.

Sam throws his arms around Gemma.

SAM

I love you, Auntie Gemma.

GEMMA

I love you too, sweetie! Now go, break a leg, or whatever they say!

Sam looks to Violet. She nods. They are ready.

ON THE STAGE

The curtain rises, revealing Sam and Violet.

The audience claps here and there, but nothing crazy.

SAM

My name, is...

Sam looks out to the audience. So many people.

SAM (CONT'D)

My... my name is...

Violet smiles to the audience, as her eyes turn to Sam.

VIOLET

(through her teeth)

You can do this....

Just then, the theatre doors open, and GARY and MELISSA, 30s, full on magician outfits, run down the aisle towards the front row of the theatre.

Everybody turns and looks.

SAM

Dad! Mom!

GARY

We're here son!

MELISSA

We're so proud of you!

The audience AWWWWS as Gary and Melissa take their seats.

Sam steels himself.

SAM
My name is the Great Sambini, and
I'd like to show you a few magic
tricks. Are you ready to be
amazed?

Sam removes his top hat and places it upside down on a table.

SAM (CONT'D)
Violet, can you tell the audience
if there is anything in my hat?

VIOLET
Nope, it's empty, Mr. Sambini!

SAM
That's right, it's empty.

He tips the hat to the crowd, then puts it back on the table.

Sam waves a magic wand above the hat.

SAM (CONT'D)
Abracadabra, Alakazam!

Sam reaches into the hat and pulls out Copper!

The audience laughs.

SAM (CONT'D)
Well, it's not exactly a rabbit.

VIOLET
Oops, I forgot my glasses!

Violet puts a pair of thick glasses on. The audience laughs.

SAM
Alright, Copper, you can watch the
show from over here.

Sam places Copper on a special red velvet stand, next to
three orange plastic balls.

As Sam walks back to the table, THE ORANGE BALLS FLOAT INTO
THE AIR AND ORBIT AROUND COPPER! The audience gasps.

Violet points to the balls.

VIOLET
Sambini, I, I --

SAM
-- What? Is there something behind
me?

Gary and Melissa exchange looks of amazement, pride and confusion.

STUDENTS in the audience yell at Sam to look behind him.

STUDENT 1
Behind you!

STUDENT 2
It's the ferret! He's juggling!

Sam whips around, and at the same time the orange balls drop from the air and land on the floor. They roll off the stage.

SAM
What the?

The crowd laughs. Danny Cho runs to pick up the balls.

Peyton glares as she watches from behind the curtain.

BACKSTAGE

Frank taps Peyton on the shoulder.

FRANK
Hi.

She turns around, sees Frank, and SCREAMS.

ON THE STAGE

Peyton's scream can be heard throughout the theatre. The audience covers their ears, including Peyton's Parents.

Sam continues with the show. He picks up Copper and puts him on the ground. Copper scampers off stage.

Violet climbs onto the table.

SAM
And now, for my final trick, I will
levitate my lovely assistant,
Violet, into the air!

Sam's parents look worried.

Gemma joins them in the empty seat next to them.

GARY
(to Gemma)
Can he do that?

GEMMA
I don't know! He's been full of
surprises this week!

Sam looks to Copper, but he's gone!

SAM
(to Violet)
Copper's gone!

VIOLET
It's okay. Just like we practiced.

Uneasy, Sam picks up the hula hoop.

BACKSTAGE

Copper has wandered into the metal Faraday cage, which Sam used to bring him to the show. He nibbles some treats.

Frank stands guard over Copper. A few kids try to approach.

FRANK
No pawtographs until after the
show.

ON THE STAGE

Sam looks out to see his family. He sees Danny Cho filming him. He sees the crowd, silent with anticipation.

Sam closes his eyes. He waves his wand.

SAM
Abracadabra!

The audience gasps.

VIOLET
Sam!

Sam opens his eyes.

VIOLET HAS LEVITATED A FOOT ABOVE THE TABLE!

He did it! Sam pushes the table aside, then using the hula hoop, passes it over Violet's body.

SAM
No wires here, folks!

The crowd stands on their feet!

CHEERS! APPLAUSE! WHISTLES!

Violet lowers back to the ground and gives Sam a big hug.

VIOLET
You did it!

SAM
Oh really?

Copper comes running out to join them. Sam picks up Copper. The three take a bow. As the curtain lowers, they hurry off stage. Mr. Winston walks back out.

MR. WINSTON
Wasn't that just amazing? Wow,
when I was nine years old I could
barely ride a bicycle.

The jury members hold up signs. 10's across the board.

MR. WINSTON (CONT'D)
No need to deliberate on that one
folks, we have our winners! The
Great Sambini, Violet, Copper, get
back out here!

Sam, Copper and Violet return to the stage. They shake Mr. Winston's hand.

MR. WINSTON (CONT'D)
Congratulations, you two!

SAM
Thank you!

VIOLET
Thank you!

Copper chirps.

BACKSTAGE

Peyton grabs Mr. Winston's arm on his way out.

PEYTON

Mr. Winston, clearly they were cheating! That ferret has magic powers!

Frank appears.

FRANK

The ferret was inside the Faraday cage when they performed the trick, so if he does have any special powers, he wouldn't have been able to use them.

MR. WINSTON

Well, there, now you see Peyton? The ferret was in a Faraday cage so it couldn't use its special powers.

Realizing the oddness of what he just said, Mr. Winston shakes his head and walks away.

PEYTON

But, Mr. Winston!

Peyton runs after him.

Sam's parents rush in and give him a big hug.

MELISSA

That was amazing, Sam!

GARY

Good show, Sam!

SAM

I thought you weren't going to make it!

MELISSA

When your Aunt called and told us you would be performing, we knew we couldn't miss it.

GARY

Do you still want to go to Magic Camp?

SAM

Can I bring Copper?

Violet passes Copper to Sam.

GARY

Well, I don't know about that Sam. Taking care of a pet is a big responsibility.

MELISSA

Especially one with such, special skills?

FRANK

I can watch him for you.

Frank steps out from the shadows.

SAM

This is Frank, he's my friend.

MELISSA

You could take care of Copper?

FRANK

Oh yeah, I love animals. It would be my honor. And Sam can visit him anytime he wants.

GARY

What do you say, kiddo?

SAM

Copper, would that be okay with you?

Copper licks Sam's face. Gary holds Melissa close.

SAM (CONT'D)

I promise I'll visit you every day after school. And we can practice our magic together. And play all those ferret games. And we'll always, always be best friends. Forever.

Sam cries and hugs his furry friend goodbye. He passes him to Frank. Violet pats Copper on his head.

VIOLET

Bye Copper.

FRANK

Bye guys. See you soon.

Frank walks away with Copper.

EXT. SCHOOLYARD - SAME

Peyton sits on the grass, throwing rocks on the ground.

PEYTON
Stupid ferret.

Danny Cho sits next to Peyton with his xylophone.

PEYTON (CONT'D)
What do you want, Danny?

BING BONG! BING BONG!

Danny plays a few notes, then slides the xylophone over to share with Peyton. He hands her a mallet.

PEYTON (CONT'D)
Oh, alright.

Peyton bops a few notes. Danny smiles.

INT. SCIENCE LAB - LATER

General Miller looks around at all the empty cages.

He stands in front of Dr. Murray, locked in the cage with Ethel the gorilla.

GENERAL MILLER
Dr. Murray! What is the meaning of this?

DR. MURRAY
General! I can explain! But first, would you mind getting me out of here, please? The key is on the counter.

General Miller takes the key and unlocks the cage, freeing Dr. Murray.

The ape pushes her way out first and runs out the door.

GENERAL MILLER
Where's the specimen?

DR. MURRAY
It's a really funny story, actually.

Off the General's look.

INT. FRANK'S APARTMENT - DAY

Frank's apartment is loaded with all the telekinetic animals he freed from the lab. Random objects fly through the air!

There's chinchillas, rabbits, monkeys, guinea pigs, doves, a raccoon, a pig, several ferrets, puppies and kittens.

FRANK

No, no, no! Easy now. Not the porcelain babies!

Copper, wearing his red bow tie, hops up and down on the couch with glee. CHIRP CHIRP CHIRP!

EXT. TANNEN'S MAGIC CAMP - DAY

Sam's parent's station wagon is parked outside the main entrance to Tannen's Magic Camp, a large castle surrounded by rolling hills as far as the eye can see.

SUPER: ONE MONTH LATER

Kids say goodbye to their parents. They wear capes, top hats, and various odd costumes. Sam will fit right in here.

MELISSA

Okay, sweetie, are you sure you want to do this? You don't have to, you know.

SAM

I'm ready, Mom. I want to be the best magician ever. Like Dad.

GARY

What about David Copperfield?

SAM

He's pretty cool, too, I guess.

Gary pulls a rose from behind Sam's ear.

GARY

There you go. Now remember, you can call us every night. It's only one week.

SAM

I know, Dad.

MELISSA

We'll be here Friday to see you perform.

GARY

I guess you'll be needing this guy.

Gary opens the car door and Copper, wearing his red bow tie, hops out onto the ground. He's wearing a matching red harness.

Some kids notice the ferret and start to gather round to get a closer look.

SAM

I would never forget Copper! He's my assistant!

Sam picks up Copper and attaches a leash to his harness. He puts him back on the ground.

Gary and Melissa hug Sam goodbye.

SAM (CONT'D)

Bye Mom. Bye Dad.

MELISSA

I love you, sweet pea.

GARY

Love you, buddy.

SAM

I love you, too.

Sam walks with Copper towards the giant castle that is Magic Camp.

JUSTIN, a tall, blonde boy, 16, walks alongside Sam. He's wearing a t-shirt that says MAGIC CAMP ALUMNI.

JUSTIN

Hey cool, is that a ferret?

SAM

Yup, his name is Copper.

JUSTIN

Awesome. I'm Justin. Is this your first time at Magic Camp?

SAM

Yeah.

JUSTIN
You're gonna love it. I come here
every year. I'll show you around.

Gary and Melissa tear up as they watch Sam walk up the steps.

INT. CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Gary and Melissa buckle in.

GARY
Hey. Where's Jackson?

MELISSA
Uh. He was here a second ago...

Gary opens his sport jacket to reveal Jackson.

GARY
Here he is!

MELISSA
That never gets old.

GARY
You ready, brother?

JACKSON
See you next week!

Jackson flies out the car window.

EXT. TANNEN'S MAGIC CAMP - CONTINUOUS

Jackson soars over the castle grounds, giving us a true
bird's eye view of the Magic Camp.

Kids pull colored handkerchiefs from their mouths.

Juggling. Making balloon animals. Wearing silly costumes.

Jackson flies past the windows of new magician students,
signing in, being assigned their roommates. Justin showing
Sam and Copper into their dorm room. Sam's happy face.

Making new friendships that will last a lifetime.

David Copperfield's tour bus pulls up to the front entrance.

FADE OUT.