

FRANKENWEENIE

screenplay by

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WHIRS and HUMS. The screen flickers.

Splices pop through the gate.

And then, today's feature film:

***MONSTERS FROM BEYOND!***

The title card is made from cut cardboard, and very blurry.

MOM (O.S.)

Victor, I don't know that it's...

VICTOR (O.S.)

You have to wear the glasses.

MOM (O.S.)

Oh! Yes of course.

Thick frames slide past. Now we're looking at the title card in real 3D. It's very homemade, but charmingly done.

The next card:

***STARRING SPARKY***

DAD

That's you!

Reveal that we are...

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Victor's MOM and DAD share the couch with SPARKY THE DOG, 30-odd pounds of canine goodness. They're watching the homemade movie through vintage 3D glasses.

Behind them run two projectors, manned by the filmmaker himself, VICTOR. He's more mad scientist than film auteur -- he built this twin projector system himself.

ON SCREEN

Sparky wears a foam fin on his back as he walks through a metropolis made of cardboard and found objects.

ANGLE ON MOM

MOM

Victor, so that's where my  
candlestick went.

DAD

I've been looking for those golf  
tees.

BACK TO THE SCREEN

Sparky-saur turns, seeing a PTERODACTYL (a plastic toy on  
fishing line) flying down from a nearby mountain.

In CLOSE UP, the Pterodactyl's eyes glow menacingly,  
Christmas bulbs flashing.

Defending the city, Sparky-saur jumps up and attacks the  
Pterodactyl, shaking it in his mouth.

ANGLE ON SOFA

(The real) Sparky BARKS at the screen, hopping up on the  
back of the couch, casting a silhouette on the screen.

DAD

You tell him, Sparky!

Suddenly, one of the projectors JAMS on a splice. The  
film melts, then the tail WHIPS AROUND, getting snared in  
the second projector's reel. The two machines SMASH  
TOGETHER in a shower of sparks.

MOM

Oh! Oh my!

Victor YANKS the power cord from the wall. The bulb  
dims. The spinning stops.

Darkness for a moment, then Victor flicks on the light  
switch.

MOM

It was certainly exciting!

DAD

Yeah, big finish!

VICTOR

I can fix it. C'mon boy!

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE / STAIRWELL - DAY

Victor lugs the two projector upstairs. Sparky follows behind.

DAD (O.S.)

All that time he spends up there.  
A boy his age needs to be outside  
with his friends.

MOM (O.S.)

I don't know that Victor has  
friends, dear. Other than Sparky.

DAD (O.S.)

When I was his age, I had lots of  
friends. We'd play baseball until  
dark.

INT. BEDROOM HALLWAY - DAY

Victor pulls down the trapdoor and climbs up the ladder-like stairs into the attic. Sparky is right behind.

MOM (O.S.)

When I was his age, I read books.  
By myself, in my room.

DAD (O.S.)

That's my point! We don't want  
him to turn out, y'know, weird.

MOM (O.S.)

There's nothing wrong with Victor.  
He's just in his own world.

MUSIC RISES as we finally enter...

INT. ATTIC WORKSHOP - DAY

MAIN TITLES begin, the words tucked in and around the fabulous inventions that cram every corner of this sloped-roof wonderland.

Victor disassembles the projectors, nimbly swapping pieces in and out.

A plume of smoke rises off the tip of a soldering iron.

Sparky happily trots on a little treadmill Victor designed. He stops to scratch himself and slides out of frame. He bounds back a second later.

Victor finishes his tinkering and patching. Splices the broken film.

As he smiles, we sweep in front of the light. The FLARE brings us to...

EXT. TOWN - MORNING

In a VERY WIDE SHOT, we establish the suburban paradise of New Holland. It's a sea of cookie-cutter houses on cul-de-sac'd streets named after trees.

The town comes complete with its own ersatz Dutch windmill, which lazily turns on the hillside above.

A BIKE-RIDING PAPERBOY delivers the morning news.

EXT. VICTOR'S HOUSE / STREET - MORNING

Sparky picks up the newspaper in his mouth, then trots back to the house, where Victor is waiting.

VICTOR

Morning, Mr. Burgemeister!

Next-door neighbor BURGEMEISTER retrieves his own paper. The Mayor of New Holland, Burgemeister is slightly OCD and largely insufferable.

BURGEMEISTER

Your mutt has been sniffing around my Dutch Dazzlers. And the other day I caught him peeing on my flamingo.

VICTOR

I'll keep an eye on him.

BURGEMEISTER

You better, or I'll get you -- and your little dog too.

He thinks he's clever quoting the "Wizard of Oz" -- but Victor doesn't get it.

VICTOR

Yes sir.

Victor heads inside.

Sparky trots after Victor. Their door shuts.

Burgemeister unfolds the newspaper to read the front page.

INSERT NEWSPAPER: The headline reads "MAYOR BURGERMEISTER TO KICK OFF DUTCH DAYS." A photo shows Mayor Burgemeister complete with sash and hat.

Burgemeister is pleased with the photo.

WIDER: A girl Victor's age tries to sneak out of the house behind Burgemeister.

This is ELSA VAN HELSING. She's a raven-haired fourth-grader with the soul of a poet.

With eyes in the back of his head...

BURGEMEISTER

And just where are you headed,  
Elsa?

She freezes.

ELSA

To school.  
(heading him off)  
I made my bed. And my lunch. I  
cleaned up the kitchen and folded  
the towels.

He turns to face her.

BURGEMEISTER

Aren't you the lucky one, getting  
to spend a few months with your  
fun uncle while your parents are  
away.

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ELSA

Yes sir.

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BURGEMEISTER

Have you been practicing your song  
for Dutch Days?

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ELSA

Yes sir.

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BURGEMEISTER

I haven't heard you practicing.

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ELSA

I sing in my head.

\*  
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BURGEMEISTER

Practice makes perfect, Elsa. We  
want everything to be perfect.

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He's finished. Has nothing more to say.

BURGEMEISTER

Off you go.

Elsa walks away, happy to be out of that conversation.

Burgemeister goes back to admiring his photo in the  
newspaper.

EXT. SCHOOL / BIKE RACKS - DAY

CLOSE ON Victor, kneeling as he locks his bike to the  
rack.

A SHADOW falls across him.

He looks up to see WEIRD GIRL standing over him. She has  
a fluffy white CAT in her arms, which she strokes idly  
like a James Bond villain.

WEIRD GIRL

Hello, Victor.

VICTOR

Hi.

WEIRD GIRL

Mr. Whiskers had a dream about you  
last night.

VICTOR

How do you know?

WEIRD GIRL

Because this morning, he made  
this.

She holds out what looks to be a small rope of dried  
clay, bent in shape of a V.

VICTOR

Did you get that out of the litter  
box?

WEIRD GIRL

It's an omen.

FLASH CUT:

EXT. VARIOUS LOCATIONS - DAY [PAST]

WEIRD GIRL (V.O.)

Last month he dreamed about Bob.

She shows BOB, a chubby classmate, a cat-poop 'B.'

In a STYLIZED, OVERLAPPING SPLIT-SCREEN, we see Bob walking down a sidewalk, eating an ice-cream cone.

WEIRD GIRL (V.O.)

That day he fell in a manhole.

Bob suddenly drops out of frame. TILT DOWN to see the open manhole.

WEIRD GIRL (V.O.)

He dreamed about Toshiaki the day he pitched a perfect game.

Weird Girl shows classmate TOSHIAKI a cat-poop 'T.'

Wearing a baseball cap, Toshiaki stares intently, ready to make his pitch.

WEIRD GIRL (V.O.)

...and Nassor the day he got knocked unconscious.

Nassor, an intense boy with sinister eyes, pulls down a catcher's mask. A slit of light on his eyes.

Toshiaki throws. The ball hits Nassor square on the mask, knocking him down.

Weird Girl's hand holds out a cat-poop 'e.'

WEIRD GIRL (V.O.)

Mr. Whiskers dreamed about E the day he got stuck in the claw machine.

E, a misfit boy with Peter Lorre's odd manner, is halfway stuck in a grab-a-prize claw machine. FIREFIGHTERS are trying to decide how to get him out.

BACK TO:



EXT. SCHOOL / BIKE RACKS - DAY

WEIRD GIRL

If Mr. Whiskers dreams of you, it means something big is going to happen.

She offers him the "V."

VICTOR

You can keep it.

The class bell RINGS. Side-stepping around her, Victor heads in to class.

She holds the cat to her face.

WEIRD GIRL

One day you'll dream about me, won't you kitty?

Mr. Whiskers offers nothing.

She tucks the cat into her backpack and heads in.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

MR. RZYKRUSKI stands at the blackboard, where he's written his name. He has a thick, impossible-to-place accent, somewhere between a Russian spy and Dracula.

MR. RZYKRUSKI

I am Mr. Rzykruski. I will your new science teacher. Apparently, Mr. Holcum had an incident.

Elsa interjects:

ELSA

He got hit by lightning.

This is news to Mr. Rzykruski. The rest of the class, including Victor and every child we've met so far, already knew.

MR. RZYKRUSKI

Well. That is bad. But he did not get "hit by" lightning. Lightning does not hit a person, the way one is hit by a baseball or a cabbage.

On the blackboard, he draws a diagram to illustrate his point, starting with a big cloud.

MR. RZYKRUSKI

Lightning is simply electricity. The cloud is angry, yes, making storm. All the electrons are saying, "I am leaving you. I go to land of opportunity."

He draws the ground beneath it.

MR. RZYKRUSKI

The ground says, "Yes, we need electrons trained in science just like you. Come! Come!" So both sides start to build a ladder.

(drawing stick figure)

This man, he comes out to look at the storm. He does not see the invisible ladders. When the two ladders meet, BOOM! The circuit is complete and all of the electrons rush to the land of opportunity. This man is in the way. Yiii!

He draws "shock lines" all around the stick figure. It's pretty violent.

All of the students are watching in wide-eyed wonder.

Realizing that he may have gone overboard...

MR. RZYKRUSKI

But is very rare to have such incident.

Victor raises his hand.

VICTOR

But it's not rare. People get hit by...

(correcting himself)

Lightning happens to people all the time here.

ELSA

There's a thunderstorm almost every night.

BOB

My dad got hit twice.

TOSHIAKI/WEIRD GIRL/NASSOR  
They built New Holland on an  
abandoned gold mine...

WEIRD GIRL/TOSHIAKI/NASSOR  
I heard it was a cemetery.

TOSHIAKI/WEIRD GIRL/NASSOR  
That's where they buried the  
miners.

NASSOR/TOSHIAKI  
It's the windmill that does it.

REVEAL a view of the windmill through the classroom  
window.

We PUSH IN on Nassor, the intense look in his eyes.

NASSOR/TOSHIAKI  
Turning, turning the air until the  
sky itself rages against the  
night.

A beat.

WEIRD GIRL  
No. Cemetery. Definitely.

EXT. BACK YARD - DAY

Sparky plays with a tennis ball. As he plays, the ball  
rolls through a broken plank in the bottom of the fence.  
He leans down to peer through.

SPARKY'S POV: The ball is just out of reach. Then it is  
suddenly gone, snatched away by other jaws.

He BARKS.

Another dog BARKS BACK.

Surprised, Sparky backs off. There's not usually a dog  
next door.

He BARKS.

An ANSWERING BARK.

He SNIFFS the fence thoroughly. As he reaches the broken  
plank, his nose touches ANOTHER DOG'S NOSE.

He jumps back.

Lies low in the grass to peer through.

On the other side of the fence is a similarly-sized poodle named PERSEPHONE -- Elsa's dog. She's beautiful.

She drops the ball on the grass, staring back.

Sparky suddenly rolls over on his back, completely submissive.

Persephone grabs the ball and runs away.

Sparky pops up, looking after her.

INT. CLASS - DAY

The bell RINGS. Students head for the door.

MR. RZYKRUSKI

On your way out, take a permission slip.

Toshiaki takes a form. Reads it.

TOSHIAKI

Wait -- science fair?

NASSOR

Only seventh graders are allowed to enter the science fair.

MR. RZYKRUSKI

This is ridiculous rule. There is no age limit on the making of a great scientist. Newton was only five when he discovered, after eating a bad chicken dinner, that what goes down must come up.

They are intrigued but don't understand.

BOB

(per the form)

First prize is a year's worth of ice cream!

VICTOR

You're saying we can enter this year?

MR. RZYKRUSKI

I'm saying you can win.

EXT. TOWN - DAY

Victor walks his bike. E walks backward in front of him, pleading at sonic speed.

E

You'll be my partner for the science fair, right, Victor? Because you have to have a partner and Toshiaki will pick Bob and Nassor is scary so you don't want him and you don't want a girl because girls have lame ideas like which cat is cuter. So pick me as a partner. I have lots of ideas. We could make a death ray!

VICTOR

It says no death rays. See?

WHIP ZOOM in on the permission slip, which lists all the prohibited projects, including explosives, lasers, nuclear devices and death rays.

E

Ah, man.  
(and yet...)  
C'mon. Who else would be your partner? You don't have friends and neither do I.

He has a point. Victor gives in.

VICTOR

You couldn't touch anything. You could only watch. From this far back.

E is overjoyed.

E

Secret partner handshake?

VICTOR

No.

INT. DINING ROOM - DAY

Sparky is under the table, chewing on a bone.

Dad is examining the permission slip. Mom is bringing food in from the kitchen -- they're having fondue.

DAD

Victor, have we talked about what I do for a living?

VICTOR

You're a travel agent.

DAD

I sell dreams. I tell people, you can sail to Italy. You can do the hula in Hawaii.

VICTOR

Will you sign my form?

DAD

I'm getting to that.

VICTOR

It's just...Okay.

Dad picks up two long fondue forks, using them to illustrate his point.

DAD

In my job, sometimes you have people who don't want quite the same thing. Say the husband wants to play golf in Scotland, but the wife wants to paddle down the Amazon.

(holding forks apart)

It's my job to help them meet halfway. Say, Scottsdale, Arizona. He gets to golf, she gets Indians.

MOM

But there's no river. No jungle.

VICTOR

Nobody gets what they want.

DAD

Exactly. And wrong. They both get what they want because they compromise.

Dad skewers meat on his forks, continuing his metaphor. Victor is shrimp; Dad is beef.

DAD

You'd like to do this science fair. And that's great.

(MORE)

DAD (CONT'D)

I'd like you to try a sport. Say,  
baseball. Science fair, baseball.  
Science fair, baseball. How do  
you choose? Guess what? You  
don't have to. No reason you  
can't do both. We meet in the  
middle.

(bringing forks  
together)

Everyone's happy.

He puts both forks in the oil. We see them bubble and  
boil.

EXT. BASEBALL FIELD - DAY

Victor wipes the sweat off his forehead with his baseball  
mitt. He's one of five kids at practice. (The other  
boys on his team are E, Toshiaki, Bob, and Nassor.)

Toshiaki is pitching. Nassor is catching.

Victor's Dad is the head coach.

DAD

Look at what Toshiaki's doing.  
Keeping his eye on the target.  
Never losing his concentration.

Camera PANS to find Mr. Rzykruski -- who is simply in  
Victor's imagination.

We're beginning a MONTAGE that will cover many days.

MR. RZYKRUSKI

I want you to concentrate on the  
unanswered questions of science.

We see Victor concentrating and we dissolve to him being  
distracted on the baseball field. He stares at the dark  
clouds.

INT. ATTIC LABORATORY - DAY

On the chalkboard, Victor has written "storms,"  
"lightning," "New Holland" and "windmill" -- with arrows  
and question marks.

EXT. BASEBALL FIELD - DAY

Sparky is completely taken by the ball and his eyes follow it around the field.

A ball flies towards Victor who is not paying attention and it hits him in the head.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Mr. Rzykruski swirls a beaker of fluid.

MR. RZYKRUSKI

When conducting an experiment, trying is the important thing. It is OK to fail as long as you keep trying.

EXT. BASEBALL FIELD - DAY

Victor swings. And misses. Swings. And misses.

He finally gives up the bat to the next player. Sparky grabs the ball and brings it to dad.

DAD

Nice try son.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Mr. Rzykruski writes on the blackboard.

MR. RZYKRUSKI

(with rising excitement)

Your science fair project is due in precisely three hundred and forty-five thousand seconds, on the second night of the waxing gibbous moon which just happens to be the same day as the solar eclipse in Western Antigua and the anniversary of famed Russian scientist Mikhail Lomonosov's invention of the gas barometer...

He sees that he has completely lost his class. Except for one student -- Victor.

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MR. RZYKRUSKI  
Which is to say, next Friday.

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EXT. BASEBALL FIELD - DAY

Victor's Mom is in the stands for the big game -- along with all the kids we've met so far, and many of the adults. Elsa is there with her dog as well and Sparky and Persephone share a flirtatious glance.

Once again, Toshiaki is pitching and Nassor is catching.

This time when Victor swings -

He hits!

He almost forgets to run until Sparky BARKS at him.

Deep in the outfield, Bob is eating a candy bar when the ball suddenly beans him on the top of the head. He falls back, stunned.

The ball rolls out of the park.

Sparky goes after it, his stubby legs bounding.

EXT. STREET - DAY

The ball rolls into the street and Sparky manages to grab it in his mouth.

Proud of himself, Sparky turns to look back at Victor. Just then...

A CAR

SCREECHES up at him. Sparky reacts. We CUT AWAY as the car hits.

EXT. BASEBALL FIELD - DAY

Every player, every kid, every parent is stunned. Horrified. We end CLOSE ON Victor.

VICTOR  
Sparky!

CUT TO BLACK

EXT. PET CEMETERY - EVENING

Dad buries a wooden box. Victor watches at the grave side, devastated. His Mom and Dad give him a quiet moment to grieve.

MOM (O.S.)

He was a great dog. A great friend.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BEDROOM - EVENING

Victor lies in bed, staring up at the ceiling. Mom and Dad sit on the edge of the bed, trying to comfort him.

DAD

The best dog a kid could have.

MOM

When you lose someone you love, they never really leave you. They just move into a special place in your heart. He'll always be there, Victor.

VICTOR

I don't want him in my heart. I want him here, with me.

MOM

I know. If we could bring him back, we would.

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY

Persephone nudges the tennis ball through the gap in the fence. She's waiting for Sparky.

Disappointed, she leaves the ball and slowly walks away.

INT. ATTIC WORKSHOP - EVENING

In his attic workshop, Victor is finishing work on his projector. He threads the film and starts it playing.

Sparky-saurus is attacking the Pterodactyl. Victor smiles for a moment, then the sadness returns.

Victor lays his head on his workbench.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. CLASS - DAY

Back at School Victor is despondent. Unable to concentrate, he doodles pictures of Sparky in his notebook and barely listens to the lecture. Elsa notices that Victor is still not himself.

In today's lesson, Mr. Ryzkruski has a dead frog on display and begins to hook an electrode to its leg.

MR. RZYKRUSKI

Just like lightning, the nervous system is electricity. We are wires and springs and cables to send the messages. "Foot! Foot! Move! You are standing in the fire!"

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The wiring is attached to a small box that can generate an electric charge.

Elsa is sensitive to how this lecture may affect Victor and she glances over to see how he is doing. He is still not really engaged and doesn't seem to have registered Mr Ryzkruski's reference to death.

MR. RZYKRUSKI

Even after death, the wiring remains. Watch as the muscles respond to the electricity.

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Mr Ryzkruski now attaches the electrode to the frog's leg and, with a flip of a switch, turns on the electricity -

The frog leg jumps up as if alive!

And so does Victor.

MR. RZYKRUSKI

Electricity is dangerous, yes. But it is also key to life.

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He looks back and forth between Mr. Ryzkruski's demonstration and his doodle of Sparky. An idea.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Victor runs through the street on his way home.

EXT. VICTOR'S HOUSE - DAY

He runs into the garage and grabs a whole lot of tools, gear and equipment.

INT. VICTOR'S HOUSE - DAY

Victor raids the kitchen for some household appliances. Mom sits on the couch reading and only barely registers what he is up to.

EXT. PET CEMETERY - NIGHT

A full moon. HOOTING owls.

Over the top of the fence, we see a shovel blade moving past.

The shovel digs into the soft earth. Again. And again.

Victor is digging up Sparky's grave. It's tough work, especially because he's trying to be quiet.

A black cat perches on a nearby gravestone. SCREECHES.

Spooked, Victor waves him off.

He's uncovered the box. He opens it and loads a wrapped bundle into a wheelbarrow.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Victor's parents are sitting on the couch, eating popcorn and watching a movie. Though the movie isn't really scary, Mom looks for any excuse to snuggle closer to her husband. He playfully encourages it and puts his arm around her to pull her closer.

MOM

I can't watch. It's too scary.

DAD

Don't worry, I'm here to protect you.

As Victor sneaks behind them, carrying the wrapped corpse, he inadvertently knocks into a lamp causing it to flicker.

Dad turns and sees what's back there but can't see Victor who is hiding, frozen, just out of sight.

Dad turns back to the TV.

Relieved, Victor tiptoes past them, heading for the stairs.

INT. ATTIC LABORATORY - NIGHT

EXTREMELY CLOSE ON the eye of a needle. Thread pushes through.

Victor is making repairs to Sparky's corpse. We don't see any of it directly, just shadows on the wall.

Victor rips a piece of duct tape.

He rummages through a bucket of nuts and screws, picking two oversized bolts.

He places Sparky onto Mom's ironing board and pushes it directly under the skylight. The storm is just reaching a fever pitch.

As HOPEFUL MUSIC rises, Victor climbs a ladder out the window where we see that he has attached his metal swing set to the roof. Victor checks the wind direction and lets fly two balloons attached to the umbrella and fastens the ends to the swing set. This will serve as the conductor.

EXT. BURGEMEISTER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Burgemeister is drawing his drapes shut when he sees the movement on the Frankenstein roof. He can't make out Victor, but it's enough to make him suspicious.

INT. ATTIC LABORATORY - NIGHT

Victor climbs down and checks his notes and his equipment.

We see a whole host of household items that Victor has repurposed to become part of his elaborate apparatus.

- A series of Mom's colanders and pans and appliances,
- an old fish tank,
- some bobbing Christmas reindeer

all serve as unlikely components of his grand experiment.

He has also erected a series of pulleys so that he can hoist Sparky up through the sky light.

Victor can hear the storm raging and knows that it is now or never. He pets Sparky's lifeless form one last time for courage.

VICTOR

I love you, boy.

He turns to an old Schwinn bicycle mounted on a stand and starts the wheels spinning. One by one the appliances start to whir and come alive.

Victor then begins to hoist Sparky up through the sky light. The rain is beating down and the lightning getting more intense.

The metal table finally reaches his resting spot under the swing set.

Now all he can do is wait. He watches the storm intently, silently urging Zeus' thunderbolts to strike.

He doesn't notice his hair rising up on end. Or how the other nuts and bolts on his workbench are suddenly pulled upright.

And then...

CRACK!

A jagged finger of light touches the top of the balloons, racing down the cord and into the attic -

Zapping Sparky with a thousand volts.

He removes his swim goggles, and springs right to action cranking down the metal table, eager to see if it worked.

All of the appliances power down and grind to a halt. The room goes silent.

He swings the table over to the workbench.

Wearing a stethoscope, he listens for a heartbeat. Hearing nothing, he keeps checking. But he eventually realizes it is all for naught.

He lays his head down on the workbench, letting out exhausted, sniffly tears.

VICTOR

I'm sorry, boy.

A beat.

Another. Then...

A TONGUE licks his face.

Victor sits up, bewildered. It's Sparky, still half-wrapped in the blanket. And, strictly speaking, still dead. But it's no time to quibble...

VICTOR

You're alive!

Sparky BARKS twice. As Victor hugs him, Sparky's tail wags so enthusiastically that it flies clear across the room.

VICTOR

I can fix that.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Victor's Mom opens the door to find Victor's bed empty. Pretty sure where he must be...

MOM

Victor! Breakfast!

INT. ATTIC WORKSHOP - DAY

Victor was sleeping on the floor, sharing a blanket with Sparky. He sits up, rubbing his eyes.

MOM (O.S.)

Victor? Are you up here?

Victor hears his Mom climbing the steps and panics.

Looking around for somewhere to hide Sparky, he finally grabs a big tin bucket, part of the set dressing for his monster movie. He puts it over Sparky.

The door opens.

MOM

French toast or waffles?

VICTOR

Waffles.

MOM

Then I'll need my waffle iron  
back, Mr. Director.

Spotting her waffle iron amid the leftover set  
decoration, she heads right for Sparky. The bucket  
suddenly moves, shifting away.

She looks at Victor. Thinking quick:

VICTOR

It's my science project. It's a  
robot.

MOM

A robotic bucket?

VICTOR

Yes.

MOM

For mopping, I suppose.

VICTOR

Yes.

MOM

Maybe when you're finished, you'll  
let me use it.

She takes her waffle iron and heads back downstairs.

Victor shuts the door behind her, then lifts the bucket  
off Sparky.

VICTOR

Sorry, boy, but I can't let anyone  
know about you. They might not  
understand. You need to stay here  
today.

Victor heads out the door. We hear it locking with a  
key.

Sparky rests his head on his paws, dejected.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

Victor's Dad backs the car out of the driveway, waving  
and honking to Victor as he heads down the sidewalk.

Still walking, Victor looks up at the open attic window,  
nervous to be leaving Sparky alone.



BURGEMEISTER

Watch it, there!

Victor stops, realizing he's stepped off the sidewalk, and has almost nudged the edge of one of Burgemeister's tulips.

VICTOR

I'm sorry.

Burgermeister glares at him suspiciously. He doesn't trust this kid and suspects that something weird is going on.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY [LATER]

Mom is vacuuming while reading a book. She's quite practiced at it.

INT. ATTIC WORKSHOP - DAY

Sparky is drinking from his water bowl. As he does, water leaks from his seams.

He hears a LONG MEOW.

It's Weird Girl's Cat. It's perched in the open attic window.

Sparky BARKS at it. The cat looks a little more weirded out than usual.

Mom switches off the vacuum. Did she hear barking?

MOM

No. Couldn't be.

She starts up the vacuum again.

INT. ATTIC WORKSHOP - DAY

Sparky jumps up on a chair, then onto the workbench. Lunges for the cat --

EXT. HOUSE / ROOF - DAY

-- and goes right through the window. He lands on the steeply-sloped roof and slides down the shingles, falling...

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

...right past the picture window. Fortunately, Mom doesn't see him. Though she does look up from her book and her vacuuming.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

Sparky emerges from the bushes. One of his back legs is dislocated, jutting out as if he were peeing on a tree. He tries to shake it down, to no avail.

Finally, he rolls over a few times on the grass until it's back in place.

He looks at the house, trying to figure out how he'll get back up to the attic.

Just then, Dad's car pulls up in front of the house. Sparky dashes for the bushes.

Dad heads up the front walk. RINGS the doorbell. This strikes Sparky as odd.

The door opens.

DAD

Good morning, Ma'am. I'm a traveling book salesman, and wondered if I could interest you a novel. Perhaps something in the romantic genre.

MOM

Oh my.

Dad steps in. The door shuts behind him.

Sparky is perplexed.

He turns to find the cat directly behind him. It HISSES and dashes away.

Sparky chases after it.

EXT. BURGEMEISTER'S YARD - DAY

Sparky chases the cat through the tulips, smashing them.

The cat bounds atop one of Burgermeister's flamingos safely out of Sparky's reach -- but the single standing leg starts to buckle. The cat runs into the bushes and into narrow crack below the house.

Sparky shrugs and keeps walking.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET / SIDEWALK - DAY

Two MOMS are talking, one of whom has a BABY in a stroller. We never see the women's faces, just their shoes and hemlines.

FIRST WOMAN

Helen said she thought they were putting up some kind of satellite dish on the roof.

SECOND WOMAN

In the middle of a thunderstorm?

Neither mother notices as Sparky trots by, but the baby is delighted, clapping her hands.

The baby's rattle drops.

Sparky picks it up in his mouth and hands it back.

Seeing Sparky up close, the baby is horrified. It SCREAMS.

Sparky runs off before the moms can get a good look.

EXT. BEHIND THE SCHOOL - DAY

In Victor's gym class, they're learning how to perform the maypole dance. Each student holds a very long ribbon, attached at one end to a tall pole.

The GYM TEACHER is a woman in her forties, with a clipboard and whistle.

GYM TEACHER

The Maypole is one of New Holland's oldest traditions, dating back to the founding of the town almost ten years ago. It's important it be perfect.

As MUSIC plays, the students have to circle in opposite directions, passing over and under, weaving their ribbons around the pole. It's very complicated, and easy to mess up.

Victor keeps looking back at the pole, making sure his ribbon is doing the right thing. He slams face-first into Elsa.

VICTOR  
(grunt)

ELSA  
Owww!

VICTOR  
Sorry.

GYM TEACHER  
Keep going!

Victor scrambles to catch up to where he should be, but can't remember if he's supposed to go over or under Nassor. He ends up doing both.

He's facing the wrong direction when he gets to Toshiaki, then trips over Bob. Trying to get out of the way, E spins the opposite direction.

The ribbon wraps around his neck, and E finds himself hoisted off the ground, gasping for breath.

He'd be strangled if it weren't for quick work by Elsa Van Helsing, who grabs a clip from the Weird Girl's hair and uses it to slash through the ribbon around E's neck.

E drops to the ground, GASPING for breath.

GYM TEACHER  
Why don't you go to the nurse's office, Edgar?

E nods and heads towards the school.

GYM TEACHER  
The rest of you, reset!

The class GROANS.

EXT. NEAR THE SCHOOL - DAY

E is almost at the school doors when he spots Sparky bounding past.

Sparky stops short. Looks right at E.

E's eyes narrow. Isn't Sparky supposed to be dead?

Sparky runs off.

We end on a shot of E, hatching a plan.

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY

Sparky has made it home and sits exhausted in the shade of a big tree.

A FAT FLY buzzes around, finally landing on the tip of Sparky's nose, perhaps thinking the dog is a corpse.

Sparky looks at the fly, cross-eyed.

Then Sparky's tongue flicks up and grabs the fly. Swallowing him.

Sparky noses up, smelling something. Looks back to see Persephone the poodle, who is watching him cautiously. She seems to know that he's not-quite-alive.

Sparky rolls over, submissive, but the jagged stitches on his belly only freak her out more.

Finally, she regains her confidence and begins sniffing him more closely, focusing on the bolts sticking out of his neck. She licks one, getting a mild ZAP.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

Victor runs home after school. As he opens the front door, Sparky emerges from the bushes, following Victor inside.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Mom is lying on the couch, reading one of her books.

MOM

Hi Victor. How was school?

VICTOR

GoodGottaGo.

He's headed up the stairs. Sparky follows a few steps behind, careful not to be noticed.

INT. ATTIC WORKSHOP - DAY

Victor unlocks the door and enters, looking for...

VICTOR

Sparky?

Hearing no answer, he walks in further. He checks under Sparky's blanket.

Sparky sneaks in behind him. Nudges his leg.

VICTOR

There you are. Good boy!

Victor hugs him.

VICTOR

Sorry you had to stay here alone  
all day.

Sparky just keeps panting, not revealing a thing.

INT. ATTIC WORKSHOP - DAY [LATER]

Victor measures Sparky's voltage with a meter.

VICTOR

You're a little low. Are you  
hungry, boy?

Sparky nods eagerly.

Victor runs an extension cord from the wall to a socket on Sparky's thigh. As he plugs him in, Sparky's eyes glow a bit.

The DOORBELL RINGS.

MOM (O.S.)

Victor! It's your little friend.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

Victor opens the front door to find E. Victor's Mom is in the living room, still reading her book. Close enough that she might be able to hear their conversation.

VICTOR

Sorry, I can't work on the project  
today.

E  
I know.

VICTOR  
Oh.

E  
I know.

VICTOR  
Know what?

E  
You know.

VICTOR  
No.

E  
I think I know what you know I  
know.

VICTOR  
I don't know what you think I  
know, but I don't know it.

E  
Your dog is alive.

Victor pulls the door a little further shut so his Mom  
won't hear.

VICTOR  
That's impossible.

E  
I know. But you did it.

Victor stalls, trying to think of an explanation.

E  
So show me how, or I'll tell  
everyone.

INT. ATTIC WORKSHOP - DAY

Still plugged in, Sparky hops up on a chair, watching as  
Victor diagrams his findings on the chalkboard for E.  
It's a mess of symbols and variables, all connected by  
arrows.

VICTOR

I think the wind and the lightning are part of the same thing, some kind of strange force. But the wind isn't strong enough to bring an animal back from the dead. For that, you need lightning.

E

So when can I do it?

VICTOR

You can't.

E

We're partners!

VICTOR

This isn't an experiment. It's my dog.

E

Show and tell: you show me and I won't tell. So show me how.

INT. PET STORE - DAY

TILTING UP from a tank of swimming goldfish, we reveal the PET STORE OWNER.

PET STORE OWNER

Can I help you young man?

It's E.

E

I'd like to buy a fish.

PET STORE OWNER

Certainly. Which one?

E

This one.

He points to one floating belly-up at the top of the tank. Of the Owner's odd look...

INT. ATTIC WORKSHOP - NIGHT

E plops the dead fish into a small jar of water, already attached to electrodes and the metal table.



Sparky hops up on the table, sniffing it.

VICTOR

Down, boy.

Sparky jumps off as Victor and E crank the gears, opening the roof to the stormy night sky. The table rises into position as the lightning rod telescopes out.

E

What do we do now?

E's hair suddenly rises up on end.

Victor grabs him and throws him to the floor.

CRACK! BOOM!

Lightning SURGES down the pole, sparking and bubbling the water.

Sparky hides.

Victor cranks down the metal table. The roof doors fold shut.

CLOSE ON E as he looks into the little jar.

The fish is gone.

E

What happened to it? What did you do?

VICTOR

I don't know. It should have worked.

Victor leans in to look close. Suddenly, the water ripples. A PLOP.

Then the jar RATTLES AROUND on its rim, knocked about from within.

Following a hunch, Victor finds a steampunk-ish flashlight he's developed, with different lenses that spin in front of the bulb. He dims the overhead light, and flips on his flashlight.

As he holds it close to the jar, we see a fish skeleton and veins swimming around. But you can only see it under certain light.

VICTOR  
 (in wonderment)  
 It's invisible. An invisible  
 goldfish.

E  
 Why is it invisible?

Victor looks back at his blackboard full of figures and  
 variables.

VICTOR  
 I have no idea.

EXT. FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

The nightly storm has ended. It's now just a bit of  
 distant RUMBLING.

E is carrying the jar with the invisible goldfish.

VICTOR  
 You can't tell anyone. You  
 understand that, right? Not until  
 we figure out how it works.

E  
 Okay! Okay!

VICTOR  
 Promise.

E  
 Promise.

CUT TO:

EXT. TOSHIAKI'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Toshiaki and Bob, both wearing pajamas and carrying  
 flashlights, examine E's jar with healthy skepticism.

TOSHIAKI  
 How are we supposed to see an  
 invisible goldfish?

E  
 Put your finger in. You can feel  
 it.

Toshiaki and Bob trade a look -- this feels like a prank.  
 But with a shrug, Bob does.

Nothing. He swirls his finger around.

And then...

BOB

Aaah!

He yanks his finger out.

BOB

It bit me.

TOSHIAKI

Let me see it.

Toshiaki takes the jar from E and presses his big flashlight right against the glass.

The invisible goldfish casts a shadow on the wall. In the shadow, you can see it actually has Jurassic-sized teeth. It's pretty scary.

E takes the jar back. Screws on the lid.

E

But you can't tell anybody. It's our science fair project, and it's top secret.

BOB

Yeah, well, our science fair project is even cooler.

E

What is it?

Bob and Toshiaki exchange a glance: they got nothin'.

CUT TO:

INT. TOSHIAKI'S GARAGE - NIGHT

Toshiaki and Bob take a critical look at their science fair project: SEA MONKEYS - THE TRUTH REVEALED!

It's impressive only for the number of popsicle sticks involved.

BOB

We gotta come up with something better. Bigger.

TOSHIAKI

I know.

BOB

The science fair is in two days!

TOSHIAKI

I know.

BOB

You're the smart one.

TOSHIAKI

I know! Let me think.

A long beat.

BOB

You got anything?

Toshiaki's eyes narrow. Bob backs off.

TRANSITION TO:

EXT. TOWN - DAY

A big Kellogg's sun rises over New Holland.

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - DAY

WORKMEN start to put up the massive tent and banners for "DUTCH DAY."

INT. ATTIC WORKSHOP - DAY

Victor ties up Sparky in the attic.

VICTOR

Sorry, boy. But we can't risk anyone seeing you again.

Victor plugs in the extension cord to the wall socket, then leaves.

Sparky lies down, head on his paws, sad and lonely.

EXT. SCHOOL - DAY [AFTERNOON]

As he unlocks his bike at the rack, E looks up to find Nassor waiting for him.

NASSOR

Toshiaki says you have an invisible fish.

E

No he doesn't.

NASSOR

So you don't?

E

I didn't say that. Who said I did?

NASSOR

Toshiaki says it's your science fair project.

E

If it was, I couldn't tell you.

NASSOR

So it isn't? Or is it?

E

No. Yes. I'm confused.

NASSOR

Do you have an invisible fish?

A beat.

E

Okay. But you have to keep it a secret.

He unzips his backpack, pulling out the jar of water. Unscrews the lid.

E

Swish your finger around. You can feel it.

Nassor dips his finger in the water, swirling it around.

NASSOR

It's just water. There's nothing there.

E

No, it's invisible, see?

E dips his own finger in, feeling for his toothy goldfish. He's puzzled when he can't find it.

E

Huh.

PUSHING IN ominously...

NASSOR

I don't know what kind of game you  
and Victor are playing. But that  
trophy will be mine.

A beat.

E

What trophy?

NASSOR

The science fair. There's a  
trophy. Or perhaps a ribbon.  
Either way...

PUSHING IN ominously again --

NASSOR

I intend to win it.

EXT. STREET - DAY

E pedals his bike hard, catching up to Victor. It's just  
the two of them.

E

Something's wrong with my fish.

VICTOR

What is it?

E

It's not there anymore.

VICTOR

Maybe it hopped out. Did you have  
the lid on?

E

Yes! Ever since...since I left  
your house. I mean, it was there  
when I went to bed.

Victor ponders the possibilities.

E

I'm thinking, maybe they don't  
last.

(MORE)

E (CONT'D)

Maybe they're like fireworks.  
They're only there for a little  
bit and then they're gone.

Suddenly panicked, Victor runs back to his house.

INT. HOUSE - DAY

Victor runs up the stairs.

INT. ATTIC WORKSHOP - DAY

Victor opens the door. His eyes go right to where he  
left Sparky tied up.

The rope is still there, attached to the collar. But his  
dog is gone.

VICTOR

No! Sparky!

A BARK.

WHIP PAN to find Sparky drinking out of his bowl. Water  
trickles out of his stitches, he doesn't seem to notice  
and keeps drinking thirstily.

He scratches his ear and it falls off.

Victor rushes over to him, picking him up for a hug.  
Sparky's not sure what all the drama is about but does  
seem slightly concerned with his lost ear.

VICTOR

Don't worry. I can fix that too.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Victor is in bed. He reaches under the bed to pat  
Sparky's head...

VICTOR

'Night, boy.

...then switches off the light.

Sparky's eyes are glowing, bright enough to cast shadows from under the bed. Sparky's eyelids blink once, twice, then slowly shut, making the room dark.

TRANSITION TO:

EXT. ROOF OF TOSHIAKI'S HOUSE - DAY

Bob is nervous. Looking back over his shoulder...

BOB

Are you sure this is going to work?

Toshiaki is shaking a soda bottle.

TOSHIAKI

No. That's why it's called an experiment. We have to collect data.

BOB

But do we have to collect it on me?

WIDER, we see that Bob is wearing a modified backpack. Lashed to it are nine two-liter containers of soda, caps pointing down, each with a pull-string. Toshiaki attaches the tenth and final bottle.

TOSHIAKI

Ready?

BOB

No.

TOSHIAKI

Ten. Nine. Eight.

BOB

We could use a test dummy or something.

TOSHIAKI

Seven. Six. Five.

BOB

Computer simulation.

TOSHIAKI

Four. Three. Two.



BOB

I have to pee.

TOSHIAKI

One.

Toshiaki yanks the cord. The soda BLASTS out the bottom of the jet-pack. Bob finds himself hovering in fits and starts and actually gets a bit airborne.

BOB

(incredulous)

It's working. It's working!

Toshiaki grabs his camera to document their success.

THROUGH THE LENS

we see Bob wave. He then drops from the frame.

THE BOTTLES

are almost empty, just leaking the last bit of soda.

Bob THUMPS twice on the roof, then tumbles off the edge.

Toshiaki looks down to find Bob sprawled on the grass. His arm is bent at an impossible angle.

Not sure what to do, Toshiaki takes a picture.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

A half-dozen NEIGHBORS and classmates have gathered to watch as Bob is loaded into an ambulance. His arm is already in a sling.

BOB'S MOTHER -- a hippo in a housedress -- is apoplectic:

BOB'S MOTHER

What were you boys doing on the roof!?

Bob and Toshiaki exchange a glance.

BOB AND TOSHIAKI

Science.

INT. SCHOOL ASSEMBLY ROOM - NIGHT

Burgemeister walks up to the podium. A SQUEAL of feedback as he noisily adjusts the microphone.

BURGEMEISTER

The correct thing to do...(feedback)...is to set the microphone...(feedback)...to the height of the first speaker.

He glares over at APATHETIC JANITOR, who shrugs.

BURGEMEISTER

Now, as mayor of New Holland, you have entrusted me with your safety. So I can't sit idly by while a teacher endangers our children.

(checking notes)

Mr. Ryzk...krusekishi...krysk...  
Couldn't have an American name, I suppose.

Bob's Mother stands in the crowd.

BOB'S MOTHER

He is a menace!

A lot of agreement from the PARENTS in attendance. Bob, his arm in a cast and sling, sits sheepishly at the front.

Victor's Dad stands up. (He's there with Victor's Mom.)

DAD

Mayor, I can tell you that our son Victor is just crazy about the new teacher. Thinks he's great.

ANOTHER FATHER

Have you looked through this "science" book they're using? Apparently, Pluto isn't good enough to be a planet anymore. When I was a kid, Pluto was a great planet. This guy comes along and rewrites the rules.

MOM

In fairness, he didn't write the textbook.

ANOTHER MOTHER

My Cynthia has been asking all sorts of strange questions. About things I've never even heard of!

DAD

We should at least give the man the chance to explain himself.

BURGEMEISTER

Fine. Yes. Please come up.  
Mr...Menace.

He points to Mr. Rzykruski, who has been lingering at the back of the assembly room.

He comes up front to the microphone.

He clears his throat. Smiles.

MR. RZYKRUSKI

I think the confusion here is that you are all very ignorant.

A sea of stony faces.

MR. RZYKRUSKI

Is this right word, "ignorant?" I mean simple. Primitive. Unenlightened.

Not winning them over.

MR. RZYKRUSKI

You do not understand science, so you are afraid of it. Like a dog is afraid of thunder, or balloons. To you, science is magic and witchcraft because you have such small minds. I cannot make your heads bigger, but your children's heads -- I can take them and crack them open. This is what I try to do. To get at their brains.

Somehow convinced he did a good job...

MR. RZYKRUSKI

Thank you.

EXT. ELSA'S BACKYARD - NIGHT \*

Elsa PRACTICE-HUMS her Dutch Day song while Persephone  
does her business, sniffing around the bushes. \*

Forgetting a lyric, Elsa checks a sheet she was holding  
behind her back. \*

EXT. VICTOR'S HOUSE / BACKYARD - NIGHT \*

Meanwhile, Victor has Sparky out. \*

VICTOR  
Quick, boy. They'll be home any  
minute. \*

Sparky smells Persephone. He sniffs along the fence. \*

INTERCUT BOTH SIDES \*

Persephone sniffs along the fence as well. \*

She BARKS. \*

Sparky BARKS back. \*

VICTOR  
No no no no! \*

He covers over Sparky's mouth. \*

Elsa approaches the fence. Peers through a knothole. \*

ELSA  
Victor? \*

She can only see Victor, not Sparky down below.  
Meanwhile, the dog is frantic to play with Persephone. \*

VICTOR  
Hi, Elsa. What are you doing? \*

ELSA  
Practicing my song for Dutch Days. \*

VICTOR  
It's nice. \*

ELSA  
Did you get a new dog? \*

VICTOR  
No. \*

ELSA

I heard a bark.

VICTOR

That was just me.

ELSA

You were barking.

VICTOR

Yup.

Elsa steps back from the fence.

ELSA

You must really miss Sparky.

Sparky HOWLS. Victor fakes a WAILING CRY to cover it.

HEADLIGHTS sweep across the fence. Victor's parents are back.

VICTOR

Have to go. Bye.

Elsa pets Persephone.

ELSA

I feel so sad for him, Persephone.  
He really misses his dog.

She kisses Persephone on the head.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

The whole class looks up as the teacher enters. Not Mr. Rzykruski, but rather the female Gym Teacher, who is serving as substitute.

VICTOR

Where's Mr. Rzykruski?

GYM TEACHER

He's not here today.

TOSHIAKI

Is he coming back?

GYM TEACHER

All I know is, I'll be teaching  
the class for the rest of the  
semester.

She begins erasing the messy blackboard. The class is a-twitter.

ELSA

Do you know anything about science?

GYM TEACHER

I know more than you do.

BOB

Mr. Rzykruski knew a lot.

GYM TEACHER

Well, sometimes knowing too much is the problem.

VICTOR

But what about the science fair?

GYM TEACHER

Oh, it's still on. But it will be judged by someone who is not insane -- Me!

The class look skeptical.

GYM TEACHER

So get cracking and may the best person win. Also class, I'm adding rodents and reptiles to the no-go list. Science shouldn't be disgusting.

EXT. BEHIND THE SCHOOL - DAY

Bob, Toshiaki and Nassor are still bumming from the news.

BOB

I can't believe I broke my arm for nothing. None of us are going to win. E has an invisible fish.

NASSOR

No he doesn't. You fell for a parlor trick.

TOSHIAKI

You're saying he faked it?

Just then, he spots E coming out around the corner.

NASSOR

E!

The boys move in, circling him. He panics, but can't get away.

TOSHIAKI

That fish you showed us, was it real?

E

It was! And it was dead, too.

NASSOR

You brought an animal back from the dead?

E

No, Victor did. With lightning and BOOM! and SSS...

He pulls his hair up to simulating "standing on end."

NASSOR/TOSHIAKI

Impossible.

E

I swear! I mean, he already brought back his dog.

He tries to swallow his words.

BOB/ TOSHIAKI/NASSOR

He brought back Sparky?

E nods. The boys exchange a look.

NASSOR/TOSHIAKI

Then Victor will win the science fair. Unless we can do better. Bigger.

We PAN ACROSS the boys' faces, we suddenly see Weird Girl has joined them. They're just as surprised.

BOB

What are you doing here?

WEIRD GIRL

My cat finally dreamed about me.

She holds up a cat-poop 'W.'

EXT. SCHOOL PARKING LOT - DAY

Mr. Rzykruski is packing his strange little car with all his things from the classroom.

Victor watches him, despondent.

VICTOR

I can't believe they let the gym teacher be the judge. She's not even interested in science.

Mr. Rzykruski turns back to see his favorite student.

MR. RZYKRUSKI

Back home, everyone is scientist.  
(counting on fingers)  
Physicist, physicist, chemist, biologist. My plumber, he wins Nobel Prize. Your country does not make enough scientists. Always needs more. You should be a scientist, Victor.

VICTOR

Nobody likes scientists.

MR. RZYKRUSKI

They like what science gives them, but not the questions, no, not the questions that science asks.

VICTOR

I have a question.

MR. RZYKRUSKI

That is why you are scientist.

Victor smiles, a little.

VICTOR

I was doing my experiment, my project, and the first time it worked great. But the next time it didn't. I mean, it sort of worked, but then it didn't. And I don't know why.

MR. RZYKRUSKI

Then maybe you never really understood it the first time.

Victor is puzzled, but intrigued.



MR. RZYKRUSKI

People think science is here...

(taps Victor's head)

...but it is also here. The first time, did you love your experiment?

CUT TO:

INT. ATTIC WORKSHOP - NIGHT [FLASHBACK]

Victor, defeated, hangs his head in his hands. Suddenly, Sparky licks him. He's returned from the dead.

VICTOR (V.O.)

Yes.

MR. RZYKRUSKI (V.O.)

And the second time?

CUT TO:

INT. ATTIC WORKSHOP - NIGHT [FLASHBACK]

Victor watches as the bolt of lightning charges the jar of water with the dead goldfish.

VICTOR (V.O.)

No. I just wanted it over.

BACK TO:

EXT. SCHOOL PARKING LOT - DAY

MR. RZYKRUSKI

Then you changed the variables.

VICTOR

I was doing it for the wrong reason.

MR. RZYKRUSKI

Science is not good or bad, Victor. But it can be used both ways. That is why you must always be careful.

With that, he offers his hand. They shake.

CUT TO:

EXT. SCHOOL PARKING LOT - DAY [LATER]

Victor watches as Mr. Rzykruski drives off.

ACCORDION MUSIC rises as we...

TRANSITION TO:

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - DAY

It's Dutch Day, and everyone has broken out their lederhosen and wooden shoes.

The main square has been transformed into a suburbanite vision of what Holland is supposed to be: half Oktoberfest, half county fair. There are a few carnival rides as well -- a ferris wheel and an octopus spinner.

Windmills and tulips are the most common tchotkes, but every discernible bit of Dutch culture has been stripped from the bones and repackaged, from Van Gogh to canals.

OOMPA BANDS circulate, brass and drums and accordions to put everyone in a festive mood.

We follow WORKMEN with ladders, who hang lanterns from the poles for the big party tonight.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Victor's Mom is flipping through her recipe book while she talks on the phone. The coiled cord seems to stretch to infinity.

MOM (ON PHONE)

I need something original for the  
bake sale. No. Maybe. Helen  
Sanders always makes those.

She finally decides on...

MOM

Chocolate cherry cheese cupcakes.

She turns on the oven.

She beats eggs in a bowl. Stirs in oil and sugar, flour and cocoa. Adds chunks of cheddar and spoonfuls of jam.

MOM

Now, where is my muffin tin?

She sorts through her cabinet, pulling out pan after pan.  
But no muffin tin.

MOM  
(realizing)  
Victor.

INT. ATTIC WORKSHOP - DAY

Sparky looks up, hearing the doorknob RATTLE. It's  
locked.

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR

Victor's Mom takes a pin from her hair.

She bends it into a remarkably precise shape.

SPARKY

looks for a place to hide. He tries to get under the tin  
bucket, but can't lift it up.

VICTOR'S MOM

She opens the door to find...

Nothing out of the ordinary.

She enters, taking a look around for her missing muffin  
tin. She pokes through piles, stepping up on the  
overturned bucket to reach higher.

MOM  
Aha!

She's spotted the muffin tin, still part of the elaborate  
set from Victor's movie.

As she lifts it away, we find Sparky crouched behind it.  
But Mom doesn't notice him. He stays frozen, hopeful.

She's about to head for the door, but decides to take a  
quick look at Victor's chalkboard. Recognizing that the  
schematic shows their house, she's curious about the open  
roof doors it depicts.

She studies the roof and sees the machinery attached  
there, all of which seems to lead back to a single chain.  
Curious, she gives it a tug.

Suddenly, everything is WHIZZING and CLICKING. The roof doors open wide. The lightning rod stretches up. Mom stares up, amazed.

A fan switches on, swirling fabric. An arc of lightning climbs along poles.

The muffin tin slips out of Mom's hands, landing with a loud CLATTER on the floor.

Sparky BARK-WINCES, pure instinct.

She turns, startled. Sees Sparky.

His NECK BOLTS.

His STITCHES.

His BLACK EYES, reflecting back the electric arcs.

Mom SCREAMS.

Sparky bolts away, through the door and down the steps.

A beat as Mom tries to gather her wits. Nope. She's lost 'em.

She faints.

VICTOR (PRE-LAP)

We have to find Sparky before  
someone else does!

WIPE TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Victor shares the couch with his Mom, who has a washcloth at her forehead. Meanwhile, his Dad paces in a worried circle.

DAD

Now, let's not get ahead of  
ourselves. What you did is a  
very serious thing, young man.

VICTOR

You said yourself: If you could  
bring back Sparky, you would.

DAD

Yes, but that was different,  
because we couldn't!

MOM

It's easy to promise the impossible.

DAD

Doing it is another matter. Crossing the boundary between life and death -- reanimating a corpse - - it's very...upsetting.

MOM

It raises ethical issues.

DAD

I mean, plenty of people are happy to let the dead be dead.

(realizing)

Dead people might not be happy being dead. Hard to say. I suppose the only way to know would be to bring them back to life and ask them: "Were you happier being dead or alive?"

Tears well up in Victor's eyes.

VICTOR

I just wanted my dog back.

MOM

I know.

VICTOR

You can't get rid of Sparky.

DAD

That's not what we're saying.

MOM

Whenever Sparky...

(what word?)

...passes on, you're going to need to let him go. No more bringing him back from the dead.

Understood?

VICTOR

I guess.

DAD

Now let's go find your dog.

EXT. BURGEMEISTER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Burgemeister steps out the front door, adjusting his "MAYOR" sash.

BURGEMEISTER  
 (calling back)  
 Elsa! We'll be late! You look  
 fine.

Elsa emerges dressed in "traditional" Dutch attire, complete with blonde wig in pigtails. She's none too happy about it. She has Persephone on a leash, festooned with garlands.

BURGEMEISTER  
 You know, a lot of girls would  
 kill to be in your place.

ELSA  
 I'd welcome death.

They spot Victor's parents outside their house with flashlights.

MOM  
 Spar-ky! Spar-ky!

Her flashlight beam sweeps across Burgemeister and Elsa.

BURGEMEISTER  
 Wasn't that the boy's dog?

MOM  
 Yes.

BURGEMEISTER  
 The one who died?

MOM  
 Yes.

BURGEMEISTER  
 So what are you doing?

Dad joins her. Trying to help:

DAD  
 It's a game we play.

From behind the house...

VICTOR (O.S.)  
 Sparky? Where are you?

BURGEMEISTER

You play a game in which you look  
for a boy's dead dog?

MOM

Yes.

BURGEMEISTER

Explains a lot.

Victor hurries past with his flashlight. Yells to his  
Mom:

VICTOR

I'm going to check out the school  
and the park. You guys do the  
town square, okay?

DAD

Got it.

On Elsa, confused. Could Victor's dog be alive?

She's YANKED out of frame by Burgemeister.

BURGEMEISTER

Let's go!

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - NIGHT

It's the biggest celebration of Dutch Days -- a  
celebration that has almost the entire town gathered  
under the massive beer garden tent.

Sparky runs from hiding place to hiding place, trying to  
stay out of sight. But everywhere he goes, he's scared  
off by some new terror, including A MARCHING BAND on  
parade.

Sparky dashes around them, desperate.

On an elevated stage, the OOOMPA BAND is playing while  
WOMEN IN WOODEN SHOES do a festive dance. As the song  
finishes, everyone CHEERS.

In the crowd, we see Victor's parents searching behind  
booths and tents.

EXT. NEAR THE SCHOOL - NIGHT

Victor searches around the bushes.

VICTOR

Sparky! Sparky! C'mon boy. Come back.

INT. PET CEMETERY - NIGHT

Sparky noses open the gate.

He walks up to his grave. He can't read, obviously, but he seems to recognize what it is. What it means.

He lays down, looking up at the moon.

TRANSITION TO:

EXT. VICTOR'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Toshiaki rings the DOORBELL. Bob, Nassor, E and Weird Girl are with him. Weird Girl has her cat.

BOB

What are we gonna say?

TOSHIAKI

We're going to ask him how he did the invisible fish and his dog.

BOB

What if he won't tell us?

Toshiaki has no answer. He KNOCKS on the door, which swings open.

TOSHIAKI

Hello?

Weird Girl's cat leaps from her arms, racing up the stairs.

INT. ATTIC WORKSHOP - NIGHT

Bob, E, Nassor, Toshiaki and Weird Girl enter. Except for E, it's the first time they've ever been inside Victor's sanctum sanctorum.

BOB

Cool.

Nassor and Weird Girl check out the equipment. Toshiaki examines the blackboard.



TOSHIAKI

Interesting.

They examine the formulas and theorems. But the most important part are the illustrations. Lightning hits a rod, which brings a thing to life.

E

It has something to do with the lightning. I don't really understand it.

NASSOR/TOSHIAKI

But I do.

PUSHING IN on his eyes...

NASSOR

Tonight, we shall bring the dead to life.

TRANSITION TO:

EXT. TOWN SQUARE / STAGE - NIGHT

Burgemeister steps up to the microphone, which once again is set too high for him.

He glares over at the same School Janitor, who shrugs.

Burgemeister pulls the microphone from the stand.

BURGEMEISTER

And now, it's my pleasure to introduce this year's Little Dutch Girl, my niece, Elsa Van Helsing.

Leaving Persephone backstage, Elsa walks out to meet Burgemeister. In addition to her costume, she's wearing a wide crown of candles. She tries to walk very steadily to keep wax from dripping on her.

ELSA

I don't think this is safe.

BURGEMEISTER

Nonsense. We have the fire chief here.

We see a decrepit, 90 year old man dressed like a fireman. He doesn't inspire confidence.

Burgermeister hands her the microphone.

Nervous, she looks out over the crowd. The band starts playing a SONG. It has the quality of a national anthem, though it's really just about the town.

Elsa sings in Dutch.

ELSA

(singing)

*Alle lof, New Holland!  
Uw straten zo breed,  
Uw trottoirs zo schoon.  
Bescheiden woningen, bescheiden prijzen  
Veilig van al ondeugden*

The crowd is so rapt that no one notices the big

THUNDERSTORM

brewing overhead.

SONG CONTINUES UNDER:

EXT. PET CEMETERY - NIGHT

Cowering behind his tombstone, Sparky watches as Nassor and Toshiaki enter the graveyard, each carrying a shovel.

Nassor heads up the hill towards a gothic mausoleum.

Toshiaki digs up a larger bundle, which he loads into a wagon.

EXT. BEHIND THE SCHOOL - NIGHT

E pulls a dead rat out from behind a garbage can.

This is road kill, and we can still clearly see the tire treads that have completely flattened it.

Checking that no one's seen him, he lurches off.

INT. WEIRD GIRL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Weird Girl's room is impossibly girly with pink fluffy flowers all around. She is pinning a dead bat to a small corkboard. Her cat watches from her dresser and seems more than usually interested.

ELSA (V.O., SINGING)

*Alle lof, New Holland!*

*Grasvelden van groene gras  
 Glorie van de middenklasse  
 Zonder gevaren  
 Zonder vreemden  
 Beschut van alle kwaad*

EXT. BACKYARD POOL - NIGHT

Ripping apart his old science fair project, Bob opens the container of sea monkeys and dumps them into the pool.

ELSA (V.O., SINGING)

*Dus, alle lof, New Holland!  
 Laat uw windmolen altijd spin.*

EXT. TOSHIAKI'S BACKYARD - NIGHT

Toshiaki is behind the gardening shed in his yard. He moves some old gardening equipment out of the way and starts to unwrap the disinterred bundle from his wagon.

EXT. PARK - NIGHT

Victor keeps searching for his dog.

VICTOR

Sparky! Sparky!

Elsa's song transitions to English:

ELSA (V.O., SINGING)

*Praise be, New Holland!  
 Your streets so wide,  
 Your sidewalks clean.  
 Modest homes at modest prices  
 Safe from all those urban vices*

EXT. PET CEMETERY - NIGHT

Nassor is crouching behind an elaborate head stone at the top of a rise. He has dug a hole and hammered a broken piece of gothic iron railing into hole which he attaches to four Mylar balloons, and sends floating up.

INT. WEIRD GIRL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Weird Girl untwists metal coat hangers and attaches them to each other, making a long lightning rod. Her cat curiously sniffs at the pinned bat beside them.

EXT. BACKYARD POOL - NIGHT

Bob wraps wire around a long metal pool skimmer.

ELSA (V.O., SINGING)

*Praise be, New Holland!  
Rolling lawns of verdant grass  
The glory of the middle class  
Free of dangers  
Free of strangers  
Sheltered from all harm.*

INT. CLASSROOM - NIGHT

E hooks the dead rat up to the electrodes Rzykruski used in the frog experiment.

EXT. TOSHIAKI'S YARD - NIGHT

Toshiaki flies a kite into the storm. Rather than string, he's using extension cords -- he has to keep connecting new ones.

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - NIGHT

Elsa finishes her song:

ELSA

(singing)  
*So praise be, New Holland  
May your windmill spin for-ever more.*

The crowd APPLAUDS. Motioning with his hands, Burgemeister signals for bigger applause. The crowds only gives him a bit more.

A big clap of THUNDER gets everyone's attention, including Victor's parents.

EXT. PET CEMETERY - NIGHT

As fingers of lightning CRACK along the sky, Victor pushes open the gate.

His flashlight casts long, scary shadows.

Sparky can see the beam, but not who's holding the light. He scrunches down behind his tombstone, hiding.

He walks up to the grave, dejected and almost hopeless. He'd say something poignant, but the MUSIC does the work for him.

His flashlight sweeps across the tombstone, revealing Sparky's stubby tail poking out behind it.

Could it be...

VICTOR

Sparky?

Sparky peers around the edge of the tombstone. Realizes it's Victor.

VICTOR

Sparky!

Sparky BARKS. Jumps up, knocking him down. Victor sits up, hugging his dog.

VICTOR

I thought I lost you. I don't ever want to lose you, okay? Promise you'll never go running off.

Sparky licks him.

Victor sits with Sparky. Only now does he notice the two open graves, shovels at ready.

VICTOR

Was someone else here?

THUNDER carries us to...

EXT. SCHOOL - NIGHT

Toshiaki watches in amazed horror as his kite gets swallowed up by the dark clouds. He lets go of the extension cords.

As he feels his hair rising, he squats down and covers his head, knocking over a bottle of Miracle-Grow which spills all over the bundle.

Lightning surges down from the heavens, striking the disinterred bundle, which smolders.

EXT. BACKYARD POOL - NIGHT

Lightning hits the propped-up pool skimmer, then CRACKLES across the surface of the pool.

A mist clings to the surface.

Bob watches in fascination, hoping his experiment worked.

EXT. SKY ABOVE THE CEMETERY - NIGHT

The Mylar balloons floats along. Suddenly, they are FRIED by lightning. The balloons burst, sending the surge hurtling down towards earth. It strikes the metal and continues deep into the grave.

Nassor watches from behind the tombstone.

INT. CLASSROOM - NIGHT

E jumps back as lightning strikes the building, SURGING through the power line to the electrodes on the rat. We see the flattened sections start to balloon out.

EXT. WEIRD GIRL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Just as lightning is about to strike, Weird Girl checks for the bat -- but it's gone. She turns to see her cat who now has the bat in its mouth.

Lightning hits the TV. Weird girls ducks out the way just in time.

When she looks up she sees Mr. Whiskers. His fur is smoking but he just seems a little dazed. He starts licking his paws when suddenly --

GIANT BAT WINGS

unfurl from the cat's back. He looks up at the Weird Girl and HISSES, his mouth featuring two giant fangs.

WEIRD GIRL

Aaaaggh!

With one flap of its wings, the VAMPIRE CAT flies out the window and up into the stormy night sky.

INT. CLASSROOM - NIGHT

E swings a desk lamp over to look upon his rat, which has in fact returned to life. But there's something unsettling about the way it moves -- in particular, the dexterity with which it un-clips the electrodes. It seems almost human and its gotten larger.

The Wererat lets off a howl, somewhere between a wolf and a mouse.

E steps back. The desk lamp swings up, casting a shadow of the rat on the wall.

The shadow grows larger and larger as the rat stands up on its back feet. Its teeth and claws extend.

EXT. BACKYARD POOL - NIGHT

An almost-translucent hand grabs the side of the pool, pulling itself out. And it's not alone.

Dozens of SEA MONKEYS emerge: simian warriors with shimp-like features, some carrying bone tridents.

Bob SCREAMS and runs.

EXT. TOSHIAKI'S YARD - NIGHT

The bottle of Miracle-Gro lies empty on the grass.

The scorched kite CRASHES down.

Toshiaki's wagon sits empty.

Suddenly, a massive turtle foot SMASHES down, crushing the wagon.

A GIANT TURTLE MONSTER -- bigger than a bus -- SHRIEKS to the heavens.

Toshiaki scrambles to get away, alternately impressed and terrified.

The turtle opens its mouth, and lets out a blood curdling roar.

EXT. PET CEMETERY - NIGHT

The earth around the grave rumbles. Something is trying to get out.

NASSOR

Rise, colossus. Rise from your tomb!

As Nassor continues his incantation, we see a MUMMY HAMSTER emerge from out of a Kleenex box buried in the ground.

The Mummy Hamster breaks through and stands upright, arms extended.

He starts to walk and then stiffly falls forward onto all fours and lurches forward, dragging its back leg menacingly. It might be frightening if he weren't just a few inches tall.

TRANSITION TO:

INT. SCHOOL / COACH'S OFFICE - NIGHT

The Gym Teacher is finishes some last minute preparations for the science fair when she hears a boy's voice SCREAMING in the hall.

E

(terrified scream)

E's voice dopplers as he runs past the shut door.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - NIGHT

Gym Teacher steps out into the hallway, looking in both directions.

GYM TEACHER

Hello? Is someone there?

POV -- WERERAT

Coming around the corner, a clawed hand ripping down kindergarten artwork.

SNIFFING sounds. Saliva sucking through teeth.



It spots Gym Teacher in the distance.

CLOSE ON GYM TEACHER

She sees it. Inhales as she...

EXT. SCHOOL - NIGHT

In a WIDE SHOT...

GYM TEACHER

(screams)

E runs past, panicked.

EXT. BACKYARD POOL - NIGHT

Sea Monkeys stream out of the pool, climbing over the fence.

Bob watches from the window, hiding behind a curtain.

BOB

(to himself)

Victor. Victor will know what to do.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Victor carries Sparky, wrapped in an old blanket so no one will see him.

VICTOR

I'll get you charged up, boy. You gotta be hungry.

As he turns the corner, he sees a phalanx of sea monkeys charge past. They're like supernatural hooligans, craving mayhem and destructive mischief.

Victor crouches down behind a mailbox. He and Sparky trade a look -- what the heck are they?

Sea Monkey King points at the lights in the distance and they disappear down the manhole cover into the sewers.

SEA MONKEY KING

("charge!")

Klakits nix tlaltic!

EXT. TOSHIAKI'S YARD - NIGHT

The giant turtle's stomps down on a child's playhouse. He then turns his attention to lights in the distance -- the glowing Ferris wheel.

As he starts stomping that direction, Toshiaki grabs his bike and starts riding the other way.

EXT. VICTOR'S HOUSE - NIGHT

With Sparky trotting beside him, Victor finds the front door wide open.

VICTOR

Mom?! Dad?!

Bob arrives on his bike. Wheeling his way up the door --

BOB

Victor! I need your help!

VICTOR

Did you see those things? They were like...

BOB

Sea Monkeys.

VICTOR

Really?

BOB

You know how on the package, they're like in a happy kingdom and everyone's smiling?

VICTOR

Yeah.

BOB

They're not like that at all.

Toshiaki arrives on his bike, yelling from the sidewalk.

TOSHIAKI

Victor! I need your help!

BOB

I asked him first!

TOSHIAKI

My problem's bigger!

BOB

You don't know what...

Toshiaki points to the distance, where the towering Giant Turtle is walking past houses. A suburban Gamera.

Pure instinct, Sparky BARKS at it.

Bob has to admit --

BOB

Yeah. He's right.

Just then, the Gym Teacher runs past, chased by the Were-Rat. It runs on its back legs, occasionally putting down one of its front paws.

GYM TEACHER

(exhausted screams)

A beat. Some looks exchanged.

VICTOR

I'll get my bike.

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - NIGHT

Backstage, Burgemeister carefully snuffs the candles on Elsa's crown.

BURGEMEISTER

I told you there was nothing to worry about. Safe as can be.

Suddenly, SCREAMS in the crowd. Burgemeister pokes his head through the curtain to see --

THE GIANT TURTLE

marching through town, crushing everything in its path.

BURGEMEISTER

(panicked gasp)

Burgermeister flees, leaving Elsa to her own devices.

Running frantically, Burgemeister tries to save himself. He nearly crashes into the Gym Teacher, busy fleeing the Wererat.

Desperate for a place to hide, Burgemeister spots a public restroom. Quickly ducks inside.

INT. PUBLIC RESTROOM - NIGHT

Out the window, Burgemeister can hear the pandemonium escalating but, feeling safe for the moment, he sits on the toilet and breathes a sigh of relief.

Strangely he feels something sharp poke him in the butt. When he jumps up he sees a host of sea monkeys carrying tridents, jumping out of the toilet and sink!

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - NIGHT

VICTOR'S MOM AND DAD

huddle in a phone booth, trying to stay out of sight.

Nearby, a sea monkey tries the Hi-Striker, the classic carnival strength game with the giant hammer. But the hammer proves too heavy, and he ends up teetering back and SMACKING his companion in the head.

Dad gets an idea and grabs a mallet as well.

DAD

(to Mom)

A baseball coach learns a few things.

A sea monkey kicks Dad in the shins, grabbing the mallet away from him.

THE TURTLE MONSTER

has arrived.

PANIC and CHAOS as the townsfolk run for their lives.

Elsa loses her grip on her dog's leash.

ELSA

Persephone!

The poodle disappears in the chaos.

Meanwhile, Weird Girl has just arrived, looking everywhere for her cat.

WEIRD GIRL

Mr. Whiskers! Where are you, Mr. Whiskers?

EDGE OF THE SQUARE

Victor, Toshiaki and Bob arrive on bikes, with Sparky chasing behind.

They see the Giant Turtle heading right for the Ferris wheel.

Victor turns to Toshiaki.

VICTOR

Try to get his attention and lead him out of town.

Toshiaki looks around for something to throw and pitches a rock directly at the turtle, hitting him in the head.

The Turtle glares, then abruptly changes direction, charging after him. With a smile, Toshiaki spins his bike and reverses course.

TOSHIAKI

Strike one!

EXT. TOWN SQUARE

Victor and Bob must deal with the Sea Monkeys. But how?

VICTOR

The Sea Monkeys were your science project, right?

BOB

Yes. No. It was Toshiaki's idea.

VICTOR

What do you remember about their biology?

BOB

I don't...

VICTOR

Are they freshwater or saltwater?

Bob knows this --

BOB

Freshwater!

VICTOR

Freshwater animals can't tolerate salt.

Both boys WHIP PAN their heads to the popcorn tent.

EXT. TOWN / VARIOUS

Toshiaki pedals as fast as he can. The Turtle lumbers right behind him.

The turtle gets distracted and turns back towards the Ferris wheel. Toshiaki hurls another rock at his head to get his attention.

TOSHIAKI

Strike two!

The Turtle resumes chasing him.

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - POPCORN TENT - NIGHT

Victor and Bob each take two big canisters of salt. Hold them like weapons.

BOB

Wait! We need to say something cool, like "prepare to get ah-salted." Or, "Hey monkey, sea-salt you late --

A SEA MONKEY

suddenly pops over the counter, a diabolical grin.

BOB

(panicked scream)

He and Victor both frantically shake salt on the sea monkey. It works! The sea monkey dissolves.

BOB

Cool.

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - NIGHT

Bob and Victor charge from the tent, taking out sea monkey with the salt.

EXT. TOWN / VARIOUS

On the outskirts of town, even more enraged, the turtle picks up his pace. Toshiaki rounds a corner and skids off the bike.

As the Turtle looms up, Toshiaki grabs another rock. This one even bigger than the rest. With all his remaining strength, he throws it right at the turtle's head.

The turtle is stunned and staggers for a minute leaning into some power lines. The more he tries to untangle himself the worse it gets. In a shower of sparks he is electrocuted -- and suddenly returns to his pre-reanimated size.

TOSHIAKI

You're out!

The lights in the city go dark.

EXT. TOWN / VARIOUS

SPARKY spots Persephone facing off with the Wererat, who has chased the Gym Teacher up the maypole. Tangled in the ribbons, she holds on for dear life.

GYM TEACHER

Help! Somebody! It's a mouse!

Sparky and Persephone fight the Rat together.

When Sparky bites into the rat-man's leg, we see a ZAP of electricity. The rat collapses down to normal size.

Tables turned, Persephone GROWLS at the rat, which scurries away.

ELSA

Persephone!

Elsa races up to meet her dog. She's just about reached her when suddenly

THE VAMPIRE CAT

swoops down, scooping up Persephone and flying off with her.

ELSA

No!

Elsa and Sparky chase after them.

EXT. TOWNSQUARE - NIGHT

Now that all the power is out, the townsfolk grab the Dutch Day torches.

Still wearing their costumes, they look like a mob of medieval villagers.

EXT. SKY ABOVE NEW HOLLAND - NIGHT

The Vampire Cat flies with Persephone in its claws, headed for the windmill.

EXT. ROAD UP THE HILL - NIGHT

Shedding the blonde wig, Elsa races after her dog.

ELSA  
Persephone! Hold on!

Sparky tries to keep up, but his stubby legs can't. PANTING, he grabs Elsa's wig and turns back the other direction.

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - NIGHT

Sparky runs with Elsa's wig in his mouth.

Townfolk are cutting the Gym Teacher down from the maypole.

Burgemeister retrieves his mayor's sash, making sure it's on straight.

Sparky runs up, finding Mom and Dad.

MOM  
Sparky!

Sparky drops the wig and BARKS, doing his best Lassie, trying to explain what's happened.

He grabs the wig and shakes it violently, pantomiming.

Burgemeister pushes through. Recognizing the wig --

BURGEMEISTER  
That's Elsa's! Where is she?!

Sparky drops the wig and runs, hoping they'll follow.

BURGEMEISTER  
That dog attacked my niece! After him!



Burgermeister leads the crowd in a chase up to the windmill.

EXT. POOL - NIGHT

The last few sea monkeys retreat to the safety of their birthplace. Victor and Bob follow them, using the last of their salt.

The sea monkeys melt, dissolving into the water.

With an odd, philosophical gravity --

BOB

In the end, it makes you wonder:  
were they monsters, or were we?

A beat.

VICTOR

Why did you say that?

BOB

I dunno. Felt like I should.

Suddenly, E is at the gate.

E

Victor! Everyone in town is after  
Sparky. They're headed for the  
windmill.

VICTOR

C'mon!

EXT. ROAD UP THE HILL - DAY

Sparky leads the way, an angry mob behind him.

EXT. WINDMILL - NIGHT

Sparky arrives at the base of the windmill. He hears Persephone BARKING from inside.

He charges in through the open door.

The mob is just behind him.

INT. WINDMILL - NIGHT

The Vampire Cat is perched at the peak of the rafters, grooming himself. Persephone is nearby, nervously balancing on a thin beam.

Elsa is trying to climb up to reach her.

EXT. WINDMILL - NIGHT

BURGEMEISTER

Quick! Before he gets out!

Burgemeister is waving his torch to signal the rest of the crowd and inadvertently sets his torch to the base of the windmill.

The sails are quickly engulfed in flames but the blades keep turning.

From high up, Elsa leans out a window:

ELSA

Help!

BURGEMEISTER

Elsa?!

Victor, E, Bob and Toshiaki arrive.

VICTOR

Where's Sparky?

His Mom takes him by the shoulders.

MOM

He went inside. Victor, he's...

Victor sloughs her off, running towards the windmill.

DAD

Victor! Get back from there.

The windmill shifts, the base starting to collapse. Victor sees one chance. He dashes through the burning door.

INT. WINDMILL - NIGHT

Sparky climbs the stairs to the top level of the windmill. Smoke and flames are rising.

Elsa calls up to Persephone:

ELSA

Jump, Persephone. I'll catch you!

Persephone finally makes the leap. Elsa catches her, but falls down in the process. She BANGS her head.

Sitting up, Elsa COUGHS from the smoke. Sparky runs up behind her, nudging her.

Victor races up the stairs, desperate.

VICTOR

Sparky? Sparky?!

Sparky BARKS TWICE.

Victor finds them.

VICTOR

Good boy! Let's go.

Victor scoops up Persephone, following behind as Sparky and Elsa move down the stairs.

As they near the door, Elsa collapses from the smoke. Sparky looks back -- and can't see Victor.

He drags Elsa by the sleeve.

EXT. WINDMILL - NIGHT

Sparky pulls Elsa out. The crowd CHEERS as adults scoop Elsa up.

BURGEMEISTER

That dog is a hero!

DAD

Where's Victor?

Sparky looks back. Still no sign of him.

He charges back into the burning windmill.

INT. WINDMILL - NIGHT

Victor is trapped on the steps by the Vampire Cat, who has suddenly decided he doesn't want to let Persephone go.

Sparky GROWLS and attacks. He and the Vampire Cat wrestle, a full-on monster brawl of claws, teeth and flapping wings.

Losing the battle, the Vampire Cat flies up through the open window.

Victor hurries down the last few steps.

VICTOR  
Let's go, Sparky!

EXT. WINDMILL - NIGHT

Victor emerges with Persephone in his arms.

Suddenly, the windmill collapses, falling in on itself.

A CLOUD of SPARKS and CINDERS.

Through the smoke, Victor shouts...

VICTOR  
No!

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

EXT. WINDMILL - TWILIGHT

The sun hasn't quite risen. Thanks to the FIREMEN, the blaze is out. They're sorting through the wreckage.

Most of the town is there, as are all of Victor's classmates.

Victor wipes away tears, smudged with soot. His Mom hugs his shoulders.

A FIREFIGHTER yells out:

FIREFIGHTER  
I found him!

He emerges from the debris carrying Sparky's body. The little dog is singed, but still in one piece.

The firefighter lays him on the dirt.

Everyone starts to huddle around, but Bob holds them back.

BOB

Give him room.

Victor kneels over the lifeless body of his amazing dog.

In the crowd...

Dad kneels beside his son.

DAD

Victor? Is there anything we can  
do for him?

Victor looks up at his Mom and Dad.

VICTOR

But you said...

DAD

Sometimes adults don't know what  
they're talking about.

Victor smiles.

CUT TO:

DAD WAVES CARS FORWARD

Barking out orders.

All the cars pull forward in a circle around Sparky,  
their headlights blazing.

As we CIRCLE, townsfolk lift the hoods of the cars,  
attaching jumper cables, which all feed in to two main  
lines.

Victor attaches cables to Sparky.

DAD

Give it everything you got!

Drivers REV their engines.

Victor makes the last connection.

Sparky's leg twitches violently.

VICTOR

Okay!

Victor disconnects the power.

Dad waves for everyone to cut their engines. Now it's just headlights.

Victor approaches his dog, who isn't moving. The leg spasms may have just been an automatic reaction, like the frog leg experiment.

Almost a WHISPER...

VICTOR

It's okay, boy. You don't have to come back. If you're having fun, just keep having fun, okay? You'll always be in my heart.

He pets Sparky's head.

A long beat, then we notice Sparky's tail THUMP THUMP THUMPING.

Sparky opens an eye. Then sits up, licking Victor's face.

The crowd CHEERS and APPLAUDS.

Victor hugs his dog, who BARKS.

Victor's Mom and Dad make their way over to him. Sparky does a few tricks for the crowd, then notices someone pushing through the crowd.

Persephone, dirty from soot and ash, has a shock of hair rising from her poodle head that resembles nothing as much as the Bride of Frankenstein.

The two dogs share a sniff. And a jolt.

CUT TO BLACK.

THE END

AFTER MAIN CREDITS

OVER BLACK

we hear SQUEAK, SQUEAK, SQUEAK.

FADE IN:

THE MUMMY HAMSTER

keeps trudging forward, dragging his bad leg behind.

WIDER, reveal that he's walking on a metal hamster wheel, which SQUEAKS with every turn.

Nassor, dressed in pajamas, watches with intense pride.

NASSOR  
Good night, Colossus.

He switches out the light. The Mummy Hamster keeps walking. SQUEAK. SQUEAK. SQUEAK.