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Cast of Characters

VICE PRINCIPAL COPPER, local law enforcement, very serious

ASSISTANT VICE PRINCIPAL CRAKKUP, cheerful, makes jokes

The Mystery Club

LIZA, self-centered actress

BOOMER, bad-sport athlete

TAYLOR, quiet, book lover

MAX, obnoxious gamer

QUINN, accident-prone scientist

PARKER, know-it-all reporter

EPISODE 3: THE CASE OF THE MISSING MASCOT

FUZZY BUNNY, school's mascot (talks to audience)

Home-Economics Club

JUNE and DONNA, twin sisters, aspiring to the perfect life they see
on old 50s TV show reruns

NELL, a girl who was found out in the woods and is now learning
how to be human

TONY, an injured athlete and old enemy of Boomer, wants to be a
stay-at-home dad

Cosmetics Club

MARY and KAY, entrepreneurs, rich BFFs, make their own strange
cosmetics

AVON, Mary and Kay's cosmetic henchperson, not afraid to follow
you home

VIDAL, a master makeup manufacturer

Animal Rights Club

ARF FARF and PAL, animal rights freedom fighters, will go to any
extreme to keep animals free

GEORGE, Arf's sensible sidekick

LENNY, George's strong but simple-minded friend, he really wants
to pet the bunny

EPISODE 4: THE CASE OF THE DISAPPEARING GRADES

Academic Decathlon Team

ALBERTA, captain of team, jealous class salutatorian (#2 in class)

SIGURD, corny class essayist (#3 in class), loves to make bad jokes

DUTTON, very quiet and very, very smart, terrible at taking tests

JIM, the team's dim-witted towel and water boy, sweatband enthusiast

Computer Club

STEVIE 1, co-founder of Computer Club, shares brain with Stevie 2, who's always finishing his...

STEVIE 2, co-founder of Computer Club, shares brain with Stevie 1, ...sentences

BILL, feels like an outsider, always threatens to start his own computer club

BLEEP BLOOP, the Computer Club's annoying mascot, might be a robot, probably just a costume

Chess Club

GARRY, chess champion and suspected criminal mastermind

MARRY, chess-champion alternate and suspected criminal mastermind alternate

LARRY, chess caddy and suspected criminal mastermind assistant

SHERRY, Chess Club member hoping to be Garry's queen

Casting Note

All roles are open to any gender.

Acknowledgments

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An expanded production was directed by Kianna Scanlon at the Summit School in 2015.



The Mystery Club, Episode 4: The Case of the Disappearing Grades, Summit School, Winston-Salem, North Carolina (2015). Photo: Martin Tucker.

THE MYSTERY CLUB—EPISODES 3 & 4

by Roz Mihalko

EPISODE 3: THE CASE OF THE MISSING MASCOT

Scene 1

(A middle school cafetorium [a combined cafeteria/auditorium]. VICE PRINCIPAL COPPER, the very serious vice principal, takes the stage with the slightly silly ASSISTANT VICE PRINCIPAL CRAKKUP. ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP is carrying a long rope that leads offstage.)

ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP. Good afternoon, students! It's good to see so many of you here in the cafetorium for this emergency after-school assembly!

V.P. COPPER. For those of you who don't know us, either because you have just transferred here, or because you have recently had your memory erased by a secret government alien task force...this is Assistant Vice Principal Crakkup and I'm Vice Principal Copper, the school's vice principals.

ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP. As opposed to the vice principals of the *Men in Black*. *(Laughs.)* That was a joke! *(Laughs less.)* And a movie...

(KIDS speak up from the sides.)

PARKER. I'm sorry...but what are we doing here, exactly?

PAL. Yeah, this is supposed to be *our* time for *our* clubs!

JUNE. Speaking of time, is this going to take long? We've got something in the oven.

NELL. NELL!

ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP. No, no. This isn't going to take long at all. We know you are all very excited to go and enjoy your clubs before we break for the school holiday.

V.P. COPPER. It's actually because of the holiday that we've called this emergency meeting. It seems that Mrs. Farthauver, our seventh-grade biology teacher, has recently come down with a severe case of formaldehyde frog flu...

ARF. That's what she gets for dissecting defenseless amphibians!

V.P. COPPER. Thank you, Ms. Farf...

ARF. Please, call me by my animal name: Arf.

ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP. Arf Farf?

PAL. She got it from her dog.

LENNY. I like dogs, George!

GEORGE. We all do, buddy. We all do.

ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP. Our concern here today lies not with formaldehyde frogs, but with a completely different but equally defenseless animal...

(V.P. COPPER pulls the rope and in hops FUZZY BUNNY. FUZZY BUNNY talks, but only the audience understands him/her.)

FUZZY BUNNY. You are the ones who shall be defenseless...against my cuteness! I'm adorable.

V.P. COPPER. By now you should all know Fuzzy Bunny, our school's new mascot.

ARF. More like our school's new prisoner!

MARY. Hey, cut it with the outbursts, please. You're wasting our time...

KAY. And our time is money.

TONY. And my soufflé is yummy.

LENNY. And I wanna pet the bunny!

ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP. And you just might get that chance, if your group is selected to take care of Fuzzy Bunny over the school break!

QUINN. Is that what this is all about? Finding a babysitter for a bunny?

FUZZY BUNNY. Hey, I'm not a baby! I'm a grown bunny!

LIZA. Ooo, I played a babysitter in our third-grade musical production of *Don't Tell Mom the Babysitter's Dead!* My death was always met with a standing ovation!

V.P. COPPER. Yes, well, this time it's Mrs. Farthauver who is nearly dead, and with everyone else having gone home already for vacation, your groups are our only hope of finding a proper bunny-sitter.

TAYLOR. Why don't one of you take care of the bunny?

ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP. I would, but my landlord won't let me take another stray into my house. And neither will my 12 cats.

V.P. COPPER. And I'm allergic to bunnies. *(Sneeze!)*

FUZZY BUNNY. Gesundheit!

(KIDS laugh, he cuts them off.)

V.P. COPPER. That was not a joke!

MAX. I know exactly what you mean, dude. If I come anywhere near a rabbit, I break out in mad hives. I'm like a big itchy mess, dude.

V.P. COPPER. This whole situation is a mess. *(Sneeze!)*

FUZZY BUNNY. You should go see a doctor about that sneeze!

V.P. COPPER. *(Sneeze!)*

FUZZY BUNNY. Is there a doctor in the house?

V.P. COPPER. *(Sneeze!)*

FUZZY BUNNY. *(To an audience member:)* What's up, Doc?

V.P. COPPER. I am prepared to "sweeten" the deal by giving whichever group is selected to take care of our school's beloved mascot a free all-you-can-eat after-school ice cream party.

MAX. Dude! You just combined my three favorite words: free, all-you-can-eat, and ice cream! I am so totally in!

BOOMER. Boo-yah!

(MAX and BOOMER start dancing around.)

MAX & BOOMER. Go ice cream! Free ice cream! Go! Go! Go! Go!

ARF & PAL. STOP!!!

(MAX and BOOMER stop dancing. A beat.)

ARF. Can it be vegan ice cream?

PAL. With vegan sprinkles?

V.P. COPPER. Fine.

ARF. *(Begrudgingly:)* Okay. We're in too.

JUNE. So are we! There's nothing better than a good party!

DONNA. You are so right, sister! It'll be the social event of the season!

MARY. And we can use it as an opportunity to launch our new line of cosmetics!

VIDAL. Your cosmetics?!? But I'm the one that made them!

KAY. Yeah, but it's our name on the box!

AVON. So unless you want to go inside a box with *your* name on it, you best shut your mouth.

V.P. COPPER. Okay! Settle down! Now we just need you all to make a *brief* presentation on why your group is the best group for taking care of Fuzzy Bunny over the school holiday. (*Sneeze!*)

FUZZY BUNNY. Anybody but him, please! Before I have to change my name to Booger Bunny...

V.P. COPPER. And we'll start with the...Home-Economics Club.

JUNE & DONNA. Goody goody gumdrops!

(*JUNE takes the stage with NELL and TONY.*)

JUNE. Hello and good afternoon. My name is June Weaver and this is my twin sister Donna! We're the founders of the after-school Home-Economics Club!

DONNA. What is home economics? Well, I'm glad you asked. home economics is about learning the skills to properly manage a home, which includes cooking and cleaning and taking care of the children.

TONY. Which isn't just girly stuff. Guys can do it too. 'Sup, I'm Tony. But my friends call me T-Dog.

(*NELL barks like a dog. FUZZY BUNNY screams and jumps into ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP's arms.*)

FUZZY BUNNY. Save me!

NELL. (*Barks like a wild dog and then...*) DOG!

JUNE. That's right. Good girl. (*Gives NELL a treat.*) And this is Nell.

NELL. NELL!

DONNA. She's a wild child that we found living out in the woods.

JUNE. But with the help of home economics, we have taught her how to bake a cake, and brighten her whites...

TONY. And use the bathroom.

NELL. POTTY!

JUNE. Good girl. (*Gives her a treat.*) Nell was just a wild animal when she arrived...

NELL. NELL!

JUNE. And look how well she's done with us.

FUZZY BUNNY. (*Sarcastically:*) Yeah, great job.

DONNA. If you let Home Economics take care of Fuzzy Bunny... he shall remain happy and healthy and... *(Making a bad joke:)* hoppy.

TONY. Yeah, and we'll teach him how to use the toilet.

NELL. POTTY!

ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP. Thank you, Weaver Sisters, for your group's energetic presentation.

NELL. NELL!

V.P. COPPER. And please be sure to officially register your newest member with the office...

NELL. *(Howls like a wolf.)*

V.P. COPPER. And perhaps animal control.

ARF. Stop controlling animals!

(ARF jumps on stage with PAL, LENNY, and GEORGE while NELL, TONY, DONNA, and JUNE exit.)

ARF. They were born free and that's how they've got to stay, man! End animal slavery now!

LENNY. Animals are our friends!

GEORGE. And friends don't keep friends on leashes!

PAL. Or test their cosmetics on them!! Or eat them in French restaurants!!!

(ARF grabs the leash and tries to pull it away, choking FUZZY BUNNY.)

FUZZY BUNNY. Ack! Stop saving me! You're choking me!

ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP. Ms. Farf! Let go! You are tampering with school property!

ARF. And you're tampering with the natural order of nature!

(ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP finally pulls the rope away from ARF.)

FUZZY BUNNY. Ugh... That kid's a pain in the neck.

V.P. COPPER. *(To ARF:)* I thought that this was what you wanted. You were the one that demanded we get rid of the Fuzzy Bunny mascot costume. That wasn't even a real bunny. That was just a costume with a person in it.

ARF. It was cruel to put a person inside that thing!

LIZA. She's right. That costume made it impossible to see the performer's face. It wasn't fair!

GEORGE. And it smelled like rotten meat and toe cheese!

LENNY. Fake bunny stinky!

PAL. It was inhumane to subject a person to that much stink! People are animals too!

FUZZY BUNNY. With animals like that, who needs enemies?

LENNY. I wanna pet the bunny!

(**FUZZY BUNNY** screams and jumps into **ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP's** arms.)

FUZZY BUNNY. Save me!

ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP. I will happily let you pet the bunny, *if and only if*, you promise to *not* release the bunny from its leash...

LENNY. Oh, please, Arf, please, please, please! Please can we take care of the bunny?! I'll love it and hug it and feed it and squeeze it and I will call it George!

GEORGE. Hey, that's my name!

PAL. You can do all that *after* we free the bunny, Lenny.

ARF. Which we will do...mark my words... That bunny will soon be hopping to freedom. To freedom!!! Come on, guys.

LENNY. Bye, bye, bunny. See you soon.

FUZZY BUNNY. Not if I see you first!

(**ARF, PAL, GEORGE, and LENNY** leave the stage.)

ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP. (*Talking to FUZZY BUNNY:*) Well, I guess we know who *won't* be taking care of our widdle Fuzzy Bunny who is just so adorable. Yes, you are. Yes, you are.

(**V.P. COPPER** takes leash away from **ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP.**)

V.P. COPPER. Give me that thing! (*Sneeze!*) Darn allergies.

FUZZY BUNNY. That's what you get for calling me a thing.

ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP. And now it's time for our next group...The Cosmetics Club!

(**MARY and KAY** take the stage with **VIDAL and AVON.**)

MARY. Well, howdy hello and a beautiful afternoon to everybody! Our name is Mary and Kay!

KAY. Not only are we the founders of the Cosmetics Club, but we are also the president of Mary & Kay Cosmetics!

MARY. And this is our assistant, Vidal.

VIDAL. I'm actually a master makeup manufacturer...

KAY. And *this* is Avon, our top salesperson!

AVON. (*In a threatening manner:*) If you don't buy some cover-up for your eye, you're gonna need some cover-up for your eye. (*Punches his fist into his other hand.*)

MARY. Speaking of buying makeup, we've got our brand new line of cosmetics available for immediate purchase!

KAY. And you better get them fast, our last launch ran out quicker than a blemished beauty queen at the prom.

V.P. COPPER. I'm sorry, but what does any of this have to do with taking care of Fuzzy Bunny?

MARY. We're a success at everything we do, whether it's launching a cosmetic line, a fashion line or a credit line, we get things done, and done well.

KAY. We don't have the time to take care of some silly bunny, but we do have the money to hire someone to do so.

MARY. Our money can buy that bunny some happiness! And your money can buy you some Mary & Kay Cosmetics!

KAY. Look your best, even if your best looks like someone completely different.

ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP. Thank you, ladies.

MARY. Please, call me Mary & Kay...

KAY. Just like it says on the merchandise!

FUZZY BUNNY. Is everyone crazy in this school?

(MARY and KAY exit the stage with VIDAL and AVON.)

ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP. And now back to our regularly scheduled program. And it looks like we have just one more after-school group to hear from.

(LIZA leads TAYLOR, BOOMER, QUINN, PARKER, and MAX onstage. MAX plays his video game.)

LIZA. And we're just about ready. Did everyone get a script?

QUINN. I can't read your handwriting.

PARKER. It doesn't matter. She's got most of the lines.

LIZA. *(To TAYLOR:)* Cue the narrator...

TAYLOR. *(Reading the script—as the narrator:)* One day, after school, Fuzzy Bunny was hopping down the hallway of our school.

BOOMER. *(Reading the script:)* Hop hop hop! I am a happy little bunny!

FUZZY BUNNY. What? Is he supposed to be me? That's offensive! I'm out of here. Hop hop hop!

(FUZZY BUNNY hops off the stage, dragging his long rope leash off into the wings.)

TAYLOR. *(Reading the script:)* Ring! Ring! The school day is over! Time for vacation!

(PARKER, QUINN, and MAX cross the stage.)

PARKER. *(Reading the script:)* Dude! I am so totally happy to be leaving this school for two whole weeks!

QUINN. *(Reading the script:)* Me too... Woo-hoo...

MAX. *(Still playing his game:)* Yeah. What they said...

BOOMER. *(Reading the script:)* Oh dear. My friends have gone away on vacation for two whole weeks. Whoever will take care of me now?

(LIZA enters with dramatic flair. She doesn't use a script. Her lines are memorized.)

LIZA. I will take care of you, Fuzzy Bunny!

BOOMER. *(Reading from the script:)* It is Liza, with a Z, from The Mystery Club!

LIZA. That's right! And there's no problem that The Mystery Club can't solve!

BOOMER. *(Reading from the script:)* But do you know how to take care of a bunny?

LIZA. No, I don't. But that just means it's a mystery, and The Mystery Club is terrific at solving mysteries!

TAYLOR. *(Reading from the script:)* So, if you want to solve the mystery of who should take care of Fuzzy Bunny during the school break, you should choose...

(PARKER, QUINN, and MAX join LIZA, BOOMER, and TAYLOR on stage.)

MYSTERY CLUB. *(Most reading scripts:)* THE MYSTERY CLUB...!

(LIZA bows as everyone else looks awkward.)

LIZA. Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

V.P. COPPER. *(Screams!)* It's a catastrophe!!!

LIZA. That was not the reaction I was looking for.

(V.P. COPPER pulls the long rope leash in from the wings. It's untied and empty.)

V.P. COPPER. Fuzzy Bunny is missing!

(ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP runs up and looks at the empty leash.)

ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP. Oh my gosh! You're right! Somebody must have taken him!

V.P. COPPER. But I didn't even leave the cafetorium!

PARKER. Then it must have been one of these other after-school groups! They took him while we were doing our show!

LIZA. They used my amazing theatrical talents as a distraction. Genius.

BOOMER. No, no, no...I was the distraction! I was like the best bunny ever!

V.P. COPPER. *(Crying:)* No! Fuzzy Bunny was the best bunny ever! And now he's gone!

ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP. And all we've got are these silly random things the thieves left behind!

(ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP hands a makeup pencil and a stained "Free Fuzzy Bunny" flyer to QUINN.)

QUINN. Those aren't stupid random things...those are clues! Let's see...we've got a pencil and a "Free Fuzzy Bunny" flyer that's stained with what looks like cheese sauce.

MAX. Cheese sauce! That's like one of my favorite food groups!

(MAX licks the cheese sauce stain and makes a face.)

MAX. Ewww, that's not cheese sauce. That's gross.

TAYLOR. There's nothing gross about a clue. It'll probably lead us right to those rabbit robbers. Don't worry, Vice Principal Copper... we'll find Fuzzy Bunny.

V.P. COPPER. I should hope so. Because if you don't, I'm going to make you all take turns wearing that stinky rabbit costume!

MAX. But that costume is sooooo stinky!

BOOMER. Yeah, it's every worse than my gym socks!

QUINN. Or a high concentrate of sulfur... *(Pause.)* Which would smell really bad.

PARKER. That much odor in such a confined space could blind us!

TAYLOR. Or kill us!

LIZA. And you wouldn't even be able to see my face during my magnificent death scene! *(In an old woman's voice:)* I'm the babysitter... and I'm dying!

(LIZA drops down dead after a big dramatic death. THE MYSTERY CLUB applauds.)

QUINN. That was rather pleasing.

V.P. COPPER. Enough fooling around! I want you to find that bunny, even if it kills you! This school needs a mascot more than it needs a mystery club! Now get to work!

ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP. And good luck!

BOOMER. All right! Let's do this thing! Mystery Club on three! One! Two! Three!

(THE MYSTERY CLUB members put their hands up in a cheer.)

MYSTERY CLUB. MYSTERY CLUB!

Scene 2

(The Animal Rights clubhouse. LENNY, GEORGE, PAL, and ARF are sitting together.)

LENNY. Tell me about the bunnies again, George. Tell me about the bunnies.

GEORGE. Well, okay, Lenny. You know those cute little bunnies, the ones out there hopping around in the fields, well they're not so different from you and me.

LENNY. People are animals too!

PAL. That's right, Lenny. And those bunnies, well, they've got eyes and skin that are very similar to our own...

ARF. So the big, bad cosmetic companies and the mean, monster scientists just love to trap 'em and do their horrible, nasty experiments on them!

LENNY. And that's why we free them, right, George?

GEORGE. Yeah, that's right, Lenny. We free them so they can be happy and hop around all nice and free!

(QUINN and TAYLOR enter.)

TAYLOR. You're not going to be free once we solve this case! It's going to be a lifetime of detention for the three of you!

QUINN. Wow. That was uncharacteristically assertive.

TAYLOR. (*In a quiet voice:*) I've been taking a public speaking course.

GEORGE. Yeah, well, publicly speaking, we didn't free Fuzzy Bunny.

QUINN. (*Holds out the flyer:*) Oh yeah, well this flyer says otherwise!

LENNY. Oooo, cheese sauce!

(LENNY goes to lick it. PAL stops LENNY.)

PAL. Don't lick that, Lenny! It's probably some sort of chemical that that smarmy scientist wants to test out on you.

LENNY. (*To QUINN:*) Bad scientist!

QUINN. I have no idea what you're talking about!

PAL. What's wrong, Dr. Feel Bad? You ran out of bunnies to test on, so you're coming after my friend?!?

QUINN. I do not advocate testing on animals!

ARF. But you don't have much to say about testing on people, do you? Maybe it's time we test something out on you! Get him, Lenny!

(LENNY grabs QUINN.)

GEORGE. Whoa, whoa, whoa...aren't we going a bit too far?

ARF. Some would say we're not going far enough!

GEORGE. Not me.

PAL. Or me.

QUINN. Or me... Let me go!

ARF. You don't like how it feels, do you? Well, maybe you'll like how it tastes...!

(ARF pushes the flyer in QUINN's face.)

LENNY. Cheese sauce! Cheese sauce! Cheese sauce! Cheese sauce!

TAYLOR. (*With a huge voice:*) ENOUGH!!!

(ARF, LENNY, GEORGE, PAL, and QUINN freeze.)

TAYLOR. (*With her normally small voice:*) Thank you. (*Ahem.*) Now, we're not here to argue about whether or not Fuzzy Bunny belongs on a leash. We're just here to figure out who let him out.

GEORGE. It wasn't us. But I wish it was.

LENNY. Me too. I want to pet the bunny!

QUINN. How can we be sure that you're just not lying to us to avoid detention.

ARF. Look, we're not scared of detention, or jail, or anything. You think we'd keep this scrapbook of all the animals we helped to escape if we did?

(*ARF pulls out a photo album.*)

TAYLOR. Whoa, whoa, whoa...what the heck is that?

PAL. These are all pictures of us with the animals we've freed. A little something to remember them by. Look at their smiles.

QUINN. Animals don't smile.

LENNY. (*Pushing QUINN's head into the photo album:*) Yes, they do! Look closer!

QUINN. (*With his face smooshed in the book:*) Oh...now I see it. It's completely obvious.

GEORGE. Let him go, Lenny!

LENNY. Sorry, George.

(*LENNY lets go of QUINN.*)

GEORGE. Okay, we let you go, now you let us go. We didn't take your darn bunny.

TAYLOR. Yeah, it's too obvious. In the mystery books I've read, and I've read a lot of them, the obvious suspects are never the ones who actually committed the crime. Here we have a case where an animal is freed from its leash...so the criminals couldn't possibly be the animals rights group.

QUINN. Sure they could! It's the logical choice!

ARF. Yeah! We free animals all the time! Just look at these pictures!

TAYLOR. Not right now. I've got to go look at something else.

(*TAYLOR leaves.*)

PAL. But we could totally be guilty!

GEORGE. We're not...

PAL. But we could be! *(Pause.)* Ugh...well, there goes our reputation.

QUINN. Hey, if it makes you feel any better...I'm still convinced that you freed the bunny.

ARF. Thanks. That does make me feel better. NOW GET OUT!

LENNY. Bad scientist!

(QUINN stumbles to run out of the room.)

LENNY. Say hi to the bunny for me!

(Blackout.)

Scene 3

(The Cosmetics Club warehouse. MARY and KAY are pacing around. AVON and VIDAL stand nearby.)

LIZA. *(From offstage.)* Fuzzy Bunny?!? Where are yooooooooou!?!

MARY. That darn bunny is stealing our buzz. It's Fuzzy Bunny, this. And Fuzzy Bunny, that.

KAY. Yeah, nobody is talking about our new line of Mary & Kay Cosmetics!

VIDAL. Don't you mean *our* new line?

MARY. Oh, I'm sorry, is your name on the product?

KAY. Yeah, is your name Mary and/or Kay?!?

VIDAL. No. But I did come up with the formulations for the cosmetics.

AVON. I'll give you a formulation...my fist plus your face equals black eye.

(LIZA and MAX enter, searching for Fuzzy Bunny. MAX is playing his video game and drinking Mountain Dew.)

LIZA. *(Calling out:)* Oh, Fuzzy Bunny...!

MARY. There's got to be a way that we can steal some of this Fuzzy Bunny fever!

VIDAL. I've got an idea...!

KAY. And more importantly, so do I! We'll give a makeover to one of those Mystery Club kids!

MARY. And when they find Fuzzy Bunny, their picture and our makeup will be all over the school paper!

VIDAL. Are you sure that's such a good idea?

MARY. Of course, you fool!

KAY. It's my idea, isn't it?

LIZA. (*Calling out, a bit frustrated:*) FUZZY BUNNY!

MAX. YEAH! I FOUND IT!

LIZA. You found the bunny?!

MAX. No, I found the secret bonus points on my game! Man, I'm totally crushing this level!

LIZA. Ugh! Boys!

(*MARY and KAY walk up to LIZA.*)

MARY. You there! Ahoy! Aren't you a member of The Mystery Club?

LIZA. Indeed I am. I'm Liza Starr! With a Z! And two Rs! Perhaps you remember me from The Case of the Missing Camera or The Case of The Milk Monster...

MARY. Yes, yes, I'm sure that's it.

LIZA. Would you like an autograph?

MARY. No, but we would like to leave our mark...on your face!

LIZA. What on earth are you talking about?

KAY. We, Mary and Kay, from Mary & Kay Cosmetics, are offering you...Liza Whatever-Your-Name-Is, a complete Mary & Kay make-over, free of charge!

LIZA. That's a very generous offer, but I'm afraid I only let my mother touch this face. The woman is an artist, which is why I'm a masterpiece.

MARY. But there must be someone we can give a makeover to!

MAX. (*Burp!*) Mountain Dew! Tastes great going in! Sounds great coming out! (*Burp!*)

LIZA. If anyone needs a makeover, it's him.

KAY. My goodness, you're right! It'll be our greatest triumph!

(*MARY and KAY walk up to MAX.*)

MARY. You there! Ahoy! Aren't you a member of The Mystery Club?

MAX. (*Focused on his game:*) Can't talk, still playing.

(*MARY and KAY snap their fingers, and AVON takes the game away from MAX.*)

MAX. Hey! What are you doing?!

AVON. Playtime's over.

MAX. But I was about to get the high score!

KAY. Wouldn't you rather score a complete free-of-charge makeover from Mary & Kay Cosmetics?

MAX. Free-of-charge *is* one of my favorite words...

KAY. We'll take that as a "yes." (*Snaps her fingers.*) Vidal...make him look good.

VIDAL. Him???

MARY. If he doesn't look good, we don't look good.

AVON. And if they don't look good, it doesn't look good for you... (*Punches fist into other hand.*)

KAY. We'll have Avon make you a house call.

AVON. Ding dong, Avon calling...

VIDAL. Okay. Okay. I'll do it. I'll give *him* a complete head-to-toe style makeover.

MAX. But I like my style!

MARY. There's no accounting for taste.

KAY. (*Snaps her fingers:*) Avon...take him away!

(*AVON grabs MAX and starts to drag him offstage. VIDAL pulls out an eyeliner pencil.*)

VIDAL. Just relax. This will all be over before you know it.

MAX. What is that thing?

VIDAL. It's an eyeliner pencil.

MAX. But it doesn't have an eraser!

VIDAL. Don't worry. I rarely make mistakes.

MAX. This whole thing's a mistake! HELLLLLLLLLL!

(*MAX, AVON, and VIDAL leave the stage.*)

MARY. Another satisfied customer.

KAY. Oooo...speaking of customers, would you like a free sample of our Saffron Dream Skin Cream?

(*MARY and KAY pull out a small container of yellow skin cream.*)

LIZA. Sure! Thanks!

(*LIZA grabs the skin cream and runs off.*)

MARY. Wait. Aren't you going to try it?

KAY. Where are you going?

LIZA. To solve the mystery and find Fuzzy Bunny!

(LIZA exits.)

MARY. First he steals our buzz and now he's stealing our customers!?!

KAY. Curse you, Fuzzy Bunny!!!

(Blackout.)

Scene 4

(The Home-Economics house. TONY holds a spatula over NELL's head.)

TONY. Who wants the spatula? Who wants it?

NELL. NELL!

TONY. Go get it!

(TONY throws the spatula and NELL goes running after it as JUNE and DONNA enter with casserole dishes and set them on the table.)

JUNE. Dinner's ready! Have you seen the spatula?

TONY. Yup.

DONNA. Well, where is it?

(NELL runs in with the spatula in her mouth.)

NELL. *(With her mouth full:)* SPATULA!

JUNE. Oh geez. I wish you would stop playing fetch with her.

TONY. But she likes it.

DONNA. She's a human being, not a dog.

(DONNA takes the spatula from NELL and gives her a treat and pats her head.)

DONNA. Good girl!

(PARKER and BOOMER enter.)

PARKER. Hello? Anybody home?

JUNE & DONNA. Visitors!

(They go running up to PARKER and BOOMER.)

JUNE. Welcome, welcome to the Home-Economics hacienda!

DONNA. It's so nice to have you here! We rarely get guests!

TONY. What are you doing here, Boomer? You get kicked off another sports team?

BOOMER. What about you, Mr. Baseball? They finally knock you out of the park?

TONY. Nah, I just hurt my shoulder, so I had to take some time off, but that got me thinking about having a back-up career, you know, just in case professional baseball doesn't work out. So I'm learning how to take care of a house, so I can be housekeeper like that guy on that TV show, *Who's the Boss*?

BOOMER. That's a dumb idea.

TONY. You're a dumb idea!

BOOMER. Nu-uh, I'm the best at everything, so I'm the best idea that ever was!

NELL. NELL HUNGRY!

JUNE. Oh, that's a great idea, Nell. We should invite our guests to join us for dinner.

PARKER. Thanks, ma'am. But we can't really stay. We're looking for a bunny.

DONNA. Nonsense. Everything's ready. We just have to set the table.

BOOMER. I'm the best at setting the table!

TONY. No, I am!

NELL. NELL!

(BOOMER, TONY, and NELL run around grabbing placemats, plates, silverware, and cups and race to set the table.)

PARKER. So, about that missing bunny, have you seen it around here?

JUNE. Well, if you came here last week, I would have said that there would be no chance of finding an animal like that in a Home-Economics classroom. You would have been more apt to find a chicken or a fish instead of a forest creature such as that. But things certainly changed when little Nell came into our life.

NELL. NELL!

JUNE. She grew up wild in the woods, you know.

PARKER. Like Tarzan. Or Mowgli from *The Jungle Book*. I'm just saying, it's pretty cool.

DONNA. And our little Nell has taught us how to prepare squirrel and chipmunk and even mole...which we prepared with a lovely Mexican *mo-lay* sauce...which was just hilarious because it's spelled exactly the same way.

PARKER. So...it's possible that Nell could have taken Fuzzy Bunny and cooked him.

JUNE. It's funny that you should say that...

TONY. Done!

BOOMER. I set the table first!

TONY. No, I did!

BOOMER. No, I did!!

NELL. NELL HUNGRY!

TONY. Good idea, Nell! We'll settle this with an eating contest!

BOOMER. I'm gonna win 'cause I'm the best eater ever!

TONY. Prepare to eat your words!

BOOMER. Yeah, I'll eat 'em, after I eat all this food!

TONY. On the count of three... One!

BOOMER. TWO!

NELL. NELL!

(BOOMER, TONY, and NELL attack the casserole dish like a pack of wild animals.)

PARKER. So...why was it funny that I mentioned Fuzzy Bunny being served for dinner?

DONNA. Oh, it's because of the dish that they're eating...

PARKER. Why? What is it?

JUNE & DONNA. Welsh rabbit!

BOOMER. *(In the middle of eating:)* Man, this cheese sauce is so good!

PARKER. *(Gasp!)* I think I just solved the mystery!

(PARKER runs out.)

JUNE. But aren't you going to stay for dessert?

DONNA. We're having soufflé!

JUNE & DONNA. Ugh. Boys.

(Blackout.)

Scene 5

(The cafetorium. THE MYSTERY CLUB enters with V.P. COPPER and ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP. MAX is missing.)

ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP. Could we have all the members from the after-school clubs up here on the cafetorium stage / salad bar please? The Mystery Club has an announcement they'd like to make...

(The HOME-ECONOMICS CLUB, the ANIMAL RIGHTS CLUB, and the COSMETICS CLUB enter.)

MARY. This had better be good.

KAY. Our time is valuable.

V.P. COPPER. So is Fuzzy Bunny!

NELL. BUNNY!

GEORGE. Did you find him yet?

PAL. Show me the bunny!

PARKER. Well, we did find the truth...

TAYLOR. *(Looking around:)* ...But we lost Max.

LIZA. No, we didn't. *(Calling out:)* Max, get out here!

MAX. *(From offstage:)* No!

AVON. *(Holding up the video game:)* If you don't come out here, I'll break your game!

MAX. Fine! But nobody laugh!

(MAX enters. He's had a stylish makeover and is clearly wearing eyeliner. He's itching all over.)

TAYLOR. Max? Is that you?

MAX. Yup. In the very itchy flesh.

MARY. Doesn't he look fabulous?

KAY. And it's all thanks to us!

LIZA. So was solving this mystery!

MARY. What on Earth are you talking about?

KAY. Yeah, we don't have a clue.

QUINN. Don't worry, we have clues. Three, in fact.

BOOMER. We're the best at finding clues!

ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP. Actually, I found them...

PARKER. At the scene of the crime, we found a pencil and a "Free Fuzzy Bunny" flyer with a stain of some kind.

TAYLOR. We thought it was cheese sauce.

MAX. But it wasn't, man. It was dee-sgusting!

BOOMER. Not like that awesome sauce that the Home-Ec Club put on that rabbit I ate!

GEORGE. You ate a rabbit!?!

LENNY. Bad Boomer!

ARF. Get him, Lenny!

PARKER. No, no, no, wait, wait, wait! It wasn't a real rabbit!

DONNA. It was actually the culinary creation known as Welsh rabbit!

JUNE. Otherwise known as Welsh rarebit.

TONY. It's actually just cheese sauce over toasted bread, but it's really good.

NELL. It's not as good as a nice squirrel, lettuce, and tomato sandwich, where the squirrel is extra lean...

JUNE & DONNA. You can talk normal?!?

NELL. Oh, sure, I actually just transferred here from upstate. But I find that the kids in my new school don't pick on me so much if I act like a "wild child."

LIZA. So why are you breaking character now?

NELL. Because I don't want you accusing me of stealing Fuzzy Bunny! I didn't do it!

PARKER. We weren't going to accuse you. I mean, when I first saw that cheese sauce in your casserole, I thought that maybe it's what caused the stain that was on the flyer, but then Boomer said it was good—

BOOMER. It was the best! It was like, the *me* of cheese sauces!

PARKER. So I knew it didn't come from the Home-Ec Club!

TONY. So we're not guilty?

BOOMER. You only steal bases, not bunnies.

JUNE & DONNA. Goody goody gumdrops!

NELL. NELL!

PAL. So who stole the bunny?

ARF. It could've been us!

QUINN. Well, logic would suggest that it was your group.

GEORGE. But it wasn't us!

LENNY. Bad scientist!

QUINN. Who else would leave a "Free Fuzzy Bunny" flyer at the scene of the crime?

TAYLOR. Someone who wanted to frame the Animal Rights Club for the crime!

ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP. But who would do such a thing?

PARKER. Someone who wanted to take the heat off themselves so they could quietly test out their new cosmetics line on a bunny!

MARY. How dare you say such a thing!

KAY. Are you trying to blemish our flawless reputation?

QUINN. We're just adding up the clues.

TAYLOR. The pencil left at the scene of the crime doesn't have an eraser.

MAX. It's an eyeliner pencil!

PARKER. And that stain on the flyer...

BOOMER. It wasn't cheese sauce!

LIZA. It was Saffron Dream Skin Cream!

(LIZA holds out the skin cream sample jar. MAX tastes it.)

MAX. Yup. That's totally gross...!

MARY. So is testing on animals!

KAY. We would never test on an animal... *(Looks at AVON:)* Unless it was this animal!

AVON. I'm not good at tests!

MAX. But you are, aren't you...Vidal? In fact, before you used that eyeliner on me, you tested it on Fuzzy Bunny, didn't you? That's why I got this allergic reaction! Your pencil brought the bunny right to me!

VIDAL. Okay, okay, it's true! I used the eyeliner on Fuzzy Bunny!

GEORGE. What?!?

PAL. You monster!

LENNY. Bad makeup man!

ARF. Get him, Lenny!

VIDAL. No, no, no, wait! I wasn't testing the makeup on him! It was just using it on him...as a promotional gimmick to promote the new cosmetics line! But I wasn't going to steal him! I was going to return him! Look! He's right here and he's totally fine!

(VIDAL brings in FUZZY BUNNY—who is wearing a bunch of garish makeup.)

FUZZY BUNNY. I wouldn't say *totally* fine.

JUNE & DONNA. Awww...he's sooooo cute.

MARY. Of course he's cute. He's wearing *our* makeup.

KAY. Another Mary & Kay makeover success!

FUZZY BUNNY. I don't need all *this* to be cute! I'm naturally adorable!

VIDAL. This was my promotional idea. To promote the line and catch Fuzzy Bunny fever... I was hoping it would help you to appreciate me and what I do.

MARY. You're a genius! We're going to put your name on the box!

KAY. But in a much smaller and less important font...!

VIDAL. Deal!

(V.P. COPPER takes FUZZY BUNNY.)

ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP. You know who is the real deal? The Mystery Club, that's who!

V.P. COPPER. Yeah! They found my Fuzzy Bunny! *(Sneeze!)*

ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP. And your allergic reaction...!

MAX. *(Still itching:)* Join the club, dude...

BOOMER. Mystery Club on three!

(EVERYONE puts their hands into the middle.)

BOOMER. One! Two! Three!

V.P. COPPER. *(Sneeze!)*

EVERYONE. MYSTERY CLUB!

(Blackout.)

End of Episode 3

EPISODE 4: THE CASE OF THE DISAPPEARING GRADES

Scene 1

(A middle school cafetorium [a combined cafeteria/auditorium].

VICE PRINCIPAL COPPER takes the stage with ASSISTANT VICE PRINCIPAL CRAKKUP.)

ASSISTANT V.P. VICE PRINCIPAL CRAKKUP. Good afternoon, students. It's good to see so many of you here in the cafetorium for our end of the year after-school club celebration.

V.P. COPPER. For those of you who don't know us, either because you have just transferred here, or because your brain has already left for summer vacation, this is Assistant Vice Principal Crakkup, and I am Vice Principal Copper, the school's vice principals. As opposed to the vice principal of Camp Owewakaka (*pronounced oh-way-wah-kahn-kahn*).

ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP. Was that a joke?

V.P. COPPER. Yes. Literally. Owewakaka actually means joke in the proud Lakota language.

ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP. Wow...nothing all year from that guy, and then, well...that.

(KIDS speak up from the sides.)

PARKER. I'm sorry...but are we really going to spend our last day at school at another boring after-school assembly?

ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP. Absolutely... (*Long pause.*) not! As far as we're concerned, school is officially over and it is time for the fun to begin!

SIGURD. So what are we going to do for fun?

ALBERTA. Are we going to have a trivia contest? I've got a great trivia app on my phone!

JIM. (*Runs up and hands her the phone:*) Phone!

(And then he runs off, like a ball boy in tennis.)

STEVIE 1. Or we could build battle robots...

STEVIE 2. ...and make them fight our robot mascot, Bleep Bloop?!

BLEEP BLOOP. I will massacre any machines you put in the robot ring with me! Bleep Bleep Bloop! A toaster would be toast!

MARRY. Or we could all play a friendly and civilized game of chess!

(LARRY pours tea for MARRY and GARRY.)

LARRY. And excellent choice, Marry.

MARRY. Thank you, Larry.

GARRY. (*Drinking tea:*) Oh, don't be ridiculous...these people don't want to strain their brains playing the greatest game ever invented... they'd rather drink neon green carbonated beverages and play the latest digital drivel the video gamers would have them consume.

(MAX is *playing his hand-held video game and drinking an extra-large Mountain Dew.*)

MAX. Hear hear! (*Burp!*) That was awesome!

BOOMER. Boo-yah...!

MAX. Let's see you do *that* with tea!

SHERRY. He could do that, if he wanted to! But he doesn't want to, because he's too busy doing other things...like *NOT* burping!

V.P. COPPER. Speaking of doing things...we will *not* be having a trivia contest, a robot battle, or a chess tournament this afternoon.

ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP. We'll be doing something even more fun!

BILL. Like alphabetizing your detention files?

TAYLOR. Or scraping the gum off the bottom of the tables?

LIZA. Or watching me perform a one-woman show about your life entitled *Vice Principal Copper! The Musical!!?!!*

ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP. Well, those all do sound like wonderfully entertaining ideas...

V.P. COPPER. Especially that last one...

ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP. But, no, we are not doing any of those things. Instead, we are doing something even better!

DUTTON. (*In a sudden explosion:*) JUST SAY IT!

ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP. We're having a dance party!

V.P. COPPER. Sadly, that was not a joke. Each after-school club will be performing a *brief* dance that is inspired by their particular club.

ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP. And I will be using my laptop to provide the fresh and/or funky beats as DJ A.V.P.

(ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP *sets up a laptop.*)

PARKER. (*Stunned:*) You, Mr. Crakkup, the assistant vice principal of our school, are a disc jockey?

V.P. COPPER. Don't be so surprised. Everyone who works at a school needs a summer job. Some people work at Wal-Mart, others work at summer camp...and I'm a clown for children's birthday parties. I enjoy making kids cry even when I'm not at school.

ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP. And when I'm not at school, I spin the hits at the Teacher's Lounge, an academics-only dance club in the heart of downtown. It gets pretty crazy. The laser lights look amazing in all that chalk dust. But enough of my jibber-jabber, let's bust a move! Academic Decathletes...come on down!

(ALBERTA, DUTTON, and SIGURD take the stage as ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP starts dance music.)

ALBERTA. What are we supposed to do, exactly?

V.P. COPPER. You introduce yourselves and then create and perform a dance inspired by your particular club.

ALBERTA. And what do we get if we win?

ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP. It's not a competition!

ALBERTA. Then what's the point in doing it?

SIGURD. To have fun! *(To the group:)* Hello, everybody! My name is Sigurd and this is Alberta, Jim, and Dutton and we are the Academic Decathletes! A team of super-powered brainiacs...

JIM. And their faithful towel boy!

SIGURD. Who compete in a state-wide nerd Olympics! This year we came in number two! But we know that we are number one in your hearts! And now we are going to do our dance...The Ten Events Smarty Pants Dance! Here we go! Here we go! Here we go!

(SIGURD starts dancing, ALBERTA follows his dance, JIM tries to join in but gets a bit lost, DUTTON doesn't dance at all—but stands still. They count as they go...)

SIGURD. One!

ALBERTA. Two!

(DUTTON holds up three fingers.)

JIM. Seven!

SIGURD. Four!

ALBERTA. Five!

(DUTTON holds up six fingers.)

JIM. Eleven!

SIGURD. Seven!

ALBERTA. Eight!

(DUTTON holds up nine fingers.)

JIM. Um...

(SIGURD and ALBERTA start jumping around as they shout out.)

SIGURD & ALBERTA. Ten! Ten! Ten! Ten! Ten! Ten! Ten! Ten!

DUTTON. *(Suddenly exploding:)* TEN!!!!

(Music stops and SIGURD, ALBERTA, and DUTTON bow as JIM hands them all towels.)

JIM. Good game. Good game.

SIGURD. Thank you! And good night!

(They all leave the stage.)

ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP. Wasn't that amazing! Let's give it up for the Academic Decathletes and The Ten Events Smarty Pants Dance!

V.P. COPPER. Next up we have the Computer Club...

(STEVIE 1, STEVIE 2, and BILL take the stage.)

STEVIE 1. I'm Stevie 1...

STEVIE 2. ...and I'm Stevie 2!

STEVIE 2. And we're on this stage...

STEVIE 2. ...to dance for you!

STEVIE 1. Let's do The Robot Reboot!

STEVIE 2. With DJ Bleep Bloop on the ones and twos!

BLEEP BLOOP. The one zero zero zero one zero twos!

(STEVIE 1 and STEVIE 2 get into position for their robot dance. BILL tries to speak to the crowd but BLEEP BLOOP starts the music and STEVIE 1 and STEVIE 2 start doing their robot dance.)

BILL. Hi. I'm—I'm Bill. And—oh, we're starting.

(STEVIE 1 and STEVIE 2 do their robot dance, working together perfectly. BILL keeps trying to join in, but STEVIE 1 and STEVIE 2 keep blocking his dancing and finally a frustrated BILL leaves the stage.)

BILL. Oh, forget it!

(BILL leaves. The song and dance ends.)

STEVIE 1. Thank you...!

STEVIE 2. ...And good night!

BLEEP BLOOP. P-p-peace out!

ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP. Now *that's* how you do it! Let's give it up for the Computer Club and their Robot Reboot!

(STEVIE 1, STEVIE 2, and BLEEP BLOOP exit the stage.)

ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP. And now it's time to mix it up for a brand new dance by the Chess Club!

(GARRY, MARRY, SHERRY, and LARRY get up on the stage. Their music starts. It's a thumping beat.)

SHERRY, LARRY, & MARRY. Chess is the best! Oh yeah! Chess is the best! Oh yeah! Chess is the best!

GARRY. Wait, wait, wait...stop the music.

(The music stops.)

LARRY. What's the problem now, Garry?

GARRY. I will *not* slander the good name of chess with a silly song and dance!

MARRY. But what if it was a chess dance that educated the masses on the classic moves of our classic game?

GARRY. Anything to help these philistines...!

BOOMER. Who's Phil Epistine?

GARRY. It means an uneducated dolt, you uneducated dolt!

LARRY. So here's a little education for you! DJ V.P. drop that beat!

(V.P. COPPER starts up the music again.)

LARRY. Now that's what I'm talking about! What up party people? I'm Larry and this is Marry and Sherry and Garry and we be representing the big double C—Chess Club!

MARRY. What what?!

GARRY. This is so embarrassing!

LARRY. Now in the game of chess—the king (*Points to GARRY:*) can only move one space at a time...but the queen (*Points to MARRY:*) can move in any direction she wants, for as many spaces as she wants...

SHERRY. Wait, wait, wait...I want to be the queen.

LARRY. Marry's the queen.

SHERRY. But I want to be the queen!

MARRY. We already have a queen.

SHERRY. I WANT TO BE THE QUEEN!

GARRY. There are two queens in every game. Let them both do it.

LARRY. Ugh, fine.

SHERRY. Yes!

LARRY. So in the game of chess...the king (*Points to GARRY:*) moves one space and the queens (*Points to MARRY and SHERRY:*) move a bunch...

MARRY. And it looks a little something like this! Hit it!

(Music gets louder as MARRY, SHERRY, and GARRY dance. GARRY moves one awkward move at a time [like he's in slow motion] and MARRY and SHERRY move quickly all around the stage, building up in energy until SHERRY shouts out...)

LARRY, SHERRY, & MARRY. Chess is the best! Oh yeah! Chess is the best! Oh yeah! Chess is the best! Oh yeah!

SHERRY. (*Grabbing hold of GARRY and hugging him:*) CHECKMATE!

(Music ends. GARRY, LARRY, and MARRY exit.)

GARRY. What a waste of time... Chess doesn't even rhyme with best.

ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP. Let's hear it for Larry, Garry, Sherry and Marry—the Chess Club! All right, it looks like we've got time for one more dance club dance, y'all! Give it up for: The Mystery Club!

(BOOMER, TAYLOR, PARKER, QUINN, LIZA, and MAX take the stage.)

BOOMER. He said, give it up, people!!!

TAYLOR. (*Reading from a paper:*) Hello. We are The Mystery Club. I'm Taylor Fleck, the avid reader.

PARKER. And I'm Parker Murdock, the ace reporter!

QUINN. And I'm Quinn Von Schnitzel, the super scientist!

LIZA. And I'm Liza Starr, with a Z! And two Rs! The famous actress!

BOOMER. And I'm number 35—Boomer Ericson!

MAX. (*Playing his video game:*) And I'm totally crushing this level!

(BOOMER nudges MAX.)

MAX. What?!? Oh, hey, I'm Max...

TAYLOR. *(Still reading from paper:)* And we are The Mystery Club...

PARKER. We solve mysteries.

QUINN. But the biggest mystery of all is what we're going to do for our dance.

MAX. *(Playing his video game:)* Don't look at me! I've almost got the high score!

(QUINN takes away MAX's video game.)

QUINN. Give me that! This is not the time for fun and games! This is the time for stressing out about not knowing exactly what we're going to do!!!

LIZA. Perhaps I should lead our dance, seeing as I'm Liza, with a Z, the star of over eleven all-singing and all-dancing school musicals...

BOOMER. No way! I'm the best athlete at this school, which means I'm in the peak physical and mental condition for dancing!

MAX. But I've got the high score on Dance Dance Revolution!

TAYLOR. And I once read a book on dancing that had really great pictures and everything!

PARKER. And I did an in-depth interview of a dancer for our school newspaper that was so in-depth that I now have the mind of a dancer!

V.P. COPPER. Oh, for Pete's sake, just dance!

(Music starts to play. TAYLOR, BOOMER, MAX, LIZA, and PARKER do different dances that match their personalities. QUINN just plays MAX's video game. Everyone starts crashing into each other. Music stops.)

V.P. COPPER. Stop, stop, stop! This is terrible!

LIZA. It's only our first rehearsal!

TAYLOR. No, he's right. That was the worst dance ever.

BOOMER. The best worst dance ever!

PARKER. That is not going into the yearbook.

QUINN. *(Playing the game:)* I am totally crushing this level!

(MAX takes his game back.)

MAX. Give that back! That's my game!

ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP. This is not the time for games! Or fun! Something very serious has happened...

V.P. COPPER. It must be serious, 'cause you're never serious.

PARKER. What is it?

ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP. Someone has broken into the system and changed all the final term grades in my computer!

JIM. Wait. We're getting graded here?

ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP. Yes, sir. And as of this moment, everybody is failing everything!

BOOMER. Phew! At least my grades didn't change...

QUINN. But everyone else, their grades were changed...?

(V.P. COPPER looks at the computer.)

V.P. COPPER. Just about. Now 99% of the student body is failing every subject. If these grades don't change back, every one of those students will be made to repeat this year's grade level. No one will graduate!

ALBERTA. Are you kidding?

SIGURD. No. If he was kidding he would have said... *(Pause.)* "That was a joke."

MAX. So we're gonna be stuck here forever?

V.P. COPPER. Not unless we can find out who changed these grades and make them change it back.

STEVIE 1. That shouldn't be too bad...

STEVIE 2. ...The crime happened over the computer...

STEVIE 1. ...so the criminal should have left...

STEVIE 2. ...electronic fingerprint!

(STEVIE 1 and STEVIE 2 work quickly on V.P. COPPER's computer.)

BILL. *(Working on his smartphone:)* Yeah...it's a pretty difficult thing to do...looking for this electronic fingerprint...it could take a while...

STEVIE 1. And...

STEVIE 2. ...done!

BILL. Figures.

BLEEP BLOOP. Let's hear it for my two incredibly smart dads!

BILL. Hey, I helped build you too!

BLEEP BLOOP. Let's not make this weird.

STEVIE 1. Okay, the signal came from an electronic device...

STEVIE 2. ...in this room.

ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP. But who would change the grades!?!

TAYLOR. *(Gasp!)* It's a mystery!

ASSISTANT V.P. CRAKKUP. It sure is.

TAYLOR. No. It's a real mystery and The Mystery Club will solve it! We'll question everyone in this room until we know who changed the grades! And then we'll make them change them back!

V.P. COPPER. That's a great idea, but you better hurry up. These grades will officially be submitted to the superintendent of schools in...twenty minutes! After that, nearly everyone in this school will have officially failed and be forced to repeat this year.

MAX. NOOOOOOOOOOOOOO! *(Pause)* I did *not* like Algebra!

BOOMER. Who's Al G. Bra?

MAX. Aw, forget it. Just do the cheer.

BOOMER. Mystery Club on Three!

(THE MYSTERY CLUB members put their hands in the middle.)

BOOMER. One! Two! Three!

MYSTERY CLUB. Mystery Club!

(Blackout.)

Scene 2

(The Academic Decathlon Club. ALBERTA is pacing, as JIM follows her with a water bottle and towel. SIGURD and DUTTON are nearby.)

ALBERTA. I can't believe all the grades have been erased!

JIM. I can't believe there were grades...

SIGURD. Relax, it's no big deal. They're only grades.

ALBERTA. They're only grades?! THEY'RE ONLY GRADES?!? You have got to be kidding me! These are not only grades! These are a way for us to separate ourselves from the riff-raff in our class! Without grades, we would not have class rankings! And without class rankings, we would not have proof that I am smarter than 98% of the kids in our class!

SIGURD. But that's just a bunch of beans! Just 'cause you're the second in the class, doesn't mean you're smarter than all those other people.

ALBERTA. Yes, it does! That's *exactly* what that means!

SIGURD. But I'm third in our class... Does that mean I'm smarter than 97% of the kids?

ALBERTA. No, that just means there was some kind of mistake. You don't even try hard and you've got the third highest grade point average. How does that even happen?

SIGURD. Maybe I'm just naturally smart.

(BOOMER and QUINN enter.)

BOOMER. Or maybe you're a big fat cheater!

SIGURD. Hey, I'm not fat. I'm just big-boned.

ALBERTA. But you're not big brained, are you? So how did you get the third highest G.P.A.?

SIGURD. I don't stress and I try my best...that's my secret.

BOOMER. I think you've got other secrets!

DUTTON. It's no secret. In a study recently published by the *Harvard Journal of Medicine*, researchers found that stress negatively affected testing outcomes at a greater rate than studying positively affected them.

QUINN. If you're so smart, how come you're not ranked higher in the class?

DUTTON. (*Pulls a sharp pencil out like a knife:*) I DON'T LIKE TESTS?!?

SIGURD. He doesn't like tests.

JIM. Wait! There are tests?!?

BOOMER. Yep, and I don't like 'em either, man.

ALBERTA. But you like tests, don't you, Quinn? That's why you're ranked the first in our class and are getting promoted two whole grade levels...Mr. Smarty Pants!

QUINN. My pants aren't so smart anymore.

ALBERTA. What are you talking about?

QUINN. My grades were erased with all the others. Now you're number one.

ALBERTA. Excuse you?!

QUINN. All the grades were changed to failing, except for yours. Yours remained exactly the same.

BOOMER. So did mine... But I was failing to begin with...

ALBERTA. So, wait...now I'm number one in the class rankings?!? (*Gasp!*) I'm number one! I'm number one! I'm number one! I'm number one! (*Pulls out a cell phone:*) Oooo...my mother's going to be so proud of me! I'm calling her and telling her right away!

JIM. (*Runs over and hands ALBERTA the phone.*) Phone! (*And runs off again.*)

QUINN. You better tell her to come pick you up in detention.

ALBERTA. Why would I do that?

QUINN. Because evidence suggests that you're the one who broke into the vice principal's computer and changed all the grades...

ALBERTA. That is a bold-faced accusation!

BOOMER. I don't care what his face looks like, it's true, isn't it?!? Why would somebody else change all the grades except yours?

DUTTON. To throw you off the scent. If you want to frame someone for a crime, you make it appear as if *they* are getting the spoils. If you steal money from your mother's purse, put some of the money in your younger brother's sock drawer...

SIGURD. Now that will totally throw you off the scent... 'cause socks stink.

JIM. (*Runs in and hands SIGURD socks.*) Socks! (*And runs out again.*)

QUINN. Wow. Those socks really *do* stink!

JIM. I made them myself!

ALBERTA. It's not just the socks... This whole accusation stinks!

BOOMER. So does switching grades!

ALBERTA. But I was number two! I only had to beat Quinn! Why would I go through the trouble of switching all those grades, when I only have to switch one?

DUTTON. TO THROW THEM OFF THE SCENT!

ALBERTA. But I'm not very good with computers. Remember, Quinn? It's the one subject I didn't get an A++ in! And it's the only reason you're ranked higher than me! But not anymore...!

SIGURD. (*Acting like a news reporter:*) Alberta Eisenstein...you just beat Quinn Von Schnitzel in the class rankings! What are you going to do next?

ALBERTA. I'm going to call my mother! Now maybe she'll get off my back about being number two...

(ALBERTA goes to dial her cell phone, and BOOMER takes it away.)

ALBERTA. Hey! Give that back!

BOOMER. No way. I'm not gonna let you do other messed-up computer stuff on this.

(BOOMER smashes the phone on the ground.)

ALBERTA. But that was my smartphone, you imbecile!

BOOMER. It's not smart anymore.

DUTTON. Neither is your plan of charging Alberta Eisenstein with the crime.

QUINN. What do you mean?

SIGURD. Don't ask him questions. They remind him of tests. He hates tests.

QUINN. Why is that?

DUTTON. I DON'T LIKE PEOPLE TESTING MY KNOWLEDGE!!! But this is not a test, this is the truth. Alberta Eisenstein did not change those grades.

QUINN. Then who do you think did?

DUTTON. I DO NOT LIKE TESTS!!!

BOOMER. Man, he's just like the voice in my head. (Pause.) Except louder. (Pause.) And with less high fives...High five!

(BOOMER puts up his hand. DUTTON doesn't move.)

SIGURD. He doesn't like being touched either.

JIM. I got it! (He runs in and high fives BOOMER.) High five! (And runs out again.)

ALBERTA. Look, this still doesn't solve the mystery. I mean, seriously, whom do I have to thank for changing those grades?

DUTTON. Someone with at least a working knowledge of computers. Which means you're out.

ALBERTA. (Sarcastic:) Ha, ha, very funny!

DUTTON. I WASN'T BEING FUNNY!

SIGURD. He really hates sarcasm.

BOOMER. Who's Sar Casm?

(Blackout.)

Scene 3

(Computer Club. STEVIE 1 and STEVIE 2 are intensively working on a laptop. BILL is trying to get involved. BLEEP BLOOP is charging/sleeping in the corner.)

STEVIE 1. I don't understand...

STEVIE 2. ...why can't we change the grades back?

STEVIE 1. The program must be super advanced...

STEVIE 2. ...but our brains are super-duper advanced.

STEVIE 1. We must think...

STEVIE 2. ...smarter!

BILL. Do you guys need my help?

STEVIE 1. No...

STEVIE 2. ...thanks.

BILL. You guys never need my help. Ugh!

(BLEEP BLOOP "wakes up.")

BLEEP BLOOP. Will you keep it down? I'm recharging and trying to dream of electric sheep.

BILL. Maybe I can help you with that?

BLEEP BLOOP. No thanks. Your programming is a nightmare. Ha ha ha. Robot joke.

BILL. Man, I can't help anybody.

(PARKER enters.)

PARKER. Maybe you can help me with something...

BILL. Really?!? What is it?

PARKER. My robot is having problems.

BILL. You have a robot too?!?

PARKER. *(Slightly embarrassed:)* Yup. And it's pretty unbelievable.

LIZA. *(In a robot voice—unless otherwise noted:)* Shall I enter the room?

PARKER. Yeah, sure.

LIZA. You must give the command.

PARKER. *(Sigh:)* Robot, enter!

(LIZA enters in a robot costume.)

LIZA. I am Robot! With a B!

STEVIE 1. Wow! Another robot!

STEVIE 2. Where did you get it?

BILL. I doesn't matter! She asked ME to help her fix it!

STEVIE 1. Good luck...

STEVIE 2. ...with that.

PARKER. Those guys really give you a hard time.

BILL. They are totally insufferable jerks! And one of these days I'm going to create my own computer club, and it's going to be awesome!!!! (*Calming down:*) So what seems to be the problem with your robot?

(BLEEP BLOOP *wakes up.*)

BLEEP BLOOP. There is nothing wrong with her. She is a perfect 10.0.

LIZA. This is not true. I have a virus. Cough. Cough.

BLEEP BLOOP. Oh dear, how cruel is the programming of the universe. I just met the robot of my dreams, and she is sick with an illness in her terminal.

STEVIE 1. Don't worry, Bill knows a lot about viruses...

STEVIE 2. ...because his computers *always* get them!

STEVIE 1. HA! HA!

STEVIE 2. HA!

BILL. They're right. My systems do tend to be a bit buggy. But it has made me a bit of an expert.

PARKER. Such an expert that you could create a computer virus of your own.

BILL. Oh yeah, sure, I could do that with my eyes closed.

STEVIE 1. That's the problem...

STEVIE 2. ...he's always working with his eyes closed!

BILL. Keep it up! Someday it won't be so funny! Someday I will have my revenge on you two!

PARKER. Like you did today?

BILL. What are you talking about?

PARKER. You created that computer virus didn't you? You used it to change all the grades so you could prove to the rest of the school that you're a better programmer than the two Stevies.

BILL. I don't know what you're talking about!

LIZA. Liar! Liar! Pants on fire!

BILL. But I didn't create the virus!

LIZA. Robot will find the truth!

(Robot LIZA moves menacingly toward BILL.)

BILL. Call it off! Call your robot off!

LIZA. Control-Alt-Delete! Control-Alt-Delete!

BILL. I don't want to be deleted!

LIZA. Control-Alt-Delete!

BILL. *(Crying:)* I didn't do it! I'm innocent! I didn't change the grades!

LIZA. *(Stopping the attack:)* Robot believes human.

BLEEP BLOOP. Bleep Bloop believes he is...in love. Bleep Bleep Bloop!

PARKER. Okay, so if you didn't change the grades, who did?

STEVIE 1. Don't look at us...

STEVIE 2. ...If we did it, we could change them back.

STEVIE 1. I mean, we're smart...

STEVIE 2. ...but we're not smarter than ourselves.

PARKER. So we're looking for someone smarter than you two...

STEVIE 1. They would have to be...

STEVIE 2. ...a criminal mastermind.

LIZA. The mystery continues.

(Long Pause.)

BILL. Is your robot made out of cardboard?

LIZA. Reduce, reuse, recycle.

BLEEP BLOOP. She even loves the Earth! Be still my beating processing unit!

(Blackout.)

Scene 4

(Chess Club lounge. GARRY and MARRY are playing chess. LARRY is standing nearby, caddyng. SHERRY is sitting patiently.)

GARRY. Larry! Queen to G5.

(LARRY moves the piece for GARRY.)

GARRY. Check and...mate.

LARRY. Nicely done, sir.

MARRY. You win...again.

GARRY. Honestly, Marry, I don't know why I even play with you anymore. You're hardly a match for my wits.

SHERRY. What about me? Am I a good match for you?

GARRY. Oh, Sherry...compared to me, you have the chess skills of newly-hatched lice. You are quite literally a nitwit.

SHERRY. Oh you... *(Giggles.)*

(TAYLOR and MAX enter. MAX is playing his video game.)

TAYLOR. You know who might be a good match for you?

GARRY. Do tell.

TAYLOR. Professor James Moriarty.

GARRY. I'm not familiar with him. Is he that new member of the mathematics faculty?

MARRY. No, he's a figure from classic literature.

LARRY. He was the archnemesis of Sherlock Holmes.

TAYLOR. And a supremely devious criminal mastermind...

GARRY. Ah, well, I don't see how he'd be much of a match for me, considering he's entirely imaginary.

SHERRY. Yeah, Garry's perfect match would be flesh and blood and right in front of him. Hint hint.

TAYLOR. Maybe he's just Garry's inspiration then. Maybe he's the reason that he's gone into a career of criminal masterminding.

GARRY. What on earth are you talking about?

MAX. You changed the grades!

GARRY. What? You think *I* broke into the vice principal's computer

and gave everyone a failing mark? And why would I do a thing like that?

TAYLOR. To prove that you could. Criminal masterminds are always doing that sort of thing, just to prove that they're more clever than the police...or in this case, The Mystery Club.

GARRY. But I am cleverer than you...as proven by my use of the proper term "clever-er." I don't need to go through some elaborate scheme to prove that.

MARRY. It true. Garry always has a very specific reason for every move he makes.

SHERRY. In the game of chess *and* in the game of love.

LARRY. If he don't get anything out of it, he doesn't do it. That's what makes him the best at chess.

MARRY. And that's what makes me second best.

TAYLOR. (To MARRY:) And that's what made you break into the computer and change all the grades!

MARRY. Wait? What?!!

MAX. You changed the grades!

TAYLOR. And you did it to prove that you were smarter than Garry!

GARRY. But she *is* smarter than me.

TAYLOR. Wait! What?

LARRY. Her intelligence quotient is at least twice as big as his.

SHERRY. At least.

TAYLOR. But he's always beating her at chess.

MARRY. Because he's a better chess player than I am.

GARRY. It's really the only thing I'm good at. I'm absolutely terrible at everything else. Especially school.

MARRY. His grades are pretty bad.

LARRY. He's second to last on the class ranking's list. Boomer Ericson is the only person with worse grades than him.

MAX. He's the best at being the worst.

LARRY. I'm actually here as Garry's tutor. Not that he'll do any of his work.

GARRY. I refuse to do any schoolwork that is not chess-related.

TAYLOR. What schoolwork is chess-related?

THIS PLAY IS NOT OVER!



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