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Myth and Magic

A Thesis submitted in partial satisfaction  
of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Fine Arts

in

Creative Writing and Writing for the Performing Arts

by

Sara E. Green

June 2011

Thesis Committee:

Prof. Robin U. Russin, Chairperson

Prof. Charles Evered

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The Thesis of Sara E. Green is approved:

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Committee Chairperson

University of California, Riverside

## Acknowledgments

Thanks to my committee and director for believing I could say it better, and to my classmates for fabulous table reads and insightful feedback.

And many thanks to Bryce, for always being here for me.

for my parents

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Ends of the Earth  
a play

by  
Sara Green

Characters:

FIREKEEPER - an old spirit, female  
GREAT SPIRIT - male  
OJIK - oldest brother, 20  
SEN - second brother, 19  
KISHKE - third brother, 16  
WEYAK - youngest brother, 14  
CARDINAL - plays the four spirits of the cardinal directions  
DAUGHTER - plays his four daughters  
    Zibe - daughter of the North; late teens  
    Nanzhe - daughter of the East; late teens  
    Kikwea - daughter of the South; mid-teens  
    Nemki - daughter of the West; early teens

Pronunciation Guide:

Ojik - OH-jeek  
Sen - SEN  
Kishke - KEYsh-kay  
Weyak - WAY-ack  
Zibe - ZEE-bay  
Nanzhe - NAN-jay  
Kikwea - KEY-kway-uh  
Nemki - NEM-key  
Gitcheegumee - git-chee-GOO-mee

Playwright's Note: There must be at least four exits, so the brothers can exit in the four directions.



Scene 1  
The FireKeeper

*The stage is completely dark and remains so as the FireKeeper speaks.*

FIREKEEPER

Welcome. This is the Story of the Four Brothers Who Journeyed to the Ends of the Earth.

*The lights come up on the FIREKEEPER. She is alone, in the spirit world.*

FIREKEEPER

Once there were four brothers who left their peaceful, pleasant home on the shores of Lake Gitcheegumee to travel to the Ends of the Earth.

*Transition to Lake Gitcheegumee. Once the brothers enter, the FireKeeper stands apart, unnoticed by them.*

FIREKEEPER

They were the second generation of people. Their father was created by the Great Spirit, but their mother was my daughter. Though I am the spirit-guardian of the flame, I remained on Earth and helped raise the little ones.

*OJIK attends to his weapons. He is obviously a physical being, barely 20. He wears something white.*

FIREKEEPER

The oldest was Ojik. He was a hunter, and strong-willed.  
I tried to shape his bossiness into leadership.

SEN (OS)

Ojik!

*SEN enters. He is small  
but fiery. He wears  
something yellow.*

FIREKEEPER

Sen was the second, a difficult labor, argumentative from  
the very beginning. I called him a spark in a summer field.

SEN

Have you seen my spear?

OJIK

No.

SEN

I know you have! Is that mine?

*Sen grabs the spear out  
of Ojik's hand and  
inspects it.*

OJIK

It is not.

*Ojik grabs the spear  
back.*

SEN

Then you've hidden it somewhere!

OJIK

Take better care of your own things!

*Ojik gathers his weapons  
and strides out. Sen  
stomps around angrily.*

*KISHKE enters. He is  
intellectual, a  
philosopher. He wears  
something red.*

FIREKEEPER

The third, Kishke, was always thinking about life's  
mysteries. He often forgot to think much about anything -  
or anyone - else. He was my ember in a clay pot.

SEN

Kishke! Have you seen my spear?

KISHKE

I believe it's in the canoe.

SEN

I knew Ojik took it!

KISHKE

I'm fairly certain you left it there yourself after your  
last fishing expedition.

SEN

No! Ojik is always hiding my things, telling me what to do.

KISHKE

Sometimes you encourage him by arguing about everything.

SEN

I don't argue about everything!

KISHKE

Oh, really?

*Sen realizes he was just  
arguing.*

SEN

Doesn't he ever bother you?

KISHKE

I try not to take it too personally. It's not, you know.  
He does it to everyone.

SEN

Yeah, but he's been doing it to me the longest!

KISHKE

Then I'd think you'd be used to it by now.

*Kishke sits and  
meditates. Sen exits.*

*WEYAK enters hesitantly.  
He wears something black.*

FIREKEEPER

Weyak was the baby. *(Correcting herself)* The youngest.  
He tried to do as he was asked, but he was afraid of  
everything. I tried to teach him to look out for himself.

*He approaches Kishke,  
reaches out for him but  
doesn't touch him, opens  
his mouth as if to say  
something but doesn't  
speak. He retreats.*

KISHKE

What is it, Weyak?

WEYAK

*(startled)*

Oh, Kishke! I - didn't mean to disturb you.

KISHKE

But?

WEYAK

I think you should go speak with Grandmother. She's standing on the shore, just staring out into space again. I called to her, but her trance was deeper than yours. Or she's very good at ignoring me.

KISHKE

I'm sure she wasn't ignoring you. She's just gets lost in her thoughts sometimes. Go try again.

*Weyak scuffs off.*

## Scene 2

Weyak confronts the FireKeeper

*Shores of Lake  
Gitcheegumee. The  
FireKeeper stares out  
into space. Weyak  
enters.*

WEYAK

Grandmother?

FIREKEEPER

Oh! What is it, child?

WEYAK

I'm worried about you.

FIREKEEPER

Ah, I'm just daydreaming. Nothing to worry about.

WEYAK

You've been acting strangely. Not at all like yourself.

FIREKEEPER

Well, that is strange! I feel perfectly like me. Who do you think I'm becoming?

WEYAK

This is serious! I think you're ill.

FIREKEEPER

Posh! A spirit is never ill.

WEYAK

You're constantly exhausted. You can barely move.

FIREKEEPER

It's nice to know you're looking out for me. But there's really nothing to worry about.

WEYAK

I'm not a boy anymore, Grandmother. You can tell me the truth.

FIREKEEPER

If - if I were ill, what would you do about it? Hm?

WEYAK

Anything.

FIREKEEPER

Anything?

WEYAK

Whatever I could.

FIREKEEPER

Ah. That's different. When the time is right, I'll let you know.

WEYAK

So there is something wrong!

*Beat.*

FIREKEEPER

Perhaps.

WEYAK

And getting worse every day.

FIREKEEPER

I fail to see the point of telling you things about which you can do nothing. You are not old enough.

WEYAK

I am of age now, grandmother!

FIREKEEPER

I am...world-weary. Not something you can fix with a poultice, or salve, or draught.

WEYAK

World-weary does not mean the same thing to me as it does to you.

FIREKEEPER

No, it does not. Come now, all this daydreaming has left me famished.

WEYAK

Grandmother, please.

FIREKEEPER

All right. Gather your brothers.

*Weyak nods and runs off.*

Scene 3  
The Curse

*The four brothers enter.*

FIREKEEPER

I am trapped here. In this body. For giving you fire.

KISHKE

Trapped?

FIREKEEPER

Cursed.

WEYAK

Cursed! We must pray for the Great Spirit to lift it!

FIREKEEPER

Actually, the Great Spirit is the one who cursed me.

SEN

That's impossible! The Great Spirit protects us from evil.

FIREKEEPER

That's what he wants you to think. But he came here, before any of you were born. Late one night...

*The GREAT SPIRIT enters.*

GREAT SPIRIT

Ah, my marvelous FireKeeper! I'm surprised to find you here, but very glad, very glad indeed.

FIREKEEPER

What can I do for you, sir?

GREAT SPIRIT

I thought my little man was here, but I was concerned when I saw the fire.

FIREKEEPER

Yes, it is our fire, mine and my daughter's.

GREAT SPIRIT

Has the man not arrived yet?

FIREKEEPER

No, he is here.

GREAT SPIRIT

And you taught him about fire?



FIREKEEPER

He would have to know, living with us.

GREAT SPIRIT

Was I not clear about the plan?! "When there was nothing, the Great Spirit sent his thoughts into the void of the universe. When he found the best place to create the world, he did just that."

I created the Creepy-Crawlies and the Four-Legged Walkers and all that.

*We hear moving water,  
then leaves moving, then  
animal noises. At the  
end of creation we are  
enveloped in a collage of  
natural sounds.*

FIREKEEPER

Yes, two of everything except the Two-Legged Walker. So you sent him to me. To be with my daughter.

GREAT SPIRIT

Are you calling me lazy? Because I didn't create a woman?

FIREKEEPER

Sir, I would never.

GREAT SPIRIT

You cannot understand the ways of great deity; they are mighty and mysterious - completely beyond your comprehension. You just have to believe that I know what I'm doing.

FIREKEEPER

Your powers are undeniably superior, but I think I know how to execute mine--

GREAT SPIRIT

Better?

FIREKEEPER

Satisfactorily. Haven't I done as you asked? They are expecting their first child.

GREAT SPIRIT

You were supposed to give her to him.

FIREKEEPER

I did.

GREAT SPIRIT

They are here! With you! They were supposed to leave!

FIREKEEPER

Wait, you wanted me to abandon my daughter to this strange man, no questions asked?

GREAT SPIRIT

Questions? I am the Great Spirit, and I commanded that it should be so!

FIREKEEPER

So I just ... send my daughter off? Just like that?

GREAT SPIRIT

Just your daughter. You keep the fire. You are, after all, the FireKeeper. Don't you see? How can the guardian of the flame guard the flame if it's in their reckless hands?!

FIREKEEPER

Please forgive me, sir. I didn't know. I'll make it right.

GREAT SPIRIT

You can't take it back now! Even I can't take it back. You've ruined everything!

FIREKEEPER

I'm still here to teach them--

GREAT SPIRIT

You will pay for this grievous mistake!

FIREKEEPER

Surely this small change--

GREAT SPIRIT

Small change?! You gave the man fire!

FIREKEEPER

How can I fix this?

GREAT SPIRIT

You will stay here to make sure they don't do anything stupid.

FIREKEEPER

Of course.

GREAT SPIRIT

In this body, on this Earth!

FIREKEEPER

No, sir, please!

GREAT SPIRIT

I trusted you with the most powerful of the gifts. And you betrayed me!

FIREKEEPER

Never!

GREAT SPIRIT

I curse you, oh FireKeeper, with eternal corporeality!

*The Great Spirit exits.*

FIREKEEPER

Thus the Great Spirit cursed me for giving you fire. And the fire is tied to me. Since I am cursed--

KISHKE

So is it.

OJIK

The black flames.

WEYAK

The coldness.

FIREKEEPER

Exactly. How it consumes nothing, cooks nothing, gives no warmth. If it is to be saved, you must travel to the Ends of the Earth! *(beat)* If you fail, we will lose fire forever.

OJIK

We will not fail.

SEN

I'm sure that together -

FIREKEEPER

No. You must each go a separate way. Only the gifts from the four directions combined may save me, and the flame. *(Beat)* When you get there, you will be expected.

KISHKE

Expected?

FIREKEEPER

By the Cardinals, guardian spirits of the directions who have not yet drawn the ire of the Great One. *(beat)* It is a long, long journey, but you must go. For the good of all men and women on Earth.

OJIK

I understand.

FIREKEEPER

I strongly encouraged them to go, not just for my own health, but for the sake of all humanity. Then I left them alone to make their decision.

Scene 4  
Brothers decide to Journey

*Near Lake Gitcheegumee.  
Weyak enters hurriedly.*

WEYAK  
I can't do it! Travel all the way to the End of the Earth?  
Alone?? It's too much!

*Ojik enters.*

OJIK  
Weyak!

WEYAK  
I can't do it!

OJIK  
You have to. For Grandmother.

WEYAK  
How, Ojik? The bugs; the bison; the thunder; the thickets;  
the open, empty sky! I can't!

OJIK  
Be brave!

WEYAK  
That's easy for you to say.

OJIK  
It is now.

*Kishke and Sen enter.  
Their conversations are  
separate.*

KISHKE  
Sen, Grandmother is very ill.

SEN  
She's just getting old.

KISHKE  
She's not like us.

SEN  
Everyone gets old!

WEYAK  
I want to help, but...

OJIK  
You can do this, Weyak.

KISHKE  
You don't believe that she's trapped here?

SEN  
Seriously? That's ridiculous!

KISHKE  
So you're going to do nothing?

SEN  
I don't see why I have to do anything! If Grandmother got herself into this situation, she can get herself out.

KISHKE  
You know she's too frail to travel.

WEYAK  
And we need all four gifts.

OJIK  
Yes.

SEN  
You know Ojik's going, so just take two directions each.

KISHKE  
You want me to travel to the Ends of the Earth twice?

Then...I'll try.

WEYAK

Good boy.

OJIK

The others?

WEYAK

Kishke will. Go tell Sen he must as well.

OJIK

What, I - I can't just tell him.

WEYAK

Then I will.

OJIK

*Ojik crosses to Kishke  
and Sen; Weyak follows.*

I don't want to go!

SEN

Sen.

OJIK

Don't you even--

SEN

You are going.

OJIK

No, I'm not!

SEN

Yes, you are.

OJIK

Stop telling me what to do!

SEN

*Ojik exits. Sen turns to Weyak.*

SEN

What about you, scaredy cat?

WEYAK

I'm going.

SEN

Humph.

KISHKE

Ojik could take two directions. But then he'd get two girls.

SEN

Girls? No one said anything about girls.

WEYAK

All the men and women.

KISHKE

What did you think that was all about?

SEN

That was low.

KISHKE

But you're going now, aren't you?

SEN

Yeah...

WEYAK

I hope I meet a pretty girl.

*Sen and Kishke LAUGH.*

SEN

What would you do with a pretty girl?



*Ojik enters, bringing  
four packs.*

WEYAK

Tell her she's pretty.

SEN

How ridiculous.

KISHKE

No one needs to be told what they already know.

OJIK

He's right.

SEN

He doesn't know anything. I'm older. I know things.

OJIK

I'm oldest. I know he's right.

WEYAK

Was that not the first thing Father said to Mother?

KISHKE

It was.

WEYAK

You can't argue! It's the truth.

*Sen turns away. Weyak  
smiles.*

SEN

Chances are we won't meet any pretty girls anyway.

OJIK

Now he may be right.

*Weyak pouts. Sen smiles smugly. Ojik shoves a pack at Sen.*

SEN

Ugh! This is too much stuff!

WEYAK

We are supposed to travel to the Ends of the Earth.

SEN

It's still too much stuff!

WEYAK

I hope I go somewhere nice. Like by the lake in the summer.

*Sen and Kishke laugh again.*

KISHKE

I don't think you'll learn anything from a leisurely vacation.

OJIK

It will be very difficult, but Grandmother is counting on you. On all of us.

*Ojik hands Weyak and Kishke each a pack. The FireKeeper addresses the brothers.*

FIREKEEPER

You must travel alone now for many, many days. Pray to the Great Spirit for protection.

KISHKE

Even after he cursed us?

FIREKEEPER

He cursed me, not you. Continue your devotions. Now, you will learn much beyond the small lands of your home. Go in the four directions until you can go no farther. North, east, south, west!

*She points to Ojik, Sen, Kishke and Weyak, in that order.*

SEN

Let's get this over with.

FIREKEEPER

Be very careful, my boy.

OJIK

We will.

KISHKE

We won't fail you, Grandmother.

FIREKEEPER

You will return stronger men.

*Weyak hugs the FireKeeper.*

WEYAK

Farewell.

FIREKEEPER

Farewell.

*The brothers exit. Ojik heads north. Sen heads east. Kishke heads south. Weyak heads west. The brothers always enter and exit traveling in these directions until*

*they reach the Ends of  
the Earth.*

FIREKEEPER

What neither they nor I expected was that the Great Spirit's curses were transferable.

Scene 5  
Part One: Ojik

*Emptiness. Cold grey  
light. A shrill winter  
wind sounds. Ojik  
enters, heading north.*

FIREKEEPER

Ojik was determined as he headed north. The frosted ground crunched under his feet. The shrill winter wind blew. And the Great Spirit hounded him.

*The Great Spirit enters;  
Ojik cannot see him.*

GREAT SPIRIT

I call upon the snow to sting his face and the wind to tear at his clothes!

OJIK

Oh Great Spirit, please watch over me as I travel.

FIREKEEPER

But the Great Spirit did nothing.

GREAT SPIRIT

I am not merciful just because someone asks. But I will watch over you. I see how you stubbornly face the wind. I see how the snows merely annoy you. So I will make the weather worse! The worst storm I have created yet!

*Ojik is exhausted and the  
snow overcomes him. Ojik  
falls to the ground.*

FIREKEEPER

He shivered as the cold pierced his bones. Every morning  
it took great effort to get up.

*Ojik stands with great  
effort.*

OJIK

Please give me strength.

GREAT SPIRIT

The lands of the far north are harsh, boy, and you chose to  
enter them!

OJIK

Oh Great Spirit, why will this on your own creation?

GREAT SPIRIT

Oh-ho! You are no creation of mine! You're an agent of  
the FireKeeper, that disobedient traitor! I will throw  
everything I have at you! At all of you!

*Sen, Kishke and Weyak  
enter.*

FIREKEEPER

They were losing hope. Their small efforts were dwarfed by  
even larger obstacles. They cried out:

BROTHERS

Oh Great Spirit! My journey is so long! Each day I  
continue, but I am so worn down. I have been

OJIK

Blinded in a whiteout.

SEN

Adrift at sea.

KISHKE  
Lost in the forest.

WEYAK  
Struggling up the mountain.

BROTHERS  
Alone. (beat) How far is the End of the Earth?

FIREKEEPER  
Every morning they thought:

BROTHERS  
I have traveled so far. Today I must reach the end.

FIREKEEPER  
But they saw only endless, barren landscapes.

OJIK  
Snow.

SEN  
Water.

KISHKE  
Trees.

WEYAK  
Rocks.

BROTHERS  
Oh Great Spirit!

*Brothers sink to their  
knees.*

FIREKEEPER  
They called out to the creator of Man in their time of  
need. They were only asking for hope. Such a small thing,  
like a dandelion seed. But he did not heed their cries.

BROTHERS

Will the End of the Earth never come?

FIREKEEPER

They reminded themselves of their father's travels.

BROTHERS

Father traveled the whole Earth.

GREAT SPIRIT

Your father wandered for many years, unhindered, because he was doing as I wanted! You ask for my help - bah! If I could strike you down, if I could turn the world on its side to misdirect you, I would, absolutely!

*The Great Spirit exits.*

FIREKEEPER

They just needed a little hope. And soon hope came. They saw, as clearly as if it was in front of them, what they hoped to find at the end of the journey. (beat) A pretty girl.

*The DAUGHTER enters. She glows, and her features are indistinct.*

KISHKE

I saw her briefly.

OJIK

Far off.

WEYAK

In the distance.

SEN

Then she vanished.

BROTHERS

Gone.

FIREKEEPER

They reached for her, but she disappeared into the darkness. They held her image, vague as it was, dearly in their hearts.

KISHKE

I remember her face.

WEYAK

Radiant like the moon.

SEN

Her hair like black water.

OIJK

And her delicate fingers.

BROTHERS

Pointed the way.

*The Daughter exits; the  
brothers follow her.*

FIREKEEPER

After seeing the young women, their hardships suddenly didn't seem quite as hard. They followed their visions of the women, and each one led them to a man.

Scene 6

Arrival at the Ends of the Earth

*The Ends of the Earth.*

*The CARDINAL SPIRIT  
enters. He wears  
something that is white,  
yellow, red and black.*



FIREKEEPER

Each man seemed to glow like the women had, but somehow they were different - real. Weyak met the man at the top of the desert mountain.

*Weyak enters.*

WEYAK

Have I reached the summit?

CARDINAL

Welcome, traveler.

FIREKEEPER

Kishke stumbled into a clearing.

*Kishke enters.*

KISHKE

Where am I?

CARDINAL

You have arrived.

FIREKEEPER

Sen spotted a smudge on the horizon.

*Sen enters.*

SEN

Is that...land?

CARDINAL

Welcome to the End of the Earth.

FIREKEEPER

Ojik saw a glimmer of yellow in the distance.

*Ojik enters.*

OJIK

Fire?

CARDINAL

Do come inside.

FIREKEEPER

The brothers recognized something familiar about the men.

BROTHERS

Are you--?

CARDINAL

A spirit, yes.

OJIK

The Spirit of the North.

KISHKE

Of the South.

SEN

Of the East.

WEYAK

Of the West.

BROTHERS

Oh, mighty spirit -

CARDINAL

Welcome. You have arrived at the End of the Earth. Do come in. Out of the cold. Out of the water. Out of the darkness. Out of the heat. I have been expecting you. You have traveled a long way. Please, drink.

*The Daughter enters with  
drinks. She also wears  
all four colors.*

FIREKEEPER

The ladies were even more beautiful than they imagined.

BROTHERS

It can't be...

CARDINAL

She's just my daughter. Pay her no heed. Leave us now.

*The Daughter exits.*

CARDINAL

Why are you here?

BROTHERS

I seek to learn from you, mighty spirit.

CARDINAL

Who told you of our secrets?

BROTHERS

My grandmother, the FireKeeper.

CARDINAL

Yes, I see her in you.

BROTHERS

I carry her knowledge with me. I learned much from her,  
but she knows there is more to be learned.

CARDINAL

You care for her gift well.

BROTHERS

She taught me well.

CARDINAL

Hm. It is late, and we are all tired. We will talk more  
tomorrow. Tonight, rest.

BROTHERS

Thank you, mighty spirit.

*The Cardinal Spirit  
exits. Ojik, Sen, and  
Kishke exit. Weyak lies  
down.*

FIREKEEPER

They slept as they had not slept in many, many nights. In the morning, the daughters came to them again. Weyak was sleeping so peacefully that he didn't even dream. The Daughter of the West was pretty, in her own way. It was still dark out, so she knelt close.

*The Daughter enters as  
NEMKI, accessorized with  
black.*

DAUGHTER as NEMKI

Just a boy! Father said to expect a man, but he's just a boy! A handsome boy, though, I suppose.

*Weyak snores loudly,  
startling Nemki, which  
wakes him. Then she  
leans in, her face close  
to his.*

DAUGHTER as NEMKI

You're awake! Now I can see your eyes. They're not bad looking.

WEYAK

Who are you?

DAUGHTER as NEMKI

Nemki, Daughter of the Spirit of the West!

WEYAK

Weyak.

DAUGHTER as NEMKI

Father says you're going to marry me.

WEYAK

Marry you?! What if I don't like you?

DAUGHTER as NEMKI

Why don't you like me?

WEYAK

I didn't say that! I mean, I just met you. But you seem very nice.

DAUGHTER as NEMKI

Thanks...

*She doesn't believe him.*

WEYAK

We got off on the wrong foot, I think. Can I start over?

DAUGHTER as NEMKI

Please do.

*Beat.*

WEYAK

You're very pretty.

DAUGHTER as NEMKI

Really?

WEYAK

Yes. Your face is like the moon.

DAUGHTER as NEMKI

That's very sweet. *(beat)* I like you.

WEYAK

I like you, too.

*They look at each other.  
Suddenly, she darts  
forward and kisses him on  
the cheek before running*

*off. He touches her kiss  
and smiles. He exits in  
a daze.*

*Kishke enters, meditates.*

FIREKEEPER

Kishke was already awake and meditating. Somewhere in the back of his mind, he thought of a quiet girl, someone to take care of him so he could think deeply about the mysteries of the universe. The Daughter of the South had her own ideas. Her footsteps brought Kishke out of his thoughts.

*The Daughter enters as  
KIKWEA, accessorized with  
red.*

KISHKE

You're--?

DAUGHTER as KIKWEA

Kikwea.

KISHKE

Kishke.

*Kikwea approaches him,  
but he ignores her.*

DAUGHTER as KIKWEA

I know. The Earth told me.

KISHKE

The Earth?

DAUGHTER as KIKWEA

If I sit and listen quietly with my heart, sometimes Mother whispers to me.

KISHKE

The Earth is your mother?

DAUGHTER as KIKWEA  
She is mother to us all.

KISHKE  
Actually, I have a mother.

DAUGHTER as KIKWEA  
A spirit?

KISHKE  
No, she's a human, like you.

DAUGHTER as KIKWEA  
Who was her mother?

KISHKE  
The FireKeeper.

DAUGHTER as KIKWEA  
The FireKeeper is a powerful spirit, but even she cannot  
create life alone.

KISHKE  
We were all created by the Great Spirit.

DAUGHTER as KIKWEA  
Not so! He created but one man - from the flesh of Mother  
Earth! So was I born. So was your mother. The Great  
Spirit - praise his name! - is not the only spirit. You  
have much to learn from us.

KISHKE  
I only came here to get a gift from your father, whatever  
it is.

DAUGHTER as KIKWEA  
Much to learn indeed.

*The Daughter exits.  
Kishke, confused, also  
exits.*

*Sen enters sleepily.*

FIREKEEPER

Meanwhile, in another corner of the world, Sen was dreaming of a girl on his arm who never argued with him and laughed at all his awful jokes. However, the Daughter of the East was skeptical that this young man staying in her house was worthy of all that. She gently tried to wake him.

*The Daughter enters as  
NANZHE, accessorized with  
yellow. She wakes Sen  
harshly.*

DAUGHTER as NANZHE

Wake up, boy. Wake up!

*Sen wakes with a start.*

SEN

Huh?

DAUGHTER as NANZHE

What is your name?

SEN

Sen.

DAUGHTER as NANZHE

Sen. A good name.

SEN

It's okay, I guess.

DAUGHTER as NANZHE

My mistake.

SEN

Huh?



DAUGHTER as NANZHE

It's an okay name.

SEN

There's nothing wrong with my name!

DAUGHTER as NANZHE

I didn't say there was - you did.

SEN

Oh. And what's your name?

DAUGHTER as NANZHE

Nanzhe.

SEN

Nanzhe? What kind of a name is that?

DAUGHTER as NANZHE

A perfectly lovely one, thank you.

*She rises angrily to her feet.*

SEN

Of course. A lovely girl for a lovely name. I mean -  
(beat) Sorry.

*An awkward silence.*

DAUGHTER as NANZHE

There's healthy debate and then there's talking back. Only a fool can't tell the difference.

BROTHER as SEN

I'm not--

DAUGHTER as NANZHE

You crossed the open ocean in a tiny canoe with one paddle. I can't help but wonder. You know, you'll get much further saying nice things than disagreeing all the time.

SEN

I don't - Oh.

DAUGHTER as NANZHE

You just learned your first lesson. Don't forget it because you were half asleep.

SEN

Pleased to have met you!

*She starts to go, then spins back.*

DAUGHTER as NANZHE

*(interrupting)*

Nanzhe is a perfectly lovely name.

*She exits swiftly.*

SEN

Stupid, stupid! "What kind of a name is that?"! Ugh!  
*(beat)* I should've told her she was pretty!

*Sen stumbles out. Ojik enters.*

FIREKEEPER

And Ojik waited impatiently for her, remembering her mysterious scent. He imagined her being soft-spoken and accommodating. Unfortunately for him, the Daughter of the North was used to having things her own way. But she did have an exotic scent, which is how he knew she was there.

*The Daughter enters as ZIBE, accessorized in white.*

OJIK

Hello. *(pause)* You're a striking beauty. Even in the dark.

DAUGHTER as ZIBE  
Flattery will get you nowhere. *(beat)* Well, not exactly  
nowhere, but not very far.

OJIK  
I'm--

DAUGHTER as ZIBE  
I know who you are.

OJIK  
And you're?

DAUGHTER as ZIBE  
Yes, I suppose we'll be here all day if I make you guess  
that. It's Zibe.

OJIK  
A beautiful name.

DAUGHTER as ZIBE  
Thank you.

OJIK  
Thank you for letting me stay here.

DAUGHTER as ZIBE  
It was not my choice. But since you are here, I expect  
obedience in my house. There will be no telling me what to  
do.

OJIK  
You have reason to think I would?

DAUGHTER as ZIBE  
You are a guest here and you will abide by my rules.

OJIK  
Of course. *(beat)* That's a lovely cape.

DAUGHTER as ZIBE  
You're quite the flatterer.

OJIK

You're welcome.

DAUGHTER as ZIBE

I'm sorry. Thank you.

OJIK

You will have much to teach me, I think. I'll be a good student.

DAUGHTER as ZIBE

I'll be the judge of that.

OJIK

I'm in your hands.

Scene 7

Impossible Tasks

*The brothers and the  
Cardinal Spirit enter.*

FIREKEEPER

Later, as promised, the Cardinal Spirits spoke with the brothers about why they were there.

BROTHERS

I seek to learn from you, oh wise one.

CARDINAL

Is that all you came for? My wisdom?

WEYAK

Well, my grandmother is very ill, and she said you had a gift that might help.

CARDINAL

Do you not know why? The Great Spirit cursed her for giving you her gift of fire!

OJIK

I know.

CARDINAL

The FireKeeper is supposed to keep the fire, no? But she gave it away!

SEN

But why would the Great Spirit send Father to her if she wasn't supposed to share her gift?

*The Daughter enters,  
unseen.*

CARDINAL

For her daughter. The Great Spirit created no woman. And that's why you were sent here, really. For my daughter. And my daughter you can have. But I shall not part with my gift.

KISHKE

Yes, your daughter is acceptable, but I must beg for your help in healing my grandmother as well.

CARDINAL

And who shall help me once I am cursed for giving man my gift? No, you cannot have it.

SEN

It is not just my grandmother who is sick.

WEYAK

She is still connected to the fire.

OJIK

It is cursed.

CARDINAL

Impossible.

KISHKE

She did not relinquish all responsibility, she just shared fire with man.

WEYAK

The flames turn black. They give no heat.

SEN

But anything within them dies.

OJIK

Instantly.

CARDINAL

Hm. The loss of fire will be a great tragedy.

BROTHERS

Help me and the flame won't be lost.

CARDINAL

But my gift will be blighted, and even if you find someone to help me, then their gifts will be blighted and eventually the whole world will be covered in blight!

WEYAK

Surely the Great Spirit would not allow that to happen!

CARDINAL

He has already shown that his ways are less than merciful.

BROTHERS

Please!

WEYAK

I need your help.

KISHKE

I cannot go home empty-handed.

SEN

Not when my brothers will succeed.

OJIK

We need gifts from all four directions.

CARDINAL

You really think my fellow spirits are giving in so easily?

BROTHERS

You will ruin fire for us all!

CARDINAL

Enough! I will give you my prized possession--

BROTHERS

Thank you, oh wise spirit!

CARDINAL

If you prove yourself worthy.

BROTHERS

What must I do?

*The Cardinal Spirit  
indicates Ojik.*

CARDINAL

Come with me.

*Sen, Kishke and Weyak  
exit.*

FIREKEEPER

The spirit took Ojik outside into the cold grey light. The shrill winter wind blew flurries of snow across the icy ground.

CARDINAL

What do you see?

OJIK

Snow.

CARDINAL

What do you hear?

OJIK

Wind.

*The Cardinal Spirit  
breathes deeply. Ojik is  
impatient, but silent.*

CARDINAL

Out where the sky meets the land, there is a giant wolf,  
white as the snow and quiet as the wind. You must kill it.  
You have three days.

OJIK

I will do my best and hope my efforts will prove my worth.

FIREKEEPER

But he thought to himself:

OJIK

I'm a good hunter. I will triumph.

*Ojik exits; Sen enters.*

FIREKEEPER

The Spirit of the East thought it was pure luck that Sen  
had made it across the ocean in a small canoe, and so he  
devised a plan to test these skills.

CARDINAL

Off the shore of the other side of this island there is a  
great maze. If you can paddle to the center and back by  
sundown, you shall have your prize.

SEN

That's it? A maze?

CARDINAL

I can make it more difficult if you'd like.



SEN

No, no. A maze that will take all day to complete will be quite a challenge. I'll try my hardest.

CARDINAL

It is agreed then. You have three chances. You begin tomorrow at dawn.

FIREKEEPER

But Sen was thinking:

SEN

That's it? A maze? No problem. I'll be done by lunchtime!

*Sen exits; Kishke enters.*

FIREKEEPER

In the Southern woodlands, Kishke stood with the spirit under the gold-green light.

CARDINAL

Today I will hide my gift. If, by the full moon, you can find it, congratulations. If not, you must accept defeat and be on your way.

KISHKE

What is the gift?

CARDINAL

You will know it if you find it, if you know how to look. Are we agreed?

KISHKE

I don't have much choice. We are agreed.

FIREKEEPER

Kishke waited inside while the spirit hid his gift in plain sight.

*Kishke exits; Weyak enters.*

FIREKEEPER

The Spirit of the West took Weyak outside and stood on the edge of the mountain. He swayed in the warm desert breeze. Weyak held back.

CARDINAL

Come closer, boy.

*Weyak shuffles forward a few steps.*

CARDINAL

A little closer.

WEYAK

Forgive me, but I have no desire to stand on a cliff-edge in this wind.

*The Cardinal Spirit laughs.*

CARDINAL

It's amazing that you are here.

WEYAK

How can I prove myself so that I may win your gift, and go home?

CARDINAL

On the other side of this mountain there is a cave. If you can make your way through it, I will give you my gift. Now, this cave is very deep. It runs under the whole mountain, and comes out on that ledge below me.

*Weyak inches forward to see this ledge, cranes his neck, but is not close enough to the edge to see anything. He scrambles back.*

WEYAK

All - all right.

CARDINAL

You will start in the morning.

Scene 8

Part Two - Weyak

*The desert. Sunrise.*

FIREKEEPER

And at sunrise, Weyak stood with the spirit at the mouth of the cave, shivering with cold and fear.

CARDINAL

There it is before you. I will meet you on the ledge on the other side of the mountain at this time tomorrow.

WEYAK

Tomorrow??

CARDINAL

I told you the cave was long.

*The spirit hands him a  
pack of supplies without  
a word.*

WEYAK

O-O-Okay.

*Weyak enters the cave.  
The Cardinal Spirit  
chuckles to himself as he  
exits.*

*Weyak picks his way  
forward carefully.  
Something scares him and  
he runs toward the  
entrance.*

*He stops just short of  
exiting the cave.*

WEYAK

I can't. It's so dark! And scary. And... I can't do it!  
I can't do it alone.

FIREKEEPER

He knew his brothers and his grandmother were counting on  
him. What he didn't know that they were struggling just as  
much with their tasks.

*Ojik enters.*

OJIK

For the first time...I don't know...if I can kill this  
animal.

*Sen enters.*

SEN

I can't figure out this stupid maze!

*Kishke enters.*

KISHKE

How am I ever going to find this...thing?

BROTHERS

Oh Great Spirit, please help me!

*The Great Spirit enters.*

GREAT SPIRIT

I don't know why you're asking me for help. I can't give you any. The rules have been set. And even if I could, I wouldn't.

BROTHERS

This task is impossible!

OJIK

The beast is massive.

SEN

The maze tortuous.

KISHKE

The hiding place unknown.

WEYAK

The cave terrifying.

GREAT SPIRIT

Did you think your trials would be over once you made it to the Ends of the Earth?

*He LAUGHS as he exits.*

BROTHERS

How will I ever win?

WEYAK

Oh, forgive me, Grandmother!

OJIK

I'm trying my best.

KISHKE

I'm not sure I can do this.

SEN

I would rather travel to the Ends of the Earth five times than attempt this again!

FIREKEEPER

They felt certain of failure, but they knew the others were counting on them.

BROTHERS

My brothers are sure to succeed.

WEYAK

And if we don't have all four gifts, we can't save Grandmother.

KISHKE

I'm going to be the only one empty-handed.

SEN

And if I don't win the gift, there's no way she'll have me.

OJIK

I will win!

BROTHERS

I will!

*The four brothers exit.*

Scene 9

Part Three - Kishke

*The Cardinal Spirit and  
his Daughter enter.*

FIREKEEPER

While the brothers attempted their tasks, the daughters approached their fathers.

DAUGHTER

You aren't going to let anything happen to him, are you, Father?

CARDINAL

The test is meant to be impossible, not deadly.

DAUGHTER

You didn't answer my question. Your little test could still destroy him.

CARDINAL

The rules have been set. I don't want to interfere.

DAUGHTER

Father! He already came all the way to the End of the Earth.

CARDINAL

I know. And for that he will be rewarded.

DAUGHTER

You mean me.

*The Cardinal Spirit  
hesitates.*

CARDINAL

Yes.

DAUGHTER

So you just gave me away, no questions asked?

CARDINAL

It is your fate, child.

DAUGHTER

I am your child, aren't I? Yet you part with me so easily while you cling so tightly to your stupid little gift.

CARDINAL

Do you want me to end up like that fool, the FireKeeper?

DAUGHTER

You threw me to him like a consolation prize! "Oh, I'm sorry, this little weed you can't have, but take my child instead!"

CARDINAL

You will not speak that way to me! About my gift from the Great Spirit! You do not understand his wrath. Of course I am sad to part with you, my child, but I knew this day would come. You are meant to be a mother of the nation. I have to let you go. But my gift...

DAUGHTER

I see. I really have no choice then.

CARDINAL

I'm glad you understand.

FIREKEEPER

But they thought:

DAUGHTER

If I'm going to be tossed aside, I'm taking the thing he values most with me.

FIREKEEPER

At that moment, they all decided to help the brothers, surreptitiously. They knew they could not give their fathers' gifts away; they had to be won by the rules of the agreements. Yet there were no rules against hinting. So they went off to devise the best plan.

*The Daughter exits.  
Kishke storms in.*

FIREKEEPER

Kishke returned late that evening.

KISHKE

I have played your game!

*The spirit is  
unperturbed.*

CARDINAL

Not long enough. Until the full moon. We agreed.



KISHKE

Just give me the gift already!

CARDINAL

If you cannot find it, you do not get it. We agreed.

KISHKE

At least tell me what I'm looking for! I'll never find it this way.

CARDINAL

You will know it if you find it. I promise.

KISHKE

I'm sure your daughter already knows where it is.

CARDINAL

Probably.

KISHKE

She'll tell me if you don't!

CARDINAL

I doubt that very much. Kikwea!

*The Daughter enters as  
Kikwea.*

DAUGHTER as KIKWEA

Yes, Father?

CARDINAL

Do you know where I have hidden my gift?

DAUGHTER as KIKWEA

Yes.

CARDINAL

Are you going to tell this boy where it is?

DAUGHTER as KIKWEA

No.

KISHKE  
Of course not in front of you!

*The Cardinal Spirit  
considers.*

CARDINAL  
Very well.

*The Cardinal Spirit  
exits. They glare at  
each other.*

KISHKE  
You will tell me.

DAUGHTER as KIKWEA  
I don't think so. After all, women precede men in all  
things.

KISHKE  
What?

DAUGHTER as KIKWEA  
You are in women's territory now, the direction of  
procreation.

KISHKE  
Tell me where to find the gift!

DAUGHTER as KIKWEA  
You must learn to appreciate the strengths of both.

KISHKE  
Both what?

DAUGHTER as KIKWEA  
Both men and women.

*He scoffs.*

KISHKE

You're talking nonsense.

DAUGHTER as KIKWEA

It is a different kind of strength, but just as necessary as male strength. For instance, the strength of my silence.

KISHKE

Tell me where the gift is!

*She says nothing.*

KISHKE

At least what it looks like!

*Silence.*

KISHKE

Something! Anything!

*She remains silent.  
Kishke storms off.*

FIREKEEPER

The next morning, Kikwea went into the forest. Part of her wanted Kishke to find the gift because she was angry with her father, but another part really didn't think he was worthy. Alone, she contemplated how she could get out of going with him. Suddenly, he intruded.

*Kishke enters.*

KISHKE

Kikwea?

*His tone is softer. She remains wary.*

KISHKE

I would like very much if you could please help me find this gift. You don't have to tell me where it is! Just...a small hint?

*She turns away. He  
follows her.*

KISHKE

I'm sorry. About everything. Really. I thought about  
what you said. You're right.

*She turns back,  
intrigued, but still  
cautious.*

KISHKE

About us. I mean, women and men. Our different strengths.  
You succeeded so easily where I am failing miserably. I  
imagine that a woman's strengths complement a man's  
failings in other ways. And, perhaps, a man's strengths  
complement a woman's.

DAUGHTER as KIKWEA

When men and women work together, there are no weaknesses.

KISHKE

Will you help me?

DAUGHTER as KIKWEA

You must listen to your mother. She will tell you what you  
wish to know.

KISHKE

But I sat all day yesterday--!

DAUGHTER as KIKWEA

With your mind turned inward. You must turn your focus out  
and listen. Listen carefully. Mother Earth only whispers.

*Kishke follows her. He  
sits in a quiet place,  
and listens. The  
Daughter drops a specific  
identity as Sen, Weyak  
and Ojik enter.*

SEN  
You must have figured out this maze.

OJIK  
Faced this beast.

WEYAK  
Explored this cave a hundred times!

DAUGHTER  
Of course I haven't.

SEN  
Of course you haven't!

OJIK  
You know to avoid it.

WEYAK  
You've been forbidden because of all the horrible things  
inside!

DAUGHTER  
I haven't because Father just created it yesterday.

BROTHERS  
What?

DAUGHTER  
He created it as a test for you.

BROTHERS  
For me?

SEN & KISHKE  
I'll never figure this out!

OJIK & WEYAK  
I'll be the only one who doesn't get the gift.

SEN  
My brothers will laugh at me.

WEYAK  
Grandmother will die.

OJIK  
Fire will be useless.

KISHKE  
This journey will have been pointless!

DAUGHTER  
You are the only one who can defeat it. I know you can!

BROTHERS  
Please help me!

SEN  
Tell me how the walls move!

DAUGHTER  
Something may be moving but it's not the walls.

OJIK  
Show me how to kill the beast!

DAUGHTER  
You know how. Take me with you on the hunt, and show me.

WEYAK  
Come with me through the cave.

DAUGHTER  
You must go alone. Be brave!

KISHKE  
Just give me the gift!

DAUGHTER  
Listen, and you will find it on your own. Listen, and watch, and learn.

Scene 10  
Part Four - Sen

FIREKEEPER

Without the daughters' help, the four brothers never would have completed their tasks.

WEYAK

I made it through the cave!

OJIK

I killed the giant wolf.

KISHKE

I found the gift of cedar all around me.

SEN

I...I...

*Weyak, Ojik and Kishke exit. Sen stands on the beach, staring out at the maze. The Daughter approaches him.*

DAUGHTER as NANZHE

Have you figured it out yet?

SEN

The walls don't move, but the waves do.

DAUGHTER as NANZHE

The waves--

SEN

Up and down, up and down.

DAUGHTER as NANZHE

Low and--

SEN

High! High tide covers most of the walls.

DAUGHTER as NANZHE

Exactly.

*He reaches for her.*

SEN

Come with me! We'll get the prize together!

DAUGHTER as NANZHE

You have to do it yourself or Father will refuse to give it to you. But I'll wait here until you return. Go now, while the tide is coming in.

*Sen paddles into the maze. He quickly makes it to the center, where there is a small stone orb atop a pedestal. Just as he grabs it, the tide starts going out. As he paddles back, the bottom of his canoe starts scraping the tops of some of the walls. The sun begins to set.*

DAUGHTER as NANZHE

Sen?

SEN

Nanzhe?

DAUGHTER as NANZHE

Where are you? The tide's going out!

SEN

I know!



*Sen emerges from the  
maze. He runs up to the  
Daughter, carrying the  
orb.*

SEN

I made it!

DAUGHTER as NANZHE

You did it! I knew you could!

*He kisses her just as the  
Cardinal Spirit enters.  
Sen sees him before the  
Daughter does.*

CARDINAL

You are late!

DAUGHTER as NANZHE

Just barely! The sun has not entirely set! You should  
honor your agreement!

CARDINAL

Did you help him?

DAUGHTER as NANZHE

Perhaps I gave away a small hint.

CARDINAL

Why would you do that to your own father?

DAUGHTER as NANZHE

You already gave me away. My loyalties lie elsewhere now.

SEN

Please, sir?

*Sen holds out the orb.  
The Daughter stares up at  
her father.*

CARDINAL

I suppose I have to. You did complete the task.

SEN

Thank you, sir!

CARDINAL

Come on now, before it gets too cold.

*The Cardinal Spirit  
starts to exit.*

DAUGHTER

Father, I'm sorry.

CARDINAL

For what, child?

DAUGHTER

Now the Great Spirit is going to curse you!

CARDINAL

I'm not as certain of that as I was before. You see, I am not the Keeper of this gift, just the Caretaker. The Great Spirit cannot really fault me for sharing it.

FIREKEEPER

But I have another theory.

GREAT SPIRIT

Cursing all the Cardinal Spirits, then who know who else after them--it would have been too much work!

*They all exit.*

Scene 11  
The Gift Ceremony

*Ends of the Earth.  
Moonlight.*

FIREKEEPER

The next day, the brothers rested. Then, under the full moon, the spirits honored their agreements and gave their gifts ceremoniously.

*The Cardinal Spirit and  
the Daughter, with a  
basket, enter; the  
brothers enter from the  
four directions.*

BROTHERS

I have learned your secrets at the End of the Earth and now seek to return home.

OJIK

The snow cleanses and renews all the waters. As Mother Earth shares her life-blood with us, so must we share with each other.

CARDINAL

Receive this sweet grass as a sign of your new generosity. Use it in celebration.

*The Daughter hands him a  
bundle tied with a white  
ribbon.*

SEN

All things move in the Great Circle, from darkness into light and back to darkness. But the cycle never ends; the light always returns.

CARDINAL

Receive this tobacco as a sign of your new wisdom. Use it in communication.

*The Daughter hands him a  
bundle tied with a yellow  
ribbon.*

KISHKE

All are born of a mother, therefore women precede men in  
all things. Where man is weak, woman is strong.

CARDINAL

Receive this cedar as a sign of your new compassion. Use  
it in purification.

*The Daughter hands him a  
bundle tied with a red  
ribbon.*

WEYAK

Our fire within will never go out. The power of life  
continues forever, as we all share our strengths, part of  
the Great Circle.

CARDINAL

Receive this sage as a sign of your new courage. Use it in  
prevention.

*The Daughter hands him a  
bundle tied with a black  
ribbon.*

*The Cardinal Spirit turns  
to the Daughter.*

CARDINAL

I hope you know that I will not part with you as lightly as  
I did those...weeds. You are my most beloved. I see now  
that you will have your own way. You need not go with him.

DAUGHTER

Actually, I rather like him.

*The Cardinal Spirit  
appraises the brothers.*

CARDINAL

Your virtues have won my gift, and my daughter's heart.  
She will go to you willingly, and with my blessing. May  
you have a long and happy life.

*The Daughter turns back  
to the brothers.*

DAUGHTER

Once I have prepared for the long journey, I shall come to  
you. You must go now, I know, but we will meet again.  
Look for me a year and a day after your return home.

FIREKEEPER

The Cardinal Spirits blessed the young men, and they began  
the long journey back.

Scene 12  
Break the Curse

*Lake Gitcheegumee.*

FIREKEEPER

At last, after countless nights, they returned to familiar  
lands.

*The brothers enter,  
meeting.*

OJIK

My brothers!

WEYAK

How are you?

SEN

Well enough.

KISHKE

How was the north?

OJIK

Very cold. The south?

SEN

Very wet. Did you meet a pretty girl?

WEYAK

As a matter of fact, I did.

SEN

So did I. You were right.

OJIK

What?

SEN

He was right. I should've started off telling her she was pretty.

KISHKE

Maybe I should've tried that too.

OJIK

I told her she was beautiful, but it didn't seem to help.

WEYAK

Really? The girl I met was pretty, and I told her so, and everything was fine.

KISHKE

Did we all meet girls?

SEN

Seems that way.

WEYAK

Have any of you seen Grandmother yet?

KISHKE

I've just arrived.

SEN

Same here.

FIREKEEPER

My boys! Did you receive the gifts?

OJIK

We did.

FIREKEEPER

Then let us begin at once.

WEYAK

Releasing you could mean death.

FIREKEEPER

I know. But I would still be free.

SEN

Then we will break this terrible curse!

KISHKE

Woman should precede man in all things.

*The FireKeeper walks in a circle, then sits at the center. The brothers stand around her, each at his own direction. She begins the ritual.*

FIREKEEPER

Oh Great Spirit, revered is your name. Forgive us our indiscretions as we forgive each other.

BROTHERS

Mother Earth, whence we came, so let us return to you.

*At the northern point,  
Ojik raises the sweet  
grass.*

OJIK

The white north reminds us to be generous.

BROTHERS

Oh Mother Earth, bless us with your continuing generosity.

*At the eastern point, Sen  
raises the tobacco.*

SEN

The yellow east reminds us of the wisdom of the Great  
Circle.

BROTHERS

Bless our earthen bodies and our small spirits that one day  
will part.

*At the southern point,  
Kishke raises the cedar.*

KISHKE

The red south reminds us of the strength of compassion.

BROTHERS

Bless the women in our lives as they teach us with great  
patience.

*At the western point,  
Weyak raises the sage.*

WEYAK

The black west reminds us to find courage in the knowledge  
that our fire is everlasting.

BROTHERS

Bless the flame within us all.



FIREKEEPER

And bless all our relations.

BROTHERS

Bless all our relations.

*They stare at the  
FireKeeper. She sits  
perfectly still, as  
stone. She seems not to  
breathe; the brothers  
find themselves holding  
their breath as well.*

*The Great Spirit enters.*

GREAT SPIRIT

After everything...you are still very devoted.... I  
suppose...she's suffered long enough. And you have shown  
that you can take care of my gifts. (beat) Oh, all right!  
There! Be free.

*The Great Spirit exits.*

FIREKEEPER

The curse is broken.

SEN

What just happened?

FIREKEEPER

My spirit, my true self has consumed my body from within.  
I could feel it pulling away, tugging at the flesh from the  
inside, ripping away from the bones. It occupied the tiny  
space in between. I was so claustrophobic I could hardly  
move. Then, my spirit expanded and the body was forgotten.

KISHKE

Just asking for seven blessings broke the curse?

OJIK

No. It took traveling to the Ends of the Earth.

FIREKEEPER

For someone you love. I don't think it would have worked otherwise.

WEYAK

We were glad to help, Grandmother.

FIREKEEPER

I will be forever grateful, my boys.

Scene 13

Epilogue

*Lake Gitcheegumee /  
spirit world*

FIREKEEPER

Soon the fire returned to normal. And a year and a day later, the daughters of the Cardinal Spirits arrived on the shores of Lake Gitcheegumee. They were more radiant and beautiful than the brothers remembered.

*The Daughter enters,  
glowing faintly.*

FIREKEEPER

Not long after their arrival, I returned to the spirit world, never to be seen again. The Two-Legged Walkers had learned all we spirits had to teach, and so we left them to walk the Earth alone.

But they continued to learn from each other, and they passed their knowledge to their children and their children's children, setting down the ways of the tribe. Becoming the People of the Place of the Fire.

*Lights out.*

## SUPERSTARLETS

EXT. PARK - DAY - ANIMATED

Traditional 2D cel style. Very detailed, fairly realistic, but with larger eyes.

DAISY (12) twirls on one white flat. Her dip-dyed yellow skirt spins away.

The yellow shrug pulls tight across her back as she holds her hands in front of her, palms facing out. A yellow plastic bracelet slides down her wrist.

Her long blonde hair swishes as she stops spinning. She is lean, with a surprising strength under her bubbly exterior.

DAISY  
Bright Star Burst!

A flash of yellow stars spray out of Daisy's hands.

JORDAN (13) stands with white tennis shoe in front of the other. Her fingertips graze the hem of her green dress before she raises her arm overhead.

A green plastic bracelet slides down her forearm. Her green eyes narrow.

Holding one arm in front of her, she draws the other down in a quarter-circle, then pulls back like she's drawing a bow. A slightly green, star-tipped arrow of light appears. She releases the arrow.

JORDAN  
Shooting Star!

The arrow hits a huge, glassy-eyed FISH swimming through the air - and Daisy's stars bombard it. Its wide eyes grow wider; it seems to be having its first thought - one of

surprise. Then, it turns into a glowing silhouette, and disintegrates into glitter.

Daisy and Jordan turn their sights on TOPAZ (17). Her clingy black dress reveals much of her yellow-orange tights.

Lightly-colored mist swirls around her tall, thin frame, into a decanter of mercury glass. Light glints off her gold cuff bracelets as she takes her hand off her hip and puts the stopper in the decanter. Topaz LAUGHS.

TOPAZ

You'll never stop us, girls!

Topaz throws something down and a cloud of smoke puffs up and around them all. The girls COUGH as Topaz' LAUGHTER is heard retreating. The smoke clears; Topaz is gone. The girls look at each other.

DAISY

Drat!

EXT. DARK CASTLE - ANIMATED

A perpetual storm cloud rumbles behind a black castle with many spires.

INT. DARK CASTLE THRONE ROOM - SAME TIME - ANIMATED

A cavernous room, all hard angles and flat surfaces.

VIRIDIAN (16) lounges against the entryway. As she picks at her nails, it's obvious her copper bracelets need shining. Her mercury glass decanter is tucked precariously under her arm. She wears green tights under her black dress.

On the other side of the entryway, CERULEAN (17) taps her foot impatiently. Her silver bracelets clink together as

she crosses her arms. She also holds a mercury glass decanter. She wears a black dress and blue tights.

Viridian and Cerulean flank Topaz as she enters. Their heels click against the stone floor as they approach a blocky, obsidian throne where LUCINDA perches.

Lucinda (early 20s) glares at them with her inky eyes. Her long, dark, wavy hair makes her thin, boyish frame look even smaller. She leans forward.

The trio bows before her, staying down. They hold out the mercury glass.

SIRENS

We bring more prana, Lady Lucinda.

LUCINDA

Nicely done, girls. I couldn't expect any more from glorified stage hands.

Lucinda CACKLES.

The trio share uneasy glances.

TELEVISION CREDITS - ANIMATED

Less detailed, more stylized animation, though at first the differences are subtle.

Up-beat, pop music plays as the closing credits of a children's magical girl show start playing.

SILHOUETTES of three girls. Two look like Daisy and Jordan. Lights reveal the figures; they are NOT Daisy and Jordan, but generic magical girls.

PULL OUT to reveal:

INT. MAYA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY - LIVE ACTION

Television screen plays the credits.

MAYA (12) dances around the living room, humming along to the closing theme song. Her poofy skirt and short dark hair bounce around. Her movement makes it even harder to look at the wild pattern on her tights. She is small and looks younger than she is.

MOM (OS)

Show's over! Time for homework!

Maya glances toward the sound, then ignores the command.

MOM (OS)

Maya! I can hear the end song.

Maya's MOM enters. She's fairly hip for a mom, but very busy and obviously doesn't have time for this. She turns off the television by pushing the button on the actual television, then stands in front of it with her hands on her hips.

MOM

Homework. Now.

Maya stomps off.

INT. MAYA'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY - LIVE ACTION

The doorway frames HECTOR (17) as he sits at his desk, which is piled high with books, pamphlets and papers. His sandy hair shows he's been running his hands through it. He manages athletic and nerdy, but more of the latter and less of the former.

He hears Maya STOMPING up the stairs.

Maya scuffs past Hector's room. He doesn't turn around.

HECTOR

You sound like a draught horse.

Maya comes back to his doorway. He turns to look at her.

MAYA

Social studies is the bane of my existence.

HECTOR

So you have to take it out on the stairs?

MAYA

Who cares what the state bird of Delaware is?

HECTOR

The people of Delaware.

Maya glares at him.

HECTOR

Maybe. Don't you have any art homework?

MAYA

No. But we're making puppets at school. I got the princess!

HECTOR

Yay, glitter...

MAYA

Shut up.

Beat.

HECTOR

Your social studies?

MAYA  
Oh. Right.

HECTOR  
You have to take the bad with the good.

MAYA  
I guess...

HECTOR  
The sooner you start, the sooner you'll be done.

MAYA  
Yeah, yeah. I'm going!

Maya heads into her own room.

INT. MAYA'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS - LIVE ACTION

Maya's bed is unmade, her butterfly-covered comforter hanging on the floor. There is a pile of stuffed animals on the floor at the foot of the bed, and another pile of clothes in front of the closet. The closet doors are open, and more than half the hangers are empty.

Maya sits on her pink-cushioned chair at her white desk. She stares at her social studies book. She opens it and pulls out a sheet of paper. Her pencil is covered with glitter. She stares at the book some more, then at the blank paper, and starts doodling dresses.

MOM (OS)  
Stop drawing!

Maya glares out the door.

MAYA  
How does she do that?



She pulls out a new sheet of paper, writes her name at the top of the page and 1. on the first line. She stares out the window.

Across the street, a red tabby (TAJ) sits, looking up at her window. Maya gets up when she sees it looking at her.

MAYA  
Hello, new--

The cat hurries away when it sees that Maya has seen it.

MAYA  
Neighbor...

She stares after it, puzzled.

MOM (OS)  
You'd better finish before dinner!

MAYA  
Okay, okay!

Maya sits and starts scratching out her homework.

EXT. SCHOOL YARD - DAY - LIVE ACTION

Morning. Kids are entering the building, a few are playing in the playground.

Maya is walking across the school yard. She waves.

ELLE (13) waves back. She is every bit a teenager, making Maya look even more childish when Elle joins her.

ELLE  
Good morning, Maya. How was your evening?

MAYA

Great! Well, the afternoon was great, because they finally found the last girl! On Super Sailors!

ELLE

You still watch that baby show?

MAYA

Well, I still like it. Their dresses are really cute...

A PRISSY GIRL passes them.

PRISSY GIRL

Morning, Elle.

She glares at Maya. Elle waves.

ELLE

What classes are you taking?

MAYA

I don't know.

A GANGLY BOY walks by.

GANGLY BOY

Hey, Elle.

His voice cracks, and he blushes. Elle smiles.

ELLE

Hey. Well?

MAYA

What?

ELLE

We have to sign up soon!

MAYA

I'll figure it out, don't worry.

A YOUNG FASHIONISTA comes up on Elle's other side, and tries to loop her arm through Elle's.

YOUNG FASHIONISTA

Elle, why didn't you sit with us yesterday? You don't have to hang out with less-thans anymore.

MAYA

Hey!

ELLE

Just because she wears mismatched clothes and still watches baby shows doesn't mean she's less-than!

Elle grabs Maya's arm and pulls her away from the Fashionista, into the building.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS - LIVE ACTION

Maya and Elle walk toward their classroom.

MAYA

Thanks for the glowing defense.

ELLE

Tell me you'll take honors.

MAYA

Are you?

ELLE

Duh.

SIMON (12) passes them. He has spiky hair and thick-rimmed glasses. He turns to look at the girls and waves.

Maya turns bright red, but Elle waves back.

Simon's eyes shift - he was looking at Maya and is only now noticing Elle. He looks at Maya once more, then hurries away.

Elle looks at Maya.

ELLE

Did you even wave?

MAYA

N-no.

ELLE

You'll never catch a boy like that.

MAYA

Why would I want a boy?

ELLE

Who else is gonna take you to dances?

Elle peels off into her own classroom, and Maya continues on to hers.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY - LIVE ACTION

Late morning. Maya's desk is in the middle of the classroom. She doodles as Ms. Harwood's voice drones:

MS. HARWOOD (OS)

Next week we'll be turning in our stories. Please remember to write in pen, as all your teachers next year will require it.

MS. HARWOOD already has the grandma puff of hair, but hers is bottle-brown; though plump, there is no softness about her.

MS. HARWOOD

Maya? how are you going to write your story?

MAYA

Uh...very quickly.

MS. HARWOOD

In pen. Please pay attention. Now, speaking of next year, the administrators from the junior highs will be coming next week. And the classes you select are going to shape the rest of your academic career, so choose wisely!

The recess bell RINGS. Ms. Harwood nods, and all the students rush to leave. Maya shoves her paper and pencil in her desk, and is one of the last to get up.

MS. HARWOOD

Maya?

The last of the other students leave as Maya turns back.

MAYA

Yes?

MS. HARWOOD

You still need to make up the test you missed last week.

MAYA

Oh, right...

MS. HARWOOD

You can come in after lunch.

MAYA

During recess??

MS. HARWOOD

You've already had more time to study than the other students did, Maya. It's not fair to them to wait any longer.

MAYA

Okay...

Maya fidgets.

MS. HARWOOD

You can go now.

Maya runs out.

EXT. SCHOOL YARD - DAY - LIVE ACTION

Morning recess. Maya hurries onto the crowded yard. She looks around, spotting Elle with a group of kids huddled around a tree. As she gets closer, she hears the boys yelling:

BOYS

Scaredy cat! Scaredy cat! Mangy old thing. I'll get you down!

One of the boys throws a ROCK into the tree. A girl grabs his arm.

GIRL

Don't! You'll hurt it.

BOY

So?

Maya sneaks in next to Elle.

MAYA

Hey.

ELLE

We were trying to coax it down,  
but now the boys are just scaring  
it worse.

Maya looks into the tree and glimpses a cat clinging to a  
high branch.

MAYA

It's a cat, I'm sure it climbs  
lots of trees.

ELLE

But it's just been clinging to  
that one branch since I got here!

MAYA

If you're so worried about it, why  
don't you go get it?

ELLE

Me? Climb a tree? Please. But  
someone really should go up after  
it.

MAYA

Fine, I'll do it myself.

ELLE

I didn't mean you!

Maya starts to move through the crowd.

ELLE

Maya! All the boys will see up  
your skirt!

Maya stops, looks down at her skirt, then up at the cat.  
She recognizes it as the same cat from outside her house.  
He stares at her.

Maya worms her way through the crowd to the tree.

She jumps but her fingers barely graze the lowest branch. She tries again to no avail. The others LAUGH at her. Maya hunches down real low, then springs up. She gets a tenuous grasp with one hand, then manages to get the other hand on the branch too.

As she walks her legs up the trunk, her skirt starts to come up. The boys OOH and the girls GASP - but Maya is wearing bike shorts underneath. The boys AW while the girls SIGH in relief.

Maya scrambles up the tree toward the cat. When she can almost touch him, he WINKS at her and bounds out of the tree, off the head of the boy who threw the rock, and rushes across the yard out of sight.

The kids leave as Maya works her way out of the tree. Elle waits for her at the bottom. Maya almost falls out of the tree.

ELLE

I can't believe you did that. You were so...brave.

MAYA

It's just a tree.

ELLE

Yeah, but no one else wanted to climb it, did they?

MAYA

I guess...

The recess bell RINGS.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY - LIVE ACTION

The RINGING continues.



Kids flood out of classrooms; school is out. Elle and Maya meet in the hallway. They walk a bit.

MAYA

Ugh! Social studies book.

Maya turns around and fights the crowd back to the classroom. Elle stands still as the others move around her.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY - LIVE ACTION

Maya enters the classroom. It is empty, except for the red tabby, who sits on Maya's desk, his back to her. She stops.

TAJ

There you are! Take this!

He indicates something on the desk. Maya doesn't move.

TAJ

Put it on now, Maya!

Maya comes closer and sees what looks like a blue plastic digital bracelet-watch on her desk. Taj nudges it with his nose. Maya ignores him and reaches into her desk for her book.

TAJ

You have to stop the Sirens!

Maya pulls the book out of her desk and starts to leave.

TAJ

Come back here!

Maya does not look back.

MAYA

You can't tell me what to do  
because you aren't really even  
talking.

Maya leaves. Taj blinks in disbelief.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS - LIVE ACTION

Elle sees Maya coming toward her, book in hand. Maya has a dazed look.

ELLE  
What happened in there?

MAYA  
Nothing.

ELLE  
Are you sure?

MAYA  
I'm fine.

They push through the outside doors.

EXT. SCHOOL YARD - CONTINUOUS - LIVE ACTION

Maya and Elle are stopped in their tracks by all the noisy commotion happening outside.

Everyone is seriously cranky. Kids are pushing each other, whining, crying; parents are yelling at them and at each other.

ELLE  
Did we miss something?

MAYA'S POV: At the edges of her vision, Maya can almost see faintly-colored mist coming out of people. She closes her eyes tightly and shakes her head. When she opens her eyes, the mist is gone.

ELLE

Maya?

MAYA

Don't look at me. I don't know  
what's going on.

Elle and Maya start walking home, the only two people who  
aren't visibly upset.

EXT. MAYA'S HOUSE - DAY - LIVE ACTION

Maya goes inside the house.

Taj rounds the corner and nonchalantly approaches Maya's  
house. He peers up at her open window. He climbs  
gracefully toward it. He takes a couple of confident leaps.

He leaps for the window sill - and mislands it. He  
scrambles for purchase, his claws scratching the sill, his  
back legs circling wildly. He finally gets his back claws  
secure, and heaves himself onto the sill like nothing  
happened.

Taj slips inside.

INT. MAYA'S BEDROOM - DAY - LIVE ACTION

Maya drops her backpack on the floor. She turns to kick  
her shoes off, and sees Taj.

She quickly slams the door.

MAYA

If Mom sees you! Get out! Shoo,  
shoo!

TAJ

I've been looking for you.

MAYA

There isn't a talking cat in my house because we aren't allowed to have pets.

TAJ

Listen to me, Maya, please!

Maya looks him in the eye.

MAYA

How do you know my name?

TAJ

I've been watching you.

MAYA

'Cause that's not creepy at all.

TAJ

You are a Guardian Star. And I'm here to awaken you.

MAYA

As you can see, I'm already awake, thanks. Now get out before Mom finds you.

TAJ

We obviously need to come to some sort of understanding here, starting with your understanding that you're a Star.

Taj jumps up on Maya's desk. She sees the bracelet next to him.

TAJ

Put this on and you'll see.

MAYA

I don't take things from  
strangers, and especially not from  
strangers who are freaky talking  
cats.

She kicks off her shoes and starts rifling through her  
backpack.

TAJ

Then allow me to introduce myself.  
I'm Taj, your adviser, of sorts.

MAYA

I don't think I need the advice of  
a cat, thanks.

TAJ

I'm just trying to make you see  
what you are. The latest in a  
long line of girls just like you.

MAYA

I'm nobody special.

TAJ

You didn't see anything weird this  
afternoon?

Maya hesitates.

MAYA

No. I mean, except you.

TAJ

You can see the magic now because  
you know it's real. And the only  
people who know it's real have  
powers.

MAYA

Magic is not real!

TAJ  
Said the girl who is conversing  
with a cat.

MAYA  
I don't know who you think I am,  
but you're mistaking me for  
someone else. I am not magic!

TAJ  
I realize this is hard to believe,  
but you are the current Evening  
Star.

MAYA  
Just get someone else, okay?

TAJ  
I'm not recruiting you! I'm  
trying to enlighten you. Every  
generation has its Three Stars.  
And you are one. I sense your  
mark.

Maya freaks out, looking all over herself.

MAYA  
Mark? What mark?

TAJ  
When you become the Guardian Star,  
a visual representation of your  
original form manifests itself.

MAYA  
Huh?

TAJ  
If you transform, a star glows on  
your forehead. Just put on the  
bracelet. If nothing happens,  
then I was mistaken. And you'll  
never see me again.

MAYA  
You promise?

TAJ  
I swear it.

MAYA  
Fine.

Maya takes the bracelet and puts it on reluctantly. The  
face blips.

MAYA  
Whoa.

TAJ  
Now push the button!

MAYA  
Which one? There are, like--

TAJ  
The one in the middle!

Maya pushes the button.

MAYA'S TRANSFORMATION SEQUENCE - LIVE ACTION

Black liminal space.

A BLUE HEPTAGRAM glows on Maya's forehead.

Transition to ANIMATION as she rotates and becomes a  
glowing silhouette. Blue stars swirl around her. Her

skirt flares out, becoming much poofier, sticking almost straight out.

As the stars fade, Maya strikes a pose as the Evening Star.

A white ruffle peeks out from under her blue dress, matched by her white mary janes.

INT. MAYA'S BEDROOM - DAY - ANIMATED

Maya inspects herself in disbelief.

MAYA

What did you do to me?

TAJ

I didn't do anything. It was always in you. I just awakened it. Now, wear the bracelet at all times. You need it to transform, and to communicate with the others.

MAYA

There are others?

TAJ

Yes, as I said before, there are Three Guardian Stars. You are the last to awaken. Listen, when the Earth was first created...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SPACE - ANIMATED

The Earth is a glowing blue-green marble.



TAJ (VO)  
Three Stars were assigned to  
protect it. They watched in  
shifts, so the Earth was never  
alone. They were the Day Star--

A yellow dot WINKS into existence.

TAJ (VO)  
The Evening Star.

A blue dot BLINKS on.

TAJ (VO)  
And the Midnight Star.

A green dot WINKS.

TAJ (VO)  
When the Earth was in danger, the  
Stars descended to protect it.

The dots swirl down to Earth.

EXT. ICY HIGHLANDS - DAY - ANIMATED

Three large energy orbs swoop past a small, ragged ARMY  
toward a HOARD OF DEMONS, leaving colored trails behind  
them. The ARMY MEN stand in awe as the colored lights zoom  
in and out of the hoard. Soon the demons have all fallen.  
The army CHEERS.

EXT. OPEN SEA - ANIMATED

A huge SEA SERPENT looms over a fishing boat. The three  
lights fly in and spiral around the serpent, disorienting  
it until it has tied itself in knots and falls beneath the  
waves. The FISHERMEN CHEER.

EXT. ROLLING HILLS - NIGHT - ANIMATED

An ANGRY MOB, complete with torches and pitchforks, faces off with a DRAGON.

TAJ (VO)

The Earth was a dangerous place in those days, and soon the Stars had spent too much time away from the heavens. They became mortal.

Three female figures run up from behind the crowd. Their features are indistinct in the firelight. Their brightly colored dresses - yellow, green, blue - looks strange compared to the villagers' drab clothes.

TAJ (VO)

But they retained their powers.

The women yell an indistinct BATTLE CRY under the ROAR of the dragon. The dragon is bombarded with yellow, blue and green lights. It soon collapses under the barrage. The townspeople CHEER.

TAJ (VO)

And when the time came, their powers passed on to others.

EXT. NEW ENGLAND TOWN - EVENING - ANIMATED

A BOG MONSTER slogs toward three different young women, but they still wear yellow, green and blue. The monster BELLOWS, overpowering their different BATTLE CRY. The women attack. It MOANS and MELTS back into mud.

The young women turn triumphantly to face a group of VILLAGERS. The women's colors stand out even more against the villagers' black and white. They look angry.

TAJ (VO)  
Eventually they learned they  
needed to hide their powers.

VILLAGER  
Witches!

The women run.

#### BLACK LIMINAL SPACE - ANIMATED

Three female bodies in dark shadows, their features  
obscure. They wear long toga-style dresses, with pieces of  
armor. The center woman's armor is yellow/gold, the two on  
either side of her blue and green.

TAJ (VO)  
But they are remembered still in  
stories about warrior goddesses  
like Athena, or brave women like  
Mu-Lan.

On the forehead of the center woman glows an enneagram  
(nine-pointed star). On the forehead of the green-clad  
woman, an octogram glows. On the blue, a heptagram.

TAJ (VO)  
Every generation, there are three  
Stars.

Slowly at first, the female bodies morph into three other  
female bodies, wearing slightly different but still color-  
coded clothes; the stars still glow on their foreheads.

They pause in these new forms for a breath, then begin  
morphing again, more quickly. Faster and faster, the trio  
cycles through many different bodies and outfits, always  
retaining the color-coding and the forehead-stars.

TAJ (VO)  
Though no one today knows who they  
are - no one can know - they  
continue to protect the Earth.

At last, the figures settle on forms that look like Daisy,  
Jordan and Maya.

TAJ (VO)  
When there is no danger, the  
powers sleep.

The forehead-stars fade.

TAJ (VO)  
But as soon as there is a threat,  
the Stars must awaken.

The stars glow, much more brightly than before, blindingly,  
until everything is enveloped in a white light.

INT. MAYA'S BEDROOM - DAY - ANIMATED

Maya is enraptured in the story.

MAYA  
This...is...awesome! We're like  
the Super Sailors!

TAJ  
Huh?

MAYA  
Girls with powers kicking--I mean,  
saving the world!

TAJ  
Yes, exactly! You should begin  
training at once.

MAYA  
Let's go!

EXT. MAYA'S BACKYARD - DAY - ANIMATED

Maya bounces excitedly.

MAYA  
Okay, what are my powers?

TAJ  
You will feel them within you.  
Close your eyes and let them speak  
to you.

MAYA  
Okay.

TAJ  
Oh, and aim up. We don't want to  
ruin anything.

MAYA  
Right.

She closes her eyes and takes a few deep breaths. She  
opens one eye.

MAYA  
I don't feel anything.

TAJ  
Imagine them glowing within you.

Maya closes her eyes again. Slowly, she seems to stand  
taller. She points at the sky with both hands.

MAYA  
Evening Star Power!

Nothing happens.

She wiggles her fingers, holds her palms toward the sky, pretends she is throwing something. Nothing.

TAJ  
It's okay. Just focus!

Maya nods, and closes her eyes again. She lunges forward and flings one hand out.

MAYA  
Dusk Dust!

Nothing happens.

TAJ  
Dusk Dust?

MAYA  
It just came to me.

TAJ  
Keep trying.

MAYA  
What exactly am I trying to do?

TAJ  
The powers manifest themselves differently with each generation.

MAYA  
You don't know what my power is?

TAJ  
Uh...no. But I know you have them!

MAYA  
Great.

TAJ

Try again! Imagine you are saving  
your house from a fireball!

Maya closes her eyes again.

MAYA

I feel like I should have a wand.

TAJ

Well, you don't.

Maya sighs. She twirls in a circle then makes her thumb  
and finger into a gun.

MAYA

First Star I See Tonight! Byew!

She shoots into the sky.

Nothing happens.

Maya slumps.

TAJ

Try again!

MAYA

It's not working! You were wrong.  
I'm not really the Star.

TAJ

You transformed.

MAYA

Yeah...

TAJ

So you are she! Try again!

Maya closes her eyes reluctantly.

All is still for a moment.

Maya hears a BEEPING.

MAYA  
What is that?

TAJ  
It's your bracelet!

Maya opens her eyes and looks at the bracelet. The face is blinking ALERT inside a heart.

TAJ  
The others need you! You must go to them!

MAYA  
And do what? A distracting dance?

TAJ  
Just get down here!

Maya crouches down so Taj can see the bracelet. He unsheathes one claw and pushes buttons rapidly.

TAJ  
Good luck!

MAYA  
You're not coming with me?

She already has a glowing blue aura and blue sparkles appear. Soon they cover her form, and rush upward. Maya is gone.

Taj hears the back door open and runs off.

Mom pokes her head out the door.

MOM  
Maya?



Mom looks left and right, then comes out into the yard.  
She stands where Maya stood and looks up into the sky.

MOM

Hm.

INT. MOVIE THEATER LOBBY - DAY - ANIMATED

The sparkles descend and coalesce into Maya. She looks around. The lobby is deserted except for a PIMPLY TEEN working concessions. He seems not to see Maya.

A large, scaly tail comes around the corner. Maya hears the creature BELLOW. She looks back at the teen; he is oblivious.

The tail slides away as the creature turns around and Maya comes face-to-face with a dragony-lizard MONSTER. She freezes.

Daisy and Jordan run in after the monster. They see Maya, and her presence catches them off-guard.

JORDAN

She sees!

Daisy pushes buttons on her bracelet.

DAISY

She's...the Evening Star.

Daisy and Jordan's faces light up.

The monster takes a deep breath.

JORDAN

Hey! It breathes fire!

DAISY

Your powers!

Maya is petrified. Daisy and Jordan start running.

Jordan tackles Maya to the ground just as the flames rush over them.

DAISY (OS)  
Over here, you big dumb ox!  
Dragon...thing...

The monster turns toward Daisy. Jordan helps Maya up.

MAYA  
What just...?

JORDAN  
Behind the counter!

Jordan pushes Maya toward the concessions counter. Maya scrambles behind it. The teen starts WHISTLING to himself as he wipes down the counter. Maya sees a faintly-colored mist seeping out of him.

MAYA  
Hey, get down!

He doesn't hear her. She pulls on his pant-leg.

MAYA  
Hey!

TEEN  
Mouse! Mouse!

He jumps up on the counter. The monster swipes at the teen, sending plastic lids, straws and napkins flying into the air. The teen SCREAMS and faints, falling off the counter next to Maya. She risks a peek over the edge.

Behind the monster, Daisy holds her hands out toward it.

DAISY  
Bright Star Burst!

As Daisy's stars strike the monster, Jordan, off to one side, looses an arrow.

JORDAN  
Shooting Star!

The arrow strikes the monster in the side. It ROARS its death-cry, turns into a glowing silhouette, and disintegrates into glitter.

JORDAN  
Get her!

It appears she is pointing at Maya, but Maya hears a LAUGH behind her. Maya turns to see Topaz.

TOPAZ  
Three of you now! How cute! But today, there are three of me, too. No one likes going to the movies alone! Viridian! Cerulean!

Viridian and Cerulean come up behind her.

VIRIDIAN  
Yes, Topaz?

Topaz points at the three girls.

CERULEAN  
Oh, how cute!

TOPAZ  
My words, exactly.

Jordan begins her attack.

JORDAN  
Shooting--

VIRIDIAN

Now, now. Play nice. You don't  
want to end up like the others.

The Sirens CLINK their metal bracelets together. Glowing  
yellow, green and blue circles fly out of their bracelets  
and toward Daisy, Jordan and Maya.

Maya ducks while Daisy and Jordan leap out of the way. The  
Sirens LAUGH and run off.

Maya hears people inside the theaters complaining loudly.  
A MAN WITH AN OLD FEDORA comes out of one of the theaters,  
grumbling to himself. He puts on his hat as he walks out,  
oblivious to all else.

Maya stands and brushes her self off.

JORDAN

Are you sure she's a Star?

Daisy shrugs.

MAYA

Well, Taj said I was...

DAISY

She knows Taj. She has a bracelet.

JORDAN

She's completely useless.

MAYA

Hey!

DAISY

Meet us at Frostine's Ice Cream  
House tomorrow.

MAYA

Uh, I don't know where that is...

JORDAN  
It's across the street from the  
mall!

MAYA  
Oh, that place...

She still doesn't know.

DAISY  
Be there at two o'clock.

JORDAN  
Don't be late!

DAISY  
Let's go.

JORDAN  
Right.

Jordan and Daisy start pushing buttons on their bracelets.  
Jordan is faster; she has a green aura and green sparkles  
appear. The sparkles rush upward as Daisy's yellow aura  
starts glowing.

MAYA  
Wait! How do you--?

Daisy grabs Maya's wrist. Daisy quickly pushes buttons as  
sparkles start surrounding her.

MAYA  
Thank you!

Daisy is covered in sparkles and disappears. Maya's aura  
starts glowing.

The MANAGER walks in.

MANAGER  
What the? Troy!

The teen sits up groggily.

MANAGER  
What happened here?

TEEN  
There was...a mouse.

INT. DARK CASTLE THRONE ROOM - SAME TIME - ANIMATED

The Sirens bow before Lucinda.

SIRENS  
More prana, lady.

LUCINDA  
Marvelous.

She comes down off her throne and takes the decanters from them and turns back.

TOPAZ  
And...

Lucinda spins around.

LUCINDA  
And?!

Topaz glances uneasily at the others.

TOPAZ  
The Guardian Stars...

LUCINDA  
Yes??

VIRIDIAN  
They've found the last one!

LUCINDA  
What?!

CERULEAN  
All three Stars have been  
awakened, Lady.

LUCINDA  
I knew what she meant! This is  
horrible!

She flails in anger.

VIRIDIAN  
Don't worry, this new girl was  
completely useless.

LUCINDA  
She may be useless now, but she'll  
soon realize her powers.

CERULEAN  
So there are three of them. There  
are three of us, too.

LUCINDA  
We aren't ready to take on three  
of them yet!

Topaz hesitantly rises and delicately approaches Lucinda.

TOPAZ  
We've gathered a lot of prana  
already, lady.

Topaz tries to take the decanters from Lucinda, but Lucinda  
keeps moving away.

LUCINDA  
Not enough! You'll have to work  
faster! If their powers combine...

Lucinda goes behind the throne. Topaz looks at Viridian  
and Cerulean to follow.

INT. DARK CASTLE PRANA ROOM - CONTINUOUS - ANIMATED

A huge glass container dominates the room. It looks like  
the top half of an hourglass, with a spigot on the bottom.  
There are several tubes coming out of the top; they hang  
from the ceiling and trail down the walls.

Inside the glass, lightly colored mists swirl.

Lucinda stalks up to the container.

LUCINDA  
Look at this! Barely half full!  
I need it to be completely full,  
girls!

She spins and tosses the decanters at Topaz. She juggles  
them, one flying out of her arms one way, and another  
another way. Viridian and Cerulean catch them. They all  
sigh visibly.

LUCINDA  
Now that all the Stars have  
awakened, they're going to find us  
out before we have enough prana!

VIRIDIAN  
Um...excuse me...uh...enough for  
what?

LUCINDA  
The Destruct-O-Beam, you imbecile!



VIRIDIAN

Oh, right!

LUCINDA

If I don't have enough prana to reach critical compression, it won't be a Destruct-O-Beam! It'll be a - an Obnox-O-Spray!

CERULEAN

That sounds nice!

LUCINDA

An Obnox-O-Spray will not destroy anything!!

CERULEAN

Oh, right!

LUCINDA

Figure out a way to get rid of those girls!

She pushes past them and storms out of the room.

SIRENS

Roger!

They spin and salute. Viridian salutes with the hand holding the decanter, and she lets it fall, but Topaz catches it with her saluting hand. Viridian grins sheepishly as she takes back the decanter.

They each go to a different station and attach a tube to the top of their decanters. The mist flows from the decanters into the container. They look at each other, resolved.

INT. DARK CASTLE - LUCINDA'S ROOM - SAME TIME - ANIMATED

Lucinda picks up something off a table, but her back is turned, blocking the view.

LUCINDA

This is the only way, Edmund.  
They'll thank me, I'm sure.

She looks at an old photograph of a boy in his early teens. She sets the photo back on the table, next to a picture of her around the same age, with two other girls. They all have their arms around each other. The two girls are laughing, but Lucinda smiles with her lips closed over her braces.

The sound of Lucinda's heels echoes as she walks away.

EXT. FROSTINE'S ICE CREAM HOUSE - DAY - LIVE ACTION

Frostine's Ice Cream House is a small shop in a strip mall. It has a striped awning and two tables set up on the sidewalk.

INT. FROSTINE'S ICE CREAM HOUSE - DAY - LIVE ACTION

Daisy and Jordan sit at a booth with their treats in front of them. Jordan checks her watch and SIGHS.

DAISY

She's not late yet.

JORDAN

She will be.

DAISY

Give her a chance. We'll be  
stronger together than on our own.

JORDAN  
You really think so?

DAISY  
I really hope so.

Jordan checks her watch again.

JORDAN  
I told you she's--

A bell DINGS as the door opens and Maya bounces in. She waves to Daisy and Jordan, then goes to the counter and orders. Jordan scowls.

JORDAN  
She's not taking this seriously.

DAISY  
She just doesn't realize the seriousness yet.

In the background, Maya orders:

MAYA  
...bubblegum with extra whipped cream, thanks!

JORDAN  
Even her ice cream is frou-frou.

DAISY  
Hush!

Maya scoots in next to Jordan, who turns away.

DAISY  
Sorry we had to leave in such a rush yesterday. Parents get suspicious if we're gone too long. I'm Daisy, the Day Star.

JORDAN  
Jordan, Midnight.

MAYA  
Maya! Even--

JORDAN  
We know.

DAISY  
So, now you're a Guardian Star,  
the first thing to know is that  
you can't tell anyone.

JORDAN  
Absolutely no one. Not a soul.

DAISY  
If people knew what was happening,  
there'd be chaos.

JORDAN  
Total chaos.

The pimply teen from the theater comes over with Maya's cup of ice cream. It's piled high with whipped cream. He slams it down on the table. Maya stares at him. He scowls at her.

TEEN  
Do I know you?

JORDAN  
No!

Maya takes her ice cream with a smile, and the teen trudges off.

MAYA  
Geez, he was rude.

DAISY

He had all the good taken from him  
yesterday.

Maya digs in to her ice cream.

MAYA

Oh, wow. This is the best ice  
cream ever. Wanna try?

She offers some to Jordan, who turns up her nose.

JORDAN

No, thank you.

MAYA

Wait, he's not good anymore?

JORDAN

Those girls, they're stealing good  
prana, the vital energy in  
everyone.

DAISY

And we can't replace the prana  
stolen.

JORDAN

We can only restore it.

DAISY

We think.

JORDAN

The monsters protect the Sirens  
while they suck all the good out  
of people.

MAYA

But why?!

JORDAN

We don't know...

DAISY

It's bad enough that they're taking it. We have to stop them, Maya.

MAYA

I know.

Jordan and Daisy share a surprised glance.

JORDAN

Good.

DAISY

So...have you figured out your power yet?

MAYA

No. I was hoping it would come to me if I was in real danger, but that didn't happen...

JORDAN

Then you have to learn now to fight. For real.

MAYA

Like punching people? No way.

JORDAN

We can't be saving you and fighting monsters at the same time!

DAISY

She's right, Maya. We need your help. Somehow.

MAYA  
I'm probably the worst guardian of  
Earth in history.

DAISY  
You'll figure it out soon. I know  
we can do it together!

MAYA  
Together!

They look to Jordan.

JORDAN  
Right, together...

INT. MAYA'S HOUSE - ENTRYWAY - LATER - LIVE ACTION  
Maya arrives home. She tries to be quiet about it.

MOM (OS)  
Hey, guys!

Maya cringes a little.

MAYA  
It's just me, Mom!

Mom pokes her head out of the kitchen, wiping her hands on  
a towel.

MOM  
Where's your brother?

MAYA  
He just dropped me off and said he  
was going over to Wrinkle's or  
Wiggley's or something.

MOM  
Wrigley's?

MAYA  
That's it.

Mom SIGHS.

MOM  
He's supposed to mow the lawn  
today. I don't suppose you want  
to do it?

MAYA  
The lawn mower's bigger than I am,  
Mom.

Mom LAUGHS. Maya fakes a laugh.

MOM  
What's with you? Didn't you have  
fun with your new friends?

MAYA  
Yeah, it was great.

MOM  
How did you meet them again?

MAYA  
It was at that - thing - after  
school - about - junior high. I  
told you, remember?

Maya is a terrible liar. Her mom obviously knows she's  
lying, but lets it pass.

MOM  
It's good that you'll already have  
some friends at your new school.

MAYA  
Yeah, I'm really excited about it.



She sounds super bored.

MOM  
Why don't you come tell me all  
about it? I'm making cookies!

Maya follows her mom into the kitchen.

INT. MAYA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS - LIVE ACTION

Behind spotless glass doors gleam bright dishes on crisp  
white shelves.

Maya peeks at the bowl of dough as her mom checks the sheet  
in the oven.

MAYA  
What kind are you making?

MOM  
Low-fat whole-wheat flour oatmeal  
raisin with apple sauce instead of  
sugar!

MAYA  
That sounds disgusting.

Mom pulls the sheet out of the oven.

MOM  
Just try one once they're cool.

MAYA  
Ugh.

Mom puts in the other sheet and turns to Maya.

MOM  
So? Tell me about your friends.

MAYA

They're nice, but way more...  
talented than I am.

MOM

You have plenty of talent! I can  
think of at least seven things you  
do well.

MAYA

I guess so.

MOM

But?

MAYA

I don't know. It's just...  
Daisy's so - bright. And Jordan's  
- athletic. I'm - not going to  
fit in.

MOM

Don't worry about what you think  
you're supposed to do. Just do  
what you feel you should be.

Mom moves the cookies from the sheet to cooling racks.

MAYA

Really?

MOM

That's how you'll shine, sweetie.  
Try one.

Maya warily takes a cookie. She sniffs it. She bites off  
a tiny piece.

MOM

Well?

MAYA  
Totally disgusting.

She hands the rest of the cookie back to Mom. Mom takes a bite.

MOM  
It's not that bad!

MAYA  
It doesn't taste like a cookie should.

MOM  
Well...

MAYA  
Guess I'll get a head start on homework.

MOM  
You mean doodle?

MAYA  
Yeah, probably.

MOM  
Okay, have fun. Oh, hey, where did that cat come from?

Maya panics for a millisecond, then composes herself.

MAYA  
What cat? There's no cat? Why would I have a cat?

MOM  
The stuffed orange thing on your bed?

Maya LAUGHS nervously.

MAYA  
Stuffed! Oh right. That thing!  
Ha ha ha...

MOM  
Yeah. Where'd you get it?

MAYA  
School. I mean, Elle. I mean,  
Elle gave it to me at school  
yesterday. Ha ha...

MOM  
Okay. I just didn't remember  
seeing it before.

MAYA  
Yeah, it's no big deal. Just a  
stuffed toy! I'm gonna go now.

MOM  
'Kay. Draw pretty things!

Mom drops dough on the sheet as Maya leaves.

INT. MAYA'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER - LIVE ACTION

Maya rushes into her room and closes the door. She spins to look at her bed. On it there is a stuffed animal that looks strangely like Taj.

MAYA  
Taj?

She picks up the stuffed cat.

MAYA  
Is that you?

Taj remains silent and motionless.

MAYA

I like you better this way.

She smirks and heads for the closet. Taj starts growing in her hands. Slowly, he becomes bigger and bigger, his features becoming more life-like until he is a tabby again. Maya tries to keep a hold of him as he squirms.

MAYA

Stop squirming! What if someone sees you?

TAJ

Let me go!

MAYA

Be quiet!

TAJ

Let me go and I will!

MOM (OS)

Sweet-ums?

MAYA

Everything's fine!

They stop struggling. Taj unsheathes his claws and glares at Maya. She glares back, then drops him unceremoniously. He pads back to the bed.

Maya sits at her desk and ignores him for a moment.

MAYA

You know, that's pretty cool, what you can do.

TAJ

I know.

He starts cleaning his face.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY - LIVE ACTION

All is quiet. Ms. Harwood surveys from her desk. The students are hunched over, scratching away, taking a test.

Maya's paper still has a lot of blank spots. She gnaws on her eraser.

Suddenly, the face of her bracelet blinks the ALERT, and beeps. She fumbles with it, stopping the beeping as Ms. Harwood glowers at her.

Maya raises her hand. Ms. Harwood raises a skeptical eyebrow. Maya waves her hand a little. Ms. Harwood SIGHS and heaves herself out of her chair.

MS. HARWOOD

Yes?

MAYA

I need to go to the bathroom.

MS. HARWOOD

Not until you finish your test.

MAYA

But I really have to go! Right now!

MS. HARWOOD

Then turn your test in right now.

She glances at Maya's mostly-blank page, then goes back to her desk. Maya's eyes dart between the test and her flashing bracelet.

She scribbles something in all the blanks, then rushes to Ms. Harwood's desk and slams her paper down. She hurries toward the door.

MS. HARWOOD  
Maya?

MAYA  
What?

MS. HARWOOD  
Aren't you going to ask first?

MAYA  
May I go? Please?!

MS. HARWOOD  
Yes. Here's the hall pass.

Maya rushes back, grabs the pass, and runs out.

INT. GIRLS' BATHROOM STALL - DAY - LIVE ACTION

The door bangs open as Maya enters. She fumbles with the lock, then pushes a button on the bracelet.

BLUE FLASH

INT. GIRLS' BATHROOM STALL - MOMENTS LATER - ANIMATED

Maya, transformed, pushes some more buttons, fumbling.

MAYA  
Where's the dumb map?

Maya pushes buttons. The screen flashes SENDING ALERT.

MAYA  
No, no, no!

She pushes some more buttons. The screen flashes ALERT CANCELED. Then it reads OPTIONS. Maya is momentarily distracted. She shakes her head to refocus.

She finds the MAP. A green dot appears on a map; she's located Jordan. Maya struggles to find the TRANSPORT option, but finally succeeds.

Her aura glows and the blue sparkles appear until they cover her completely. The sparkles rush out.

INT. JORDAN'S PRIVATE SCHOOL - DAY - ANIMATED

Viridian and Cerulean LAUGH to each other in a hallway. Mists swirl out of classrooms and into their mercury glass decanters.

A huge SNAKE is wrapped around Jordan. She struggles to get out, but it squeezes harder and unhinges its jaw.

Blue sparkles descend and coalesce into Maya. She GASPS when she sees Jordan. Maya runs up behind the snake and SLAPS it in the back of the head.

The snake is momentarily disoriented, then turns to Maya, keeping a tight grip on Jordan. It HISSES, its tongue flickering in Maya's face.

Maya SMACKS it on the nose, then runs toward the Sirens. The snake slithers after her. Its grip on Jordan loosens, but it still holds her in one coil, dragging her along.

Jordan frees an arm and tries to pull herself from the snake.

JORDAN  
Took you long enough!

MAYA  
I had a test!

Viridian and Cerulean see the snake coming toward them, and jump aside.



MAYA  
Where's Daisy?

JORDAN  
(quietly)  
Not here yet...

Maya chases Cerulean.

MAYA  
You're mad at me when she's not  
even here?

JORDAN  
I'm sorry?

Maya trips, and the snake looms over her.

VIRIDIAN  
I applaud your selection.

CERULEAN  
Thank you.

Maya scrambles over and sees the snake unhinging its jaw.  
She clamps her eyes shut. Suddenly, she opens her eyes  
wide. She holds both hands out in front of her.

MAYA  
SevenStarStrike!

Seven ninja-stars shoot out of her hands in succession,  
sticking in the snake's mouth like burrs. It throws its  
head back, more startled than in pain.

Viridian and Cerulean share a surprised look.

CERULEAN  
Let's go!

VIRIDIAN  
Right!

Jordan gets her other arm free.

JORDAN  
Shooting Star!

Her legs still trapped, Jordan looses an arrow into the back of the snake's head. The snake's head drops. It's body sways and quivers. Jordan finally pulls herself free.

JORDAN  
Come on!

Maya gets to her feet and runs toward Jordan.

JORDAN  
Split up!

She and Maya run in opposite directions down the hall. Jordan glances over her shoulder and sees the snake turn toward Maya. Jordan grins.

DAISY (OS)  
Bright Star Burst!

Yellow stars hit the monster in the side of the head. It SMASHES into the wall, leaving a dent. The snake is dazed. Maya skids to a stop, and turns back.

MAYA  
Daisy!

DAISY  
I'm SO sorry!

JORDAN  
Attack!

Maya makes a great circle with one hand, from down to her toes to high overhead. She holds both hands out.

MAYA  
Seven Star Strike!

The blue stars stick in the snake's face. It turns into a glowing silhouette, then disintegrates into glitter.

DAISY  
You found your power!

JORDAN  
(to Daisy)  
What happened?

DAISY  
It's so dumb. It doesn't even matter.

MAYA  
We defeated the monster and that's what counts.

JORDAN  
Daisy?

DAISY  
I was in music class and I didn't hear the alert.

JORDAN  
A test and music class. I can't believe this!

Jordan stalks off a few paces. Daisy looks quizzically at Maya.

MAYA  
My teacher wouldn't let me leave until I turned in my test. I got here as soon as I could!

DAISY  
I know.

MAYA  
I turned it in half blank.  
Probably flunked.

DAISY  
We're saving the world, Maya.  
We're gonna flunk a few tests.  
Hopefully when this is all over,  
we'll be able to get back on  
track. Back to what we love. I  
had to drop out of dance. Both  
our grades are suffering already.  
She's on probation here.

MAYA  
At this fancy-shmancy place?

DAISY  
She could be kicked out.

Maya watches Jordan.

MAYA  
Jordan?

She doesn't turn around.

JORDAN  
What?

MAYA  
I'm really sorry. It won't happen  
again.

JORDAN  
It'd better not.

Maya glances at Daisy, then back at Jordan.

MAYA  
Well, we're...gonna go, then.

JORDAN

Fine.

Maya and Daisy share one last look before pushing buttons on their bracelets. Their auras start to glow.

Jordan's angry face softens. As she looks over her shoulder, Daisy and Maya teleport out. Jordan is left alone.

INT. GIRLS' BATHROOM - DAY - LIVE ACTION

A THIRD GRADER (8) is washing her hands.

Blue sparkles descend into a stall.

The girl glances over.

From inside the stall there is a blue FLASH of light.

The girl is weirded out.

Maya, back to her regular self, steps out of the stall, and sees Taj sitting on the window sill. He startles her.

MAYA

What're you--

She sees the girl staring at her. Maya LAUGHS nervously. She starts washing her hands. The girl keeps watching Maya as she dries her own hands.

THIRD GRADER

You didn't flush.

MAYA

Huh?

THIRD GRADER

I didn't hear you flush.

MAYA

Oh, I was just changing my clothes.

THIRD GRADER

Then why wash your hands? And  
where are your other clothes?

MAYA

It's none of your business what I  
do in the bathroom!

The girl stares wide-eyed at Maya, then rushes out.

Maya SIGHS. She dries her hands. Taj SMIRKS at her.

MAYA

So what are you doing here?

TAJ

Just checking in on you.

MAYA

I don't need a baby-sitter.

TAJ

I'm glad you discovered your  
power, finally.

MAYA

No thanks to you.

TAJ

I only awaken the Stars, not their  
powers.

MAYA

Either way, you're a terrible  
alarm clock.

TAJ  
Perhaps. But alarms clocks don't  
keep track of hall passes.

He points to the pass on the window sill next to him.

MAYA  
I totally forgot! Thanks.

TAJ  
Good work today.

He winks at her, then leaps down from the sill.

Maya grabs the hall pass.

INT. MAYA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - LATER - LIVE ACTION

Hector is in the kitchen making his second lunch. There is a tall sandwich on a plate, and he's pulling a bag of chips from the cupboard. Maya lingers by the doorway.

MAYA  
Hector?

HECTOR  
What is it, squirt? I'm busy.

He pours a mountain of chips onto the plate.

MAYA  
I just...had a question...about  
all these new responsibilities.

HECTOR  
Can't you talk to Mom?

MAYA  
If Mom was home, she'd just give  
me a lecture about trying my  
hardest.

HECTOR  
Sounds like good advice.

He puts the bag away and grabs his plate, and leaves. Maya follows.

INT. MAYA'S HOUSE - STAIRWELL - CONTINUOUS - LIVE ACTION

Hector heads upstairs for his room and Maya follows.

MAYA  
Hector, don't you ever feel...  
overwhelmed by growing up?

Hector pauses.

HECTOR  
Well, yeah, I guess sometimes.  
But that's life, you know?

He continues up the stairs.

INT. MAYA'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS - LIVE ACTION

Hector walks down the hallway. He keeps crunching chips.  
Maya is still following him.

MAYA  
I mean, I'm responsible for so  
much now.

Hector pauses outside his room, looks at Maya skeptically.

HECTOR  
You're twelve. What kind of huge  
responsibilities do you have? Mom  
doesn't even make you clean the  
bathroom.



MAYA

I have homework, and friends, and  
I have to keep my room clean! I  
cook dinner once a week for  
your...black hole of a stomach!

Hector laughs a little.

HECTOR

Okay, okay.

MAYA

And picking out my own classes is  
a big deal! You've been doing it  
so long, you've forgotten what  
it's like!

HECTOR

Is that what this is about?

Maya fidgets with her bracelet.

MAYA

Yeah.

HECTOR

Look, there are a lot more  
responsibilities as you grow up,  
sure. But there're a lot more  
freedoms and privileges too.  
Right?

Maya looks confused.

HECTOR

I mean, I gotta chauffeur your  
skinny butt everywhere, but at  
least I can drive, right?

MAYA

Right...

HECTOR

You have to cook dinner, but you  
get to eat what you want, right?

MAYA

Right.

HECTOR

So, yeah, being in charge of stuff  
is scary, but you get to do it on  
your terms.

MAYA

Okay.

HECTOR

We cool?

MAYA

Yeah, thanks.

Hector goes into his room, munching a chip.

HECTOR

No problem!

Maya continues down the hallway to her own room.

INT. SCHOOL LUNCHROOM - DAY - LIVE ACTION

It's loud in the lunchroom. Kids are everywhere.

Elle, lunchbox in hand, waits for Maya to get her school  
lunch. Elle surveys the crowd; she spots someone and waves.

Maya joins Elle, tray in hand. They head for their seats.  
Maya follows Elle. Then, she sees they are moving toward  
Simon.

MAYA

No-no-no.

Maya slows and looks around for another place.

ELLE  
Come on, Maya!

She smiles politely at Simon and grabs Maya's arm.

MAYA  
Elle, no, please!

Maya tries to pull away, but Elle hangs on, and Maya has to go with her to avoid upsetting her lunch tray.

Elle pushes Maya ahead of her. When Maya just stands there, blushing furiously, Elle hurries around the table.

ELLE  
May we sit here?

SIMON  
It's a free country.

Maya plops down across from Simon. Elle sits next to him.

ELLE  
I'm so glad we were able to find two together. I'm Elle, by the way.

SIMON  
Simon.

They look at Maya, but she is absorbed in her lunch.

ELLE  
This is my friend Maya.

MAYA  
Oh, right, Maya. Sorry.

SIMON

I'm--

MAYA

Simon. I know. We have math together.

SIMON

We do?

MAYA

I sit in the back...

SIMON

Oh.

An awkward pause. Maya pokes her steamed vegetables. Elle places each item of her lunch on the table.

ELLE

So, what's your favorite subject?

SIMON

Science.

ELLE

What a coincidence! Maya's favorite subject is art.

Maya glances at Simon, blushes, and starts twirling her fork in her pasta.

ELLE

Mine's history, so I guess that leaves me out.

Simon glances at Elle, but she doesn't look at him. Simon turns back to Maya.

SIMON

What're they serving today?  
Spaghetti?

MAYA

It's linguine, but they call it  
that because no one - spaghetti, I  
mean, they call it spaghetti,  
because if they called it linguine  
no one...would...eat it. What?

Simon and Elle stare at her. He's trying not to laugh;  
Elle looks petrified. His LAUGH bursts out. Elle fake-  
laughs nervously.

ELLE

Oh, Maya, you're a riot! Ha ha...

A small smile pulls at the corner of Maya's mouth, but she  
doesn't get the joke.

SIMON

It's always peanut butter and  
jelly for me!

Simon takes a huge bite of his sandwich. Maya twirls her  
fork absently as she smiles at Simon. When she lifts her  
fork, there's a giant ball of linguine stuck on the end.

She lifts it to her mouth, but only realizes it's too large  
when she's already closed her lips around part of it. She  
tries to bite off a reasonable amount and ends up pulling  
the whole ball off the fork, leaving linguine dangling down  
her chin.

Her hand flies to her mouth and she manages as best she can.

As the boy next to her gets off the bench, he knocks over  
her milk, spilling it all over her. Maya tries to exclaim,  
but her mouth is full of linguine.

BOY

Oh, sorry, didn't see you.

He leaves without offering any help.

Maya can't look at the others.

MAYA

'Scuse me.

She hurries away.

INT. GIRLS' BATHROOM - DAY - LIVE ACTION

Maya is alone in the bathroom, trying to dry her clothes with the hand towel, the kind that comes in a big roll and loops down. It doesn't loop low enough for her to reach where she needs.

She goes into a stall and pulls out some toilet paper. She dabs at the spill, but the paper leaves little white pieces all over. She throws the paper into the toilet and stands defeated.

Then she sees her bracelet. She fiddles with it. Making sure she's alone, she pushes the button to transform. There's a blue FLASH.

ANIMATED.

Maya, now in her Star outfit, looks down at herself. Her clothes are all dry.

She comes out of the stall and admires herself in the mirror.

She hears a VOICE outside in the hallway, and the door opens a crack.

MAYA

SevenStarStrike!!

Without thinking, she throws her stars at the door as a FIFTH-GRADER (9) comes in. Most of the stars stick in the door, but one hits the girl in the arm.

FIFTH-GRADER

Ow!

She rubs the spot. A tiny drop of blood appears, like a pin-prick.

Maya is frozen, but the girl doesn't see her.

The girl looks around, then leaves.

Maya stares at the door, looks at her hands, grins wickedly and turns toward the towel dispenser.

MAYA

Seven Star Strike!

She batters the dispenser, surveys its dents, and GIGGLES.

MAYA

Seven Star Strike!

TAJ (OS)

What are you doing?

Maya spins wildly, throwing stars all over the bathroom, narrowly missing Taj, who sits in the window. Stars fly outside and stick in a tree.

Maya hides her hands behind her back and fidgets sheepishly.

MAYA

My clothes were wet and then  
someone came in and startled me  
and--

TAJ

You're supposed to be saving the  
world, not ruining it!

MAYA

I was just having a little fun...

TAJ  
Do you always break things when  
you're having fun?

MAYA  
No...

TAJ  
I thought not!

Taj leaps down from the sill, leaving her alone.

She sticks her tongue out after him, then pushes the button.

Another blue FLASH.

LIVE ACTION.

Maya shivers in her wet clothes and frowns at her  
reflection.

MAYA  
Now I'm going to smell like sour  
milk all afternoon...

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY - LIVE ACTION

The room is filled with a low hum of conversation as the  
students work on their puppets. They are painting paper  
mache heads and throwing together little outfits.

Maya's princess doesn't have a face yet, only a flesh-  
colored head. A foil-covered cardboard crown sits on her  
desk. Her princess' dress, however, is an intricately  
detailed ballgown.

Maya concentrates on adding pick-ups to the overskirt when  
her bracelet BLINKS the alert. It beeps only once before  
Maya silences it.



She heads toward the door.

MS. HARWOOD

Maya?

Maya ignores her.

MS. HARWOOD

Where are you going? Sit down!

Maya leaves the room.

MS. HARWOOD

Frances, go after her.

FRANCES, a smudgy stick of a girl, leaps up.

FRANCES

Right away, Ms. Harwood! I'll  
drag her back!

MS. HARWOOD

Just...convince her. Here's the  
hall pass.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY - LIVE ACTION

Maya speed walks down the empty hallway. Frances jogs  
after her.

FRANCES

Hey, you!

Maya rolls here eyes, walks faster.

FRANCES

Hey! Ms. Harwood didn't say you  
could leave.

Frances is too close now to be ignored.

MAYA

So?

FRANCES

So you have to come back to class!

She grabs Maya's arm. Maya tries to pull free, but the stick-girl is stronger than she looks.

MAYA

Get off me!

FRANCES

Ms. Harwood sent me to get you!

Maya spies the hall pass in Frances' other hand and grabs it.

FRANCES

Hey!

They struggle over the pass. Finally, Maya pulls Frances close, and STOMPS on her foot. Frances lets go of the pass, grabs her foot, and starts to CRY. Maya races for the bathroom.

MAYA

Sorry!!

EXT. FLOWER SHOP - DAY - ANIMATED

A GIANT HIPPO paws at the ground; it SNORTS. Daisy glares back.

Off to the side, Cerulean approaches Viridian. As always, mists swirl out of the shop and into their decanters.

CERULEAN

A hippo? Really?

VIRIDIAN  
You picked last time! Besides,  
hippos are really scary!

The hippo opens its mouth and BUBBLES blast out.

CERULEAN  
Yeah, real scary...

Daisy leaps aside from the bubble spray. The bubbles POP against the ground like small explosives. Cerulean is pleasantly surprised.

CERULEAN  
Oh.

Two sets of SPARKLES descend, coalescing into Jordan and Maya, who flank Daisy. Jordan quickly assesses the situation.

JORDAN  
A hippo?

VIRIDIAN  
Hippos are scary!

The hippo is momentarily confused by Jordan and Maya's sudden presence. It opens its giant maw and BELLOWS.

DAISY  
Its bubbles are explosive.

The hippo blows bubbles, swinging its head around, directing the bubbles at all three girls. The girls scatter. The bubbles BURST all over the trunk of a car, denting it.

Maya and Daisy hide behind one car, while Jordan hides behind another. Viridian and Cerulean LAUGH.

The hippo takes one lumbering step toward Daisy and Maya when the door to the flower shop opens.

Hector walks out, carrying a small box. He grumbles to himself. Mists swirl away from him. Maya GASPS.

The hippo twists its head around to look at Hector as he heads to his car.

MAYA  
Seven Star Strike!

The stars stick in the hippo's thick hide. It twitches and the stars fall off. It takes a deep breath in.

Maya runs to the hippo and YANKS on its tail as hard as she can. The hippo throws back its head, its bubbles shooting harmlessly into the sky. Maya climbs onto its back and grabs its ears.

Hector gets into his car and drives away, leaving Jordan without cover.

JORDAN  
Are you crazy?? Get off!

DAISY  
She's safer behind the head than  
in front of it.

The hippo BELLOWS again, swinging its head wildly to shake off Maya. Daisy and Jordan keep their distance.

Topaz joins Viridian and Cerulean.

TOPAZ  
A hippo?

CERULEAN  
That's what I said. But watch.

The hippo sprays bubbles everywhere. They explode against Daisy's feet as she runs, and she falls.

TOPAZ

Not bad.

Jordan rushes to Daisy.

DAISY

I'm okay.

JORDAN

I have a plan.

The hippo takes another deep breath in. It sprays bubbles at Daisy and Jordan.

DAISY

Bright Star Burst!

The stars and bubbles meet, and counter each other.

JORDAN

Shooting Star!

Jordan's arrow flies right into the hippo's open mouth. The bubbles stop instantly. The hippo SQUEALS. It turns into a glowing silhouette and disintegrates into glitter. Maya falls to the ground.

Meanwhile, the others have turned on the Sirens.

DAISY

Bright Star Burst!

Viridian and Cerulean leap to opposite sides. Topaz CLINKS her bracelets together.

Topaz pulls her arms apart, and the stars hit a force field visible only at the moment of impact. Topaz grins smugly.

TOPAZ

Let's go, girls!

VIRIDIAN & CERULEAN

Right!

The Sirens run off.

Jordan lowers her arrow. As her hands get closer and closer together, the arrow gets smaller and smaller until it disappears.

The Man with the Old Fedora comes out of the flower shop with a large bouquet and goes to his car. He sees the dents all over the trunk.

MAN

Hit and run!

Grumbling, he gets into his car and drives away.

Jordan rolls her eyes.

DAISY

Who was that boy? Earlier?

MAYA

My brother.

The girls share worried looks.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY - LIVE ACTION

The end of the school day. Kids fill the hall.

Maya comes out of her classroom last, holding a slip of paper. She reads it. It's a note from her teacher to her mom about her bad behavior earlier in the day.

Maya opens her backpack to shove the note inside, and spies Taj as a stuffed animal at the bottom of the bag. She pulls him out, and shoves in the note.

MAYA  
You know, it's really annoying  
that you're following me  
everywhere!

She scoffs, accidentally blowing on Taj's ear; it twitches involuntarily.

MAYA  
Where is Elle? Oh no...

She sees Simon farther down the hallway, leaning against the wall. She looks down at the dried milk on her clothes. She hugs the opposite wall and moves slowly.

Elle comes out of a classroom up ahead.

MAYA  
(whispering)  
Elle!

Elle neither sees nor hears her, as she has turned toward Simon instead.

MAYA  
Elle?

Simon pushes off the wall as Elle joins him. They smile at each other. He takes her hand.

Maya stands frozen, open-mouthed. She gasps for air, having been holding her breath in shock. She turns away and walks quickly back down the hallway toward the back door, gripping Taj tightly.

TAJ  
(quietly)  
Ow.

MAYA  
Oh, sorry.

Maya pushes through the door.

EXT. SCHOOL YARD - CONTINUOUS - LIVE ACTION

Maya is close to tears.

MAYA  
She knows I like him! How could  
she do this to me?

She shakes Taj in the air.

MAYA  
Well? Say something!

She throws him at the ground. He lands as a cat.

TAJ  
You should kill a rat for him.

Maya makes a disgusted face.

MAYA  
If I only hadn't missed math  
today--!

TAJ  
So you could sit behind him  
smelling like sour milk?

He shakes his head.

TAJ  
Come on.

Maya readjusts her backpack. She glances back at the  
school.

MAYA  
Fine.



She and Taj walk across the yard.

INT. MAYA'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY - LIVE ACTION

Outside Hector's bedroom door, which has been pulled almost closed. He cannot be seen, but muffled music can be heard.

Maya trudges up the stairs. She passes Hector's door, then comes back.

MAYA  
Hector?

She knocks on the doorframe.

MAYA  
(louder)  
Hector?

HECTOR (OS)  
What?

Maya peers farther into his room. He jumps off the bed, dropping a magazine on the floor and kicking it under the bed. He pulls the large headphones down around his neck as he rushes to the door. He grabs the door with one hand, and puts his other on the frame, his body blocking Maya's view.

HECTOR  
I didn't hear you come in, squirt.

MAYA  
That's because you're wearing  
 earmuffs.

HECTOR  
What d'ya want?

MAYA  
I have a question about boys.

HECTOR  
Talk to Mom!

MAYA  
She's not home. Besides, I want  
the boy's view.

HECTOR  
Look, Maya, you can't keep coming  
to me with all your stupid little  
problems! I'm doing important  
things!

MAYA  
Sorry, it didn't look like--

HECTOR  
I'm going off to college in the  
fall so you'd better start  
figuring out stuff on your own!

Hector starts to close the door.

MAYA  
Why were you buying flowers today?

He opens the door and glares at her.

MAYA  
I saw the...what's-it-called in  
the fridge.

HECTOR  
Not that it's any of your  
business, but I bought the corsage  
for my date to the dance tonight.  
That's right! You're not the only  
girl in my life, twerp! Now get  
lost.

He slams the door in her face.

MAYA  
(sarcastically)  
Congratulations! I hope you have  
a wonderful time!

She walks away.

MAYA  
I feel sorry for your date.

Maya goes into her own room and slams her door behind her.

INT. MAYA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - LIVE ACTION

Maya, in her purple pajamas, hunches over her desk.

MAYA  
Taj, what's one-half times two-  
thirds?

Taj is asleep at the foot of her bed. She pokes him with  
her pencil.

MAYA  
Taj! You promised to stay up and  
help me finish my homework!

Taj YAWNS.

TAJ  
When?

MAYA  
When you made me practice with my  
power this afternoon! You  
promised!

TAJ  
Fine. What are we working on?

MAYA

Math.

Taj SCOFFS.

TAJ

Math? Can you count?

MAYA

Yes.

TAJ

Do you have a calculator?

MAYA

We aren't allowed to use one.

TAJ

But do you have one?

MAYA

Yes.

TAJ

Then forget your homework. You're  
set for life.

Taj puts his head back down and closes his eyes.

MAYA

Taj!

He ignores her.

She puts her face in her hand and tries to figure it out.

MAYA

When multiplying fractions...

She YAWNS.

MAYA  
You first...multiply the top...

She lays her head on her arm.

MAYA  
You multiply the top and  
then...the bottom...

Her eyelids are so heavy. They're half closed, then closed  
- then they snap open.

MAYA  
So one times two is...two...

Maya falls asleep.

INT. MAYA'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - SAME TIME - LIVE ACTION

Maya's mom sees the line of light underneath Maya's door.

MOM  
Maya?

INT. MAYA'S BEDROOM - SAME TIME - LIVE ACTION

MOM (OS)  
Are you still awake?

Taj wakes.

TAJ  
Maya! Wake up.

He prods her with his paw.

TAJ  
Hey! Come on!

There's a knock at the door.

MOM (OS)  
Maya?

Taj dramatically unsheathes his claws.

TAJ  
Don't make me do it, Maya!

The doorknob starts to turn.

INT. MAYA'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - SAME TIME - LIVE ACTION

Maya's mom opens the door and looks into Maya's bedroom.

She sees Maya asleep on top of her books. Taj is nowhere to be seen.

INT. MAYA'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS - LIVE ACTION

Maya's mom brushes Maya's hair out of her face.

MOM  
Time for bed, big girl.

Mom guides a half-asleep Maya away from her desk and into bed. As Maya flops into bed, Taj, in stuffed form, is squished underneath her.

MOM  
Good night.

MAYA  
(mumbling)  
Night, Mom.

Mom turns out the light and starts to go.

MAYA  
Mom?

Mom turns back.

MAYA

What do you do when you like  
someone, like a lot, but they like  
someone else, and you like that  
someone else too, in a different  
way?

MOM

Once more?

MAYA

There's this boy...

MOM

Oh?

Mom sits on the bed.

MAYA

But he likes...a friend.

MOM

That's tough. I'm afraid you'll  
just have to choose, sweetie.

MAYA

What would you do?

MOM

You have to decide for yourself.  
But good friends are hard to find.

Mom rises, and kisses Maya on the forehead.

MOM

Sleep on it.

MAYA

Night.

Mom closes the door behind her.

Maya rolls over, and Taj, stuffed, pants for air.

INT. GROCERY STORE - DAY - LIVE ACTION

Maya is slumped over a shopping cart. Her mom is up ahead; in her left hand, which is perched on her hip, she holds the list; in her right, she holds a pen, the end of which is between her lips.

MOM

What kind of salad dressing should we get? Catalina or Thousand Island?

MAYA

Those are both disgusting. Why can't we get Bleu Cheese?

MOM

Because Bleu Cheese is disgusting. Ranch?

MAYA

Boring.

MOM

Caesar?

MAYA

Gross, Mom! That has sardines in it!

MOM

Just pick something, Maya! But not Bleu Cheese!

MAYA

How about this?



She holds out a bottle of Balsamic Vinaigrette.

MOM

How about Raspberry?

MAYA

Fine.

As Maya replaces the Balsamic, she suddenly freezes.

Everything slows down, and all sounds become muted as she looks all around her. Her gaze lands on her bracelet. It's simply showing the time, digitally. When it clicks to the next minute, the sounds rush in on Maya, and time returns to normal.

MAYA

Mom!

MOM

What?

MAYA

We - uh - forgot the chili! I'll go get it!

MOM

We don't need--

But Maya is already running down the aisle.

MOM

--chili...

Maya turns the corner of the aisle, fiddling with her bracelet as she runs.

MAYA

Where's the menu on this stupid thing?

Somehow, she pushes the right combination so that the screen reads: Send ALERT? Press L and R to continue.

Maya pushes both buttons. Her screen flashes ALERT once.

She looks up just as a middle-aged woman pushes her cart out of a side aisle. Maya almost runs into her.

MAYA

Sorry!

Maya rushes toward the main entrance. Then she sees the RESTROOMS sign. She glances at the main doors, back at the sign, back at the doors. She runs outside.

EXT. GROCERY STORE - DAY - LIVE ACTION

Maya bursts out of the store. She looks all around, but the only thing she sees is an OLD MAN pushing his cart into the return stall.

She runs to the end of the building and looks around the corner. Nothing.

She runs to the other end. Only a weird lady with flaming orange hair taking out the trash.

She hears from the parking lot:

OLD MAN (OS)

Watch where you're going!  
Hooligan.

MAYA

I know they're here!

The weird lady is gone. Maya runs behind the dumpster.

BLUE FLASH

ANIMATION

Maya runs back to the front of the store.

Topaz stands by the entrance; Viridian and Cerulean are at opposite ends of the parking lot. Colored mists swirl into their mercury glass decanters.

VIRIDIAN

Topaz!

Topaz spots Maya.

TOPAZ

Say hello to my Frog Prince!

She clangs her bracelets together, and as she pulls them apart a little force-field forms. Out of it hops a little FROG wearing a crown.

Maya blinks at it in disbelief.

It hops toward her. With each hop, it grows bigger and bigger until it is as big as a Saint Bernard, and twice as slimy.

Topaz LAUGHS as the Frog lashes its tongue at Maya. Maya dodges, running into the parking lot. The Frog's tongue slimes cars and sometimes cracks windows, seeking Maya as she weaves between cars.

She runs out into the aisle and faces the Frog.

MAYA

Seven--

The Frog's tongue grazes her, leaving her sprawled on the ground and covered in slime.

MAYA

Ugh!

The Sirens LAUGH.

Maya runs behind another car as the Frog jumps toward her. She notices that the car has dents all over its trunk.

The Frog tongue lands just inches from her face, CRACKING the back windshield.

Maya glances at her bracelet as she runs again.

MAYA  
Where are you guys?

Maya peeks out over the hood of another car. She's quite close to Viridian. And the Frog is quite close to Maya.

Maya runs out.

MAYA  
Over here, frog legs!

The Frog turns and lashes its tongue at her. She leaps out of the way - revealing Viridian right behind her! The tongue catches her right in her middle, bowling her over. She fumbles with the mercury glass.

Maya glances up from where she is sprawled on the asphalt. She glimpses GREEN SPARKLES coalescing behind another car.

Viridian drops the mercury glass. It SHATTERS, and the colored mists disperse into the air.

Cerulean LAUGHS at Viridian.

JORDAN (OS)  
Shooting Star!

Jordan's arrow SHATTERS Cerulean's decanter as well. She still holds the top, and mists still swirl in, only to disperse once passing through.

Maya pushes herself up and runs behind a car.

MAYA  
Watch out for the tongue!

Next to Jordan, YELLOW SPARKLES coalesce into Daisy.

The Frog has its attention on Maya, and takes a hop or two toward her.

DAISY  
Together!

She and Jordan take their stances as the Frog prepares to lash at Maya.

DAISY  
Maya, now!

Daisy and Jordan release their attacks:

DAISY  
Bright Star Burst!

JORDAN  
Shooting Star!

The Frog's tongue shoots out toward Maya.

Maya, a split second later than Daisy and Jordan, releases her spray of stars:

MAYA  
Seven Star Strike!

Maya's blue stars and the bulbous end of the Frog's tongue meet in the middle. Maya's stars stick in it like burrs. The tongue flops lifelessly to the ground.

The Frog pulls in its tongue and lets out a horrendous CROAK. It turns into a glowing silhouette and disintegrates into glitter.

The three girls turn on the three Sirens.

Viridian is still lying on the ground, dazed. Cerulean is likewise dumbfounded by her broken decanter.

Daisy faces off with Topaz.

TOPAZ

Help me, you fools!

Cerulean snaps out of it and throws what remains of the decanter to the ground. Viridian scrambles to her feet.

They clang their bracelets together, and circles of blue and green light shoot out of them.

Maya and Jordan try to leap aside, but are clipped as the circles spray out. However, Daisy, her back to Viridian and Cerulean, takes the brunt of the attack and falls on her face.

TOPAZ

Well done! Let's get out of here.

She puts the stopper in the decanter and the Sirens run off.

As Maya and Jordan rush to help Daisy up, the Man with the Old Fedora comes out of the grocery store. He doesn't see the girls. He does see his cracked rear windshield, but doesn't seem to notice that it's covered with slime.

MAN

What the-?!

He GRUMBLES to himself as he puts his groceries in the trunk.

The girls look at each other. Maya suddenly looks startled.

MAYA

Gotta run!

She starts running for the store.

JORDAN

Hey!

Maya looks back. Jordan plucks at her dress, reminding Maya to change. Maya looks down at her own dress.

MAYA

Oh! Right!

She runs off to the side of the building, where the dumpsters are.

Daisy and Jordan push buttons on their bracelets, and their auras start to glow.

INT. GROCERY STORE - DAY - LIVE ACTION

Maya juggles four cans of chili as she runs up to her mom's cart in the bread section.

MOM

Where have you been?

MAYA

I thought it was on aisle three, and then five, but it was really four and by the time I got there there was a traffic jam of carts in front of the chili and when they moved I suddenly forgot what kind of chili Hector likes so I just grabbed a bunch.

Maya dumps the cans into the cart.

MAYA

Sorry.

Her mom raises an eyebrow at her.

MOM

I don't like it when you run off like that, Maya. I don't like not knowing where you are.

MAYA

I'm really sorry, Mom. But I'm okay. So it's okay. Right?

MOM

Don't do it again.

MAYA

I won't.

MOM

Well, I think we have everything then. Let's go.

Maya pushes the cart, following her mom into a checkout line.

INT. DARK CASTLE THRONE ROOM - INDETERMINATE TIME - ANIMATED

Viridian, Cerulean and Topaz hesitate by the entrance. Only Topaz carries a decanter.

TOPAZ

Don't say anything! I mean it!

Viridian and Cerulean nod. They follow Topaz into the room.

Lucinda lounges in her great throne.

The Sirens bow before her.

TOPAZ

We bring you more prana!

Lucinda gives them the bare minimum of her attention.



LUCINDA  
Good work, girls...

She glances at them, notices only Topaz is holding up a decanter. She lunges forward, sitting on the edge of her seat, her long, thin fingers scratching at the arm of the throne.

LUCINDA  
Only one?!

TOPAZ  
One that is completely overflowing  
with prana, Lady!

Lucinda speaks through her teeth.

LUCINDA  
I sent three of you out with three  
containers - and you come back  
with ONE?! What happened??

The Sirens are silent. Suddenly, Viridian wails:

VIRIDIAN  
I got hit by the Frog!

TOPAZ  
I told you to keep quiet!

Lucinda is genuinely confused.

LUCINDA  
What?

CERULEAN  
Our body guard attacked her and  
she dropped the glass.

Viridian cowers under Lucinda's glare. Cerulean looks smug, until Lucinda glares at her.

LUCINDA  
And what about you?

CERULEAN  
M-me? I, uh, I was attacked! In  
horrible brawl!

VIRIDIAN  
The Midnight Star shot the glass  
right out of her hand while she  
was laughing at me.

Viridian and Cerulean glare at each other. Lucinda rolls  
her eyes. Topaz bows lower and holds her glass higher.  
Lucinda stands as her anger rises.

LUCINDA  
You are being beaten by little  
girls!

She comes forcefully down the stairs. Viridian and  
Cerulean cling to each other. Topaz stares at the ground.

LUCINDA  
We are this close to having enough  
prana!

She snatches the glass from Topaz' hands. Topaz rises and  
backs into Viridian and Cerulean, who wrap their arms  
around her even as they cower behind her.

LUCINDA  
You have one more chance, girls.  
One more! Then you're finished.

Lucinda glares at them, then turns around.

VIRIDIAN  
What do you mean--

Cerulean clamps a hand over her mouth as Lucinda spins back  
around. She grin at Lucinda.

TOPAZ  
Of course, my lady.

LUCINDA  
Good.

Lucinda disappears behind the throne.

The Sirens all breathe a SIGH of relief. Then Viridian and Cerulean turn on each other again.

VIRIDIAN  
This is all your fault--!

CERULEAN  
If you hadn't--!

TOPAZ  
Quiet!

Viridian and Cerulean are silent. They blink at Topaz.

TOPAZ  
It's time to get serious.

Viridian and Cerulean put on their serious faces and nod.

INT. MALL - GIRLS' JEWELRY STORE - DAY - LIVE ACTION

Maya, Daisy and Jordan huddle conspiratorially in the back of the store, pretending to look at colorful bangles.

JORDAN  
Did you see her face?

MAYA  
You were awesome!

JORDAN  
Thanks.

DAISY

Okay, so we're getting better at fighting their monsters, but we still don't know what they're doing with all the prana!

JORDAN

Maybe they're just taking it so people will be mean.

DAISY

Really?

MAYA

They have to be doing something with it.

DAISY

Yeah, but what? I mean--

Suddenly, they all freeze. After a moment, they blink and look at each other knowingly. They look around. The store is pretty crowded.

JORDAN

This way!

She grabs Daisy and Daisy grabs Maya as Jordan pushes past a cheap red velvet curtain. On the doorjamb is a sign: EMPLOYEES ONLY.

TRANSFORMATION SEQUENCES - LIVE ACTION

Black liminal space.

A HEPTAGRAM glows on Maya's forehead.

Transition to ANIMATION as she becomes a glowing silhouette.

LIVE ACTION as an OCTOGRAM glows on Jordan's forehead.

Transition to ANIMATION as she becomes a glowing silhouette, in rotation. Green stars swirl around her.

LIVE ACTION as an ENNEAGRAM glows on Daisy's forehead.

Transition to ANIMATION as she becomes a glowing silhouette, in rotation. Yellow stars swirl around her. Her silhouette changes, until it's obvious she's wearing her Guardian Star outfit. The stars fade.

Daisy, in the middle, Jordan and Maya strike poses as the Guardian Stars.

INT. MALL - GIRLS' JEWELRY STORE - DAY - ANIMATED

Daisy, Jordan and Maya rush through the store, deftly avoiding people and displays.

INT. MALL - THROUGH-WAY - DAY - ANIMATED

Colored mists swirl past the store fronts.

DAISY

This way!

The girls run, following the mists.

INT. MALL - COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS - ANIMATED

The girls run into the courtyard. Mists are swirling all around them. Suddenly, they hear a sinister LAUGH. They face that direction but see nothing through the mists. As the laugh continues, another LAUGH joins it, from another direction, then a third LAUGH, until the girls are surrounded by mists and laughter.

The laughter grows louder as the Sirens appear out of the mists.

JORDAN  
Where're your little friends?

TOPAZ  
It's just you and us today, girls.

The mists swirl away as the Sirens come closer, leaving a clear circle surrounding them.

The Sirens and the Guardian Stars FACE OFF.

A moment of tense silence.

Topaz slowly raises her wrists. She CLANGS her bracelets together, and the other Sirens do too, filling the cavernous space with clanging echoes.

Yellow, green and blue circles shoot toward the Stars. They dodge. The circles hit each other and dissipate. As the Sirens move, the mists disappear.

The Sirens CLANG their bracelets together again. Circles fly toward the Stars.

Daisy dodges once more, sneaking closer to Topaz. Maya is hit and falls to the ground.

Cerulean looms over Maya. Cerulean relishes in the moment before she clangs her bracelets together again. Maya takes advantage of her hesitation and KICKS her in the shin.

Maya scrambles to her feet.

The Sirens CLANG their bracelets again.

Jordan runs in zig-zags, deftly avoiding the green circles. She TACKLES Viridian and they both fall to the ground. Viridian tries to slap at Jordan, while keeping her eyes closed and her face turned away. Jordan grabs her wrists and slams the bracelets into the ground.

Daisy and Maya get back to back and defend.

DAISY  
Bright Star Burst!

MAYA  
Seven Star Strike!

Their stars meet the circles head-on, and all attacks disappear.

Daisy and Maya move toward Topaz and Cerulean, and the Sirens back away. The mists continue to dissipate, until they become a swirling stream again.

Jordan looks up, following the path of the mists. She spies the mercury glass decanter on top of the fountain. She lets go of Viridian. It takes a moment for Viridian to open her eyes. Jordan has already started the motions of her attack.

JORDAN  
Shooting Star!

VIRIDIAN  
No!

Viridian pushes Jordan, and her arrow flies off course. It grazes the decanter, which starts to wobble.

All the fighting stops as the Sirens and the Stars stare at the teetering decanter.

POV: Inside the decanter.

The frozen scene below, seen through mists, wavering back and forth. Then FALLING.

BLACK.

INT. DARK CASTLE THRONE ROOM - SAME TIME - ANIMATED

Lucinda takes off a pair of oversized, cat-eye SUNGLASSES.

LUCINDA

That's IT!

She storms down the stairs and out the main entrance of the throne room, her heels clacking angrily against the floor.

INT. MALL - COURTYARD - DAY - ANIMATED

The Sirens run for the broken decanter. The mists all dissipate.

LUCINDA (OS)

Hello, girls.

She steps out from behind the fountain.

SIRENS

Lady Lucinda!

They fall to their knees.

JORDAN

Shooting Star!

Lucinda eyes the Sirens. Without even looking in Jordan's direction, she waves her hand and a purple disk glows, blocking the arrow.

LUCINDA

I'm disappointed in you.

DAISY

Bright Star Burst!

Again, without even seeming to see Daisy, Lucinda blocks her stars.



LUCINDA  
You've been beaten. By little  
girls! You! Their powers are  
nothing compared to yours!

MAYA  
Seven Star Strike!

Lucinda blocks again.

LUCINDA  
I gave you everything you needed  
and you were nothing but a  
disappointment. Hand them over.

VIRIDIAN  
Lucinda, please!

LUCINDA  
If that's how you want it.

She points her finger at them. They cry out in pain.  
Their bracelets grow red-hot, then CRACK and fall off,  
shattering when they hit the floor.

LUCINDA  
Good-bye, girls.

Lucinda stalks off.

Viridian starts crying.

CERULEAN  
Shut up!

The Stars look at each other. They look back at the  
pathetic former Sirens. They turn to leave.

TOPAZ  
Wait!

She raises her head. Viridian, sobbing quietly, clings to Cerulean, who is obviously disgusted with her.

TOPAZ

She just took all our powers.

Topaz rises as the Stars turn back.

CERULEAN

After all we did for her!

TOPAZ

I know.

VIRIDIAN

She never appreciated us!

TOPAZ

We'll make her pay.

VIRIDIAN

How?

CERULEAN

We're powerless!

TOPAZ

Not totally. We'll tell them how to get her.

Maya looks at Daisy and Jordan, then points to herself.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY - LIVE ACTION

A bell RINGS, signaling the end of school. Elle mopes outside Maya's classroom door. Maya hurries out.

ELLE

Maya!

Maya turns back and sees her. Elle catches up.

ELLE

I haven't seen you much lately.

MAYA

Yeah, I've been busy. Lots of homework. And stuff.

ELLE

Tomorrow, do you want to see a movie with me? And Simon.

MAYA

You and Simon?

ELLE

My mom won't let us go by ourselves.

MAYA

Um, yeah, that'd be...cool...I guess. Pencil me in.

ELLE

Pencil you in?

MAYA

That means I'm not sure if I can go.

ELLE

I know what it means.

MAYA

I have to see what happens with...my...book report...

ELLE

You're book report?

MAYA

Yes...

Elle stops; Maya walks forward a step, and Elle spins her around.

ELLE

Look, Maya, if you don't want to go, just say so! I know you're jealous of me and Simon.

MAYA

What? No!

ELLE

But that's no reason to be a bad friend! I don't even know if we are friends anymore!

MAYA

Of course we are, Elle! I've just been...busy...

ELLE

Too busy for your best friend? You know what, Simon was right to like me more than you.

Elle storms off. Maya hangs her head.

INT. MAYA'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY - LIVE ACTION

Hector is at his desk, with his headphones on. He doesn't hear the front door slam, or the stomping up the stairs.

Maya stands in his doorway.

MAYA

Hector?

He doesn't hear her.

MAYA

Hector!!

He spins around.

HECTOR

What? Geez, Maya, you startled me.

MAYA

What do you do when a friend  
thinks you don't want to be their  
friend any more, but you do?

HECTOR

I'm kinda busy here. Talk to Mom.

MAYA

Mom isn't home!

HECTOR

Look, Maya, I've never been a  
twelve-year-old girl--

MAYA

This is important!

He pulls off the headphones.

HECTOR

I don't know what Elle is thinking.

MAYA

How did you know it was Elle?

Hector raises an eyebrow.

HECTOR

So you really should wait to talk  
to Mom on this one.

MAYA

Fine.

HECTOR

Okay.

He reaches for his headphones.

MAYA

What about another one?

He looks at her.

MAYA

What about the fear that even though all your grown-up responsibilities come with privileges, you still have to give up everything you really love to take care of your responsibilities?

HECTOR

Come on, I don't have time--

MAYA

Hector, please.

HECTOR

Look, you do have to give up some stuff, yeah. But the important things, you find a way. You find a grown-up outlet, you know?

MAYA

No...

HECTOR

When I was in junior high, everyone teased me for still liking dinosaurs. But now? All my friends think it's cool that I'm going to study paleontology. You see?

MAYA

Yeah...

She says it in a sort of dazed way, like the lightbulb is turning on with a slow glow.

HECTOR

Then get lost.

Hector puts on his headphones and turns back to his desk. She walks off.

EXT. JORDAN'S PRIVATE SCHOOL - DAY - ANIMATED

After school, Jordan waits out back. Maya teleports in, then Daisy. The girls look nervously at each other.

JORDAN

How are we going to defeat her?  
Even if we manage to get there,  
she blocked everything we had last  
time.

MAYA

Come on, Jordan! I'm ready to  
save the world. I know it isn't  
going to be easy. But at least I  
don't have to do it alone! I have  
two strong, amazing girls to help  
me.

DAISY

Let's do this!

TAJ (OS)

Wait!

Taj runs up, out of breath.

TAJ

You'll need my help--

JORDAN  
How will you--

MAYA  
Give him a minute to catch his  
breath!

Taj pants a moment longer, then composes himself.

TAJ  
You're not teleporting to join  
each other, so you'll need my  
extra power to get you there.

Taj closes his eyes and concentrates. Slowly he grows  
larger and larger, and his features become stronger and his  
stripes become darker until he is a tiger.

MAYA  
Wow!

DAISY  
Taj, I'm impressed.

Taj's voice is lower now, but still recognizably him.

TAJ  
Let's go.

The girls each lay a hand on Taj. They all close their  
eyes. Slowly, their auras start to glow -- Taj's is a  
rusty orange. The auras glow brighter than ever before.  
Suddenly, WITHOUT separating into sparkles, the colors  
shoot into the sky.

EXT. DARK CASTLE GROUNDS - SAME TIME - ANIMATED

The storm cloud surrounding the dark castle is even  
stormier than usual. There are low grumbles of thunder,  
but no lightning.



The way leading to the castle is planted with hedges so dark they are almost black. There is a straight path to the drawbridge, which is raised, but off to either side the hedges become a maze.

The colored lights descend and take shape as the girls and Taj. Immediately they are on guard, but everything is still and quiet except for the low thunder.

Daisy takes the lead and Taj brings up the rear as they head cautiously toward the castle.

They hear a GROWL, so quiet at first as to be indistinguishable from the thunder. The growl becomes louder and suddenly a HUGE CHINESE FOO DOG leaps out at them with a roaring bark. It looks more like the stone temple guardians than the fluffy pets, all muscle and teeth and claws.

Taj leaps over the girls with a great ROAR and tackles the Dog. They wrestle. The air is filled with their snarls. Fur flies as claws flash.

Daisy and Maya raise their hands in front of them, ready to use their attacks. Jordan begins hers:

JORDAN

Shooting--

Maya pushes her hands down.

MAYA

You'll hit Taj!

Taj smacks the Dog across the face, sending it tumbling into the maze. Taj's form gets almost imperceptibly smaller with every breath he takes.

TAJ

Go now!

The Dog bowls into Taj, sending them both rolling into the other side of the maze. Taj seems much smaller at the moment of impact.

MAYA

Taj!

DAISY

Come on!

Daisy grabs Maya's hand, and the three of them run toward the castle. Off in the maze they hear the huge Dog barking and yowls of a cat.

As they rush up to the castle, the drawbridge lowers expectantly.

INT. DARK CASTLE ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS - ANIMATED

The girls enter the castle, then spin around - but the drawbridge doesn't slam shut. They take a few more steps, looking around. Everything is shadows.

JORDAN

So what's your plan?

DAISY

If we just work together...

MAYA

There are three of us and only one of her! We're sure to defeat her.

Lightning flashes. Suddenly, Lucinda's CACKLE booms over them, coming from everywhere. The girls huddle together.

LUCINDA (OS)

Welcome! I'm so glad you were able to find the place! Come right in.

Daisy pulls the other two forward.

LUCINDA (OS)  
I'm waiting to give you a royal  
welcome in my throne room. Come  
in, come in!

She cackles again. The lightning continues. Daisy  
continues on, but Jordan tries to stop her.

JORDAN  
We're doing exactly what she wants!

MAYA  
So?

JORDAN  
It's obviously a trap.

DAISY  
So what if it is? We still have  
to find her and defeat her!

Daisy and Maya pull Jordan onward.

Lucinda stops laughing and continues taunting them:

LUCINDA (OS)  
I knew those other girls were  
really no match for you. So  
young, so determined. Naively  
believing you can save the world.

The girls are deep in the main hall now. Maya pauses, and  
stops Daisy and Jordan.

MAYA  
Look.

She holds out her arms. A pale blue mist is coming out of  
her arms. Daisy and Jordan hold up their arms too. Creamy

and pale green mists are being leeched out of them too.  
They follow as the mists float through the hall.

LUCINDA (OS)

But the world doesn't care about  
you. It's indifferent. Hostile,  
even. While you try to save it,  
it will destroy you!

MAYA

I don't think she's talking about  
us anymore...

The mists snake behind a large, dark tapestry. The girls  
hurry behind it.

INT. DARK CASTLE THRONE ROOM - CONTINUOUS - ANIMATED

The girls enter the throne room. Their good prana swirls  
behind Lucinda, who lounges in her throne, holding a  
microphone languidly. She doesn't appear to notice the  
girls. She keeps speaking into the mic.

LUCINDA

I know what you're going through,  
believe me. I was like you once.

JORDAN

Shooting Star!

Without blinking, Lucinda holds up her palm. A purple disk  
appears, blocking Jordan's arrow.

LUCINDA

Innocent. Idealistic.

Here the girls start talking over her, but Lucinda's  
booming voice is still heard in the background.

LUCINDA

I had dreams. My friends had dreams. But what became of them? We had to give up everything. Our lives were ruined forever. We'd given up everything for the magic.

Jordan starts running for the stairs, but Daisy grabs her.

DAISY

Jordan, wait!

JORDAN

For what? Our powers are useless against her!

MAYA

Not if we use them together!

JORDAN

Please!

MAYA

Did she just say "magic"?

The girls pay attention to Lucinda again.

LUCINDA

I even lost my one true love.  
Edmund.

She pulls out the picture of the boy in his early teens and gazes longingly at it.

LUCINDA

At that moment I decided. I would be a Guardian Star no more!

The girls GASP!

LUCINDA

It's not fair to have the  
responsibility of the world on the  
shoulders of little girls! I  
vowed to make the Guardian Stars  
unnecessary!

The girls nod, and attack.

DAISY

Bright Start Burst!

MAYA

Seven Star Strike!

JORDAN

Shooting Star!

Again, without even acknowledging them, Lucinda raises a  
hand and her glowing disk defends against their attacks.  
She looks at the girls for the first time.

LUCINDA

Wouldn't it be nice not to be  
needed anymore?

She cackles as she tucks the mic and the photo away. She  
rises slowly and holds both hands out.

LUCINDA

Meteor Shower!

She raises her hands to the ceiling and thousands of purple  
stars pour out of her hands, raining down on the girls.  
They have nowhere to hide, and drop to the ground, covering  
their faces. They CRY OUT as the stars hit them. They  
hear Lucinda's heels clicking as she comes down the steps.

JORDAN

This is hopeless!

MAYA

I'm sure Guardian Stars have had  
to defeat former Stars in the  
past...

DAISY

Seriously?

MAYA

We still have some good prana  
left! Think of something nice!  
(beat) Supernova!

DAISY

Right.

JORDAN

What?

MAYA

On my cue.

LUCINDA

Poor little girls.

The girls raise their heads.

LUCINDA

Soon it will all be over.

The girls stand. Lucinda raises her arms overhead. Maya  
nods.

LUCINDA

Meteor--

STARS

Super Nova!

They hold their hands all together, in front of Maya, who  
is in the middle. A white orb blooms from their six hands,

BLASTING into Lucinda. The force of the impact sends her flying across the room. She crumples on the stairs.

MAYA

Come on!

They follow their good prana into the other room.

INT. DARK CASTLE PRANA ROOM - CONTINUOUS - ANIMATED

The girls enter the prana room and see the giant half-hourglass. It is so full that the prana is no longer a mist, but a gel. The girls' prana is sucked into the container by the tubes draping from the top. There is a hose attached to the spigot at the bottom, and it snakes off somewhere unseen.

JORDAN

Shooting--

DAISY

Wait!

Daisy peers at the spigot. There's a gauge attached.

DAISY

It seems pressurized.

LUCINDA (OS)

It is pressurized.

Lucinda leans against the doorway.

LUCINDA

If you break it, it'll explode and kill us all.

DAISY

What were you going to do with all this prana anyway?



MAYA  
(to Jordan)  
Do you think you can just...knick  
the top?

JORDAN  
No problem.

Lucinda leans forward. Jordan backs away while Daisy and  
Maya face Lucinda.

LUCINDA  
Good prana is nice prana - until  
there's too much of it! What I  
have here will produce a blast  
strong enough to destroy the  
entire world!

She CACKLES.

LUCINDA  
No more need for Stars when  
there's no more world to protect.

DAISY  
Bright Star Burst!

Lucinda raises her arm, but she isn't quick enough.  
Daisy's yellow stars spray her, followed quickly by Maya's  
blue.

MAYA  
Seven Star Strike!

From the back of the room, Jordan shoots the container.

JORDAN  
Shooting Star!

Her arrow grazes the top of the container, causing a small  
crack.

LUCINDA

No!!

She runs to the spigot. The pressure is decreasing, slowly but steadily. She frantically twists the handle on the spigot then races off, following the hose, intent on using her weapon before the pressure gets too low.

Jordan races after Lucinda and grabs her. They both fall. Daisy and Maya rush past them. Lucinda snaps out a hand and grabs Daisy, who also falls. Lucinda pushes away from them both.

Maya is on the threshold back into the throne room. She sees that the end of the hose is attached to a strange-looking sprayer tucked in an alcove under the stairs. She and Lucinda grab it at the same time. They struggle over it, but Lucinda gets her finger on the trigger.

The sprayer BLASTS the concentrated energy into the throne room, taking out a chunk of the wall.

Lucinda and Maya continue to struggle over the sprayer, the prana blasting everywhere. Jordan is almost hit as she stands.

JORDAN

Shooting--

MAYA

Together!

JORDAN

We can't!

DAISY

It's all in the timing!

Lucinda single-mindedly tries to rip the sprayer from Maya's hands.

MAYA

Now!

JORDAN

Shooting Star!

DAISY

Bright Star Burst!

At the exact same moment, Maya lets go of the sprayer.

MAYA

Seven Star Strike!

As their attacks shoot toward Lucinda, they pull some good prana behind them, glowing extra-bright as they become super-strong. The arrow and the stars hit all at once, battering Lucinda into the wall.

She slumps to the floor, unconscious, the sprayer held limply in her arms.

Daisy runs to the spigot.

JORDAN

Wait.

The pressure is so low now that the prana comes out like water from a watering can, pouring all over Lucinda.

Lucinda's form gets hazy, then grows smaller and younger. Her bustier becomes a sweetheart top; her skirt becomes longer. Her boots lose their heels and reach only to her knees.

JORDAN

The good prana's taking all the evil out of her.

DAISY

Returning her to the last time she was purely good.

MAYA  
When she was just like us.

The girls stare as Lucinda's form settles on that of a twelve-year-old girl.

YOUNG LUCINDA blinks at them, dazed.

YOUNG LUCINDA  
Wh-where am I?

EXT. CASTLE GROUNDS - SAME TIME - ANIMATED

Taj's eyes open. It's bright and sunny. He raises his head. It's painful. He's a red tabby again. He looks around. The hedges are bright green. A butterfly flutters past.

Achingly, he wanders out of the maze. The main walk is lined with tulips. The castle glistens. Beside the drawbridge is a statue that looks just like the Dog.

Taj lies on the drawbridge and watches the koi. He is perfectly still except that the tip of his tail twitches.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY - LIVE ACTION

Before school, Maya hangs up her backpack, doing her best to ignore Ms. Harwood. Young Lucinda walks in. Maya is taken aback. Lucinda's backpack looks too big for her small frame, and she keeps shifting its weight, but she seems content. She sees Maya for the first time and is also startled.

They stare at each other a moment, then Maya smiles. Lucinda, relieved, smiles back.

YOUNG LUCINDA

Thanks for...you know. It seems  
almost like a dream now. *(beat)*  
Good luck.

MAYA

Thanks.

MS. HARWOOD

Lucinda?

YOUNG LUCINDA

Yes.

Lucinda goes to Ms. Harwood's desk as the bell rings. The  
students take their seats.

MS. HARWOOD

Class, we have a special  
announcement today. This is  
Lucinda. I hope everyone will be  
nice to her and make her feel  
welcome.

Together, the class unenthusiastically chants:

CLASS

Welcome, Lucinda.

Young Lucinda goes to her desk and sits.

Next to her, a TOMBOY, save for her white-blond curls,  
leans over.

TOMBOY

Hi, I'm Sunny. Wanna pencil?

She holds out a fistful.

YOUNG LUCINDA

Um, thanks.

She pulls one from the bunch. It's covered with bright triangles.

MS. HARWOOD

Okay, take out your math books and  
turn to page seventy-eight.

Young Lucinda glances at Maya, who raises her own glittery pencil toward Lucinda. Young Lucinda also raises her new one as if to complete a toast, then pulls out her book.

INT. SCHOOL LUNCHROOM - DAY - LIVE ACTION

It's the middle of lunch hour and the room is noisy.

Young Lucinda and the tomboy pass by the table where Maya is sitting across from Elle and Simon. They hold hands under the table and Maya pretends not to notice.

They all laugh. Elle and Simon look at each other. They fall silent. Maya rolls her eyes and looks away as she hears Elle SIGH.

Maya catches a SHAGGY-HAIRED BOY looking at her. There's something a little goofy about him, but in a lovable kind of way.

His eyes open wide when he's been caught, but then he smiles nervously at Maya. She smiles back confidently and waves. He blushes and turns away.

Elle and Simon are looking at her.

ELLE

What was that?

MAYA

What was what?

ELLE

That! What was that?

MAYA  
Oh, nothing.

Elle and Maya giggle.

SIMON  
I don't get it.

ELLE  
Nevermind.

INT. MAYA'S BEDROOM - DAY - LIVE ACTION

Maya's room is neat and organized. Her bed is made, and the comforter has been flipped to the solid pale pink side. There are no clothes on the floor, and the closet doors are closed. A handful of beloved stuffed animals are displayed at the foot of the bed. Taj is napping in a patch of sunlight.

From the hallway come Maya and Hector's voices.

HECTOR (OS)  
Did you ever figure out that whole  
scary schedule thing?

MAYA (OS)  
Yeah, I did. Thanks.

HECTOR (OS)  
That's what big brothers are for,  
squirt.

Sounds of him going into his room.

Taj twitches in his sleep. Suddenly, he wakes, his ears alert, his eyes wide. Everything slows down, and all sounds become muted as he stares out the window. He blinks. Time returns to normal as Taj rises to his feet.

Maya rushes in.

THE END