

## THE CAT'S OUT OF THE BAG

### Characters

RALPH	A seventh grade boy
PHIL	A seventh grade boy
LILY	A seventh grade girl
OLD MAN	Lily's crabby neighbor

### Setting

Hallway of Marvin's Middle School For Dummies

The Kids' Neighborhood

Lily's Bedroom

The Alleyway

### Time

The Present

**Scene One**

**Setting:** Marvin's Middle School For Dummies

**At Rise:** Ralph and Phil are walking to their lockers and they discover a distraught Lily

RALPH

Dude, I didn't get any sleep last night. There was some cat outside my window and it wouldn't shut up. It sounded like it was dying.

PHIL

Man, I guess curiosity struck again.

RALPH

Huh?

PHIL

Cuz', you know, curiosity killed the cat.

(RALPH rolls his eyes and shoves him)

C'mon, that was a good one!

(RALPH and PHIL spot LILY and walk over to her locker)

RALPH

Hey Lily, are you okay?

(LILY turns to them, obviously previously crying)

LILY

Oh, Ralph! I can't put up this facade anymore. I'm far too distraught.

RALPH

What happened?

LILY

*(softly)* You remember my cat, Margarita, right?

RALPH

Uh, yeah.

LILY

She's dead now. *(devastated)* As a doornail.

*(LILY begins to cry again and essentially tackles PHIL in search of support or comfort.)*

*PHIL is alarmed at this.)*

RALPH

Oh no. I'm so sorry, Lils.

PHIL

How'd she die, Lily?

*(LILY cries harder. RALPH punches PHIL lightly in the arm.)*

RALPH

Dude.

LILY

No, it's okay. I need to be strong. For Margarita. It's what she would've wanted. *(sighs)* I woke up this morning and I knew something was wrong. I felt it in the air. I started to get nervous. The energy in my house was off. Almost as though someone was gone. How could that be? I saw everyone at breakfast. All my sisters, my father, the weird red stain on the ceiling that looks like Elvis Presley. I relaxed a little. I let my guard down. Big mistake. My poor, naive, past self. I

called Margarita and opened up her cat food. Fancy Feast's best. Margarita didn't come. That's when I started to panic. I looked everywhere. She was nowhere. Then I checked the driveway. There was blood and fur everywhere! And then I knew. Oh, Ralph!

(LILY falls to the ground, upset)

PHIL

*(in an attempt to console her)* Well, look on the brightside, Lils. You can get a dog now! They're way better than--

RALPH

Phil!

PHIL

I mean! God, Ralph, let me finish. I'm sorry for your loss.

LILY

I just miss her so much! Why do the good die so young? Y'know, sometimes I can still feel her spirit, just, brushing up against my leg.

PHIL

Lil, she only kicked the bucket this morning.

LILY

Buckets. Margarita loved buckets. She sat in them all the time.

(LILY is about to break down again before RALPH grabs her shoulders.)

RALPH

Lily, you should go home. You're not in good shape for Mr. Henrikson's lecture today.

LILY

You're right. Will you guys walk me to the office?

RALPH

We're gonna be late to class, Lils.

LILY

You'll get out of Mr. Henrikson's lecture.

PHIL

Of course we'll walk you, Lilybug! We're absolutely here for you in your time of need. We wouldn't dare abandon you for even one second! Let's go right now.

(PHIL drags LILY offstage and RALPH rolls his eyes and follows.)

## Scene Two

**Setting:** The kids' neighborhood

**At Rise:** Ralph and Phil are on their way to Ralph's house.

RALPH

Gee man, I don't know. I feel really bad for Lily. I remember how devastated I was when Chubbs died. He was the best hamster ever.

PHIL

What about Lil' G?

RALPH

*(reluctantly)* Yeah, he's okay, I guess. Guinea pigs just aren't the same though.

PHIL

Well, Lily will be okay. She's tough, even if she's got enough drama in her to be the entire Drama Club herself.

RALPH

Yeah. She's pretty great.

(The boys' train of thought is interrupted by the trashcans in the alleyway rustling.

PHIL gets excited.)

PHIL

Dude, look! I bet it's the raccoons again! Kick the trash can over, I want to catch one.

RALPH

Okay, but if I get rabies I'm biting you first.

(RALPH goes to kick the trashcan buuuuuuuttt)

PHIL

Wait, what's this?

(PHIL picks up something shiny off the ground)

Sweet! New bling!

RALPH

Phil, that's a collar.

PHIL

I know, help me put it on.

RALPH

Hold on a second, let me see that tag.

(RALPH snatches the collar away)

Woah.

PHIL

What?

RALPH

This is Margarita's!

PHIL

Let me see!

(PHIL snatches the collar back)

Holy crap, it is,

RALPH

Phil, look at the ground! There's fur everywhere!

(PHIL walks over to investigate a spot on the ground)

PHIL

Ralph, this is a blood stain.

RALPH

Dude, we need to go tell Lily.

(RALPH and PHIL run off stage.)

### Scene Three

**Setting:** Lily's bedroom

**At Rise:** Ralph and Phil show up with bad news.

(LILY enters, irritated. RALPH and PHIL follow close behind.)

LILY

All right, what was so important that you just had to disturb me during my hour of grief?

PHIL

It's been a lot longer than an hour.

(LILY glares at PHIL and he hides behind RALPH)

RALPH

Look Lily, I know you're not feeling great right now--

PHIL

In fact, you're probably about to feel a lot worse.

LILY

What?

RALPH

(*to Phil*) C'mon man, a little tact would be nice.

LILY

Ralph? What is he talking about?

RALPH

(*sighs*) We found something in the alleyway by my house. Something not good.

LILY

Why are you telling me?

RALPH

Because we think we found where Margarita died.

LILY

What?!?

RALPH

There was blood and fur everywhere, just like in your driveway! And then... we found this!

(RALPH holds up the collar)

LILY

That could be any cat's!

RALPH

Lily, it says Margarita on the tag.

LILY

That doesn't mean anything!

PHIL

Lils, I'm sorry to be the one to tell you this but... your cat was MURDERED!

(both LILY and RALPH gasp dramatically)

LILY

Whaaa??

PHIL

Think about it, babydoll. Let's recap.

(PHIL takes on the persona of a 1940's detective)

The night before it all went down, all was well in the house. You were curled up with Margarita, watching the soaps.

LILY

I don't watch soap operas, Phil--

PHIL

So you were watching the soaps. *(to Lily)* Trust me, I'm a professional.

LILY

Yeah, a professional stupid-head.

PHIL

ANYWAYS. You turned off the soaps. It was nine o'clock, time for bed. You turned out the lights and pulled your cat close. But what you didn't know was... that it would be the last time!

DUN DUN DUN.

*(LILY punches PHIL in the arm)*

Hey, do you want me to tell the story or not? Nine-thirty o'clock. Margarita escapes your grasp. She slinks down to the kitchen to finish off the last of the food in the bowl and at ten o'clock she sits on the driveway. But what Margarita didn't know was that it would be tHE LAST TIME.

RALPH

Phil.

PHIL

Fine. Ten-thirty o'clock. The murderer shows up. He pulls out a shovel and starts beating--

RALPH

Phil!!

PHIL

Oh shoot, sorry. (*correcting himself*) Murdering Margarita. Then, this vicious freak dumped the body in the alleyway. Case closed.

RALPH

No, it isn't. You just made that stuff up off the top of your head.

LILY

Yeah, you've been watching way too much Criminal Minds.

PHIL

That may be true, but that doesn't change the fact that Margarita was MURDERED!

RALPH

Phil, the only way we could possibly know how Margarita died is if we asked her herself.

(RALPH gasps)

I have an idea! (*heroically*) To the alleyway!

(RALPH drags PHIL offstage)

LILY

This is a nightmare.

(LILY exits)

### Scene Three

**Setting:** The alleyway

**At Rise:** Ralph is plotting in the alleyway, Lily and Phil are confused

RALPH

Phil, did you get everything we need?

PHIL

Sort of?

LILY

Ralph, will you please just tell us what you're up to.

RALPH

All right, all right. So I know that we can't exactly solve the mystery of how Margarita died.

Except-- we can! We're going to have a say-ahn-say!

LILY

You mean a seance?

RALPH

No! A say-ahn-say.

LILY

Fine. A say-ahn-say. Isn't that kind of dark?

RALPH

Nah. I saw one on an episode of The Suite Life of Zack and Cody once. We'll be fine. Now,

Phil, the stuff?

PHIL

I couldn't find any candles, so I brought my light up Sketchers. I figured that'd be close enough.

RALPH

Good thinking. Did you get the tuna?

LILY

Tuna?

RALPH

Lily. Margarita is going to need something to coax her spirit out of the veil and not any handful of Meow Mix is gonna do it. So, Phil?

PHIL

Yeah, I got it. My mom says you owe her \$2.50 though.

RALPH

Tell her to put it on my tab. Let's get to work.

(RALPH, LILY, and PHIL sit in a semi-circle)

Okay, we need an ominous chant.

LILY

What? Are you sure?

RALPH

Okay, fine. We don't need it per se, but it would be cool. Just sayin'.

(PHIL begins making imitation meditation noises)

Good. Now Lily, light those Sketchers up.

(LILY does so)

Everyone join hands.

(They do)

LILY

Ew, Phil, why are your hands all sweaty?

PHIL

I'm nervous, okay?

RALPH

Shhhhh.

(LILY and PHIL resume their “chanting”)

Margaritaaaaaa, are you out there? We request your presence! It's Ralph, by the wayyyy...

LILY

This isn't gonna work, Ralph. I know she's gone. At least let me deal with it in peace.

RALPH

Lily, this is gonna work, I swear.

(RALPH clears his throat)

Margaritaaaaa... Here kitty, kitty, kittyyyyyy... (*whispering*) Phil, open the tuna.

(PHIL does)

PHIL

Here, let me try. Here, kitty!

(Nothing happens)

Ka-caw, Ka-caw!

(The trashcans suddenly begin to shake)

RALPH

Phil, what did you do?!

PHIL

I was just pretending to be a bird! I thought cats liked birds!

RALPH

You angered the spirits, you idiot!

PHIL

It's not my fault!

LILY

Guys, shut up!

(RALPH and PHIL shut up. Tiny meows are heard from inside the trash cans, Lily stands to investigate)

PHIL

(*whispering*) Lily, no, the spirits!

(LILY looks inside the trashcans and gasps)

LILY

Margarita!

RALPH and PHIL

What?!

LILY

Guys! Guys! It's Margarita! She's alive!

(The little meows become louder)

And she has kittens!

(LILY moves the trashcan on its side to sit with her "long lost" cat)

RALPH

I don't understand...

PHIL

How is this possible?

RALPH

This is eerily supernatural.

LILY

You dum-dums, this wasn't supernatural. You two are just terrible at solving mysteries.

RALPH

Speak for yourself, Ms. "I Still Feel Her Spirit Sometimes."

LILY

Oh, hush.

PHIL

You guys! This explains so much! The blood, the fur? It was all apart of the miracle of birth.

LILY and RALPH

Ewww!!

RALPH

At least you get some pretty cute kittens out of this situation, Lil.

LILY

I'm just happy that Margarita's okay. *(to Ralph and Phil)* Thanks for helping guys. You really are the best.

RALPH

We know. Right, Phil? Phil, are you crying?

PHIL

Life is beautiful, dude!

(An old man walks into the alleyway, angry)

OLD MAN

Hey! What are you kids doing in my alley?

PHIL

Crap, grab the trashcan and run! It's Mr. Crabson!

RALPH

Code red, code red! Go, go, go!

(LILY, RALPH, and PHIL grab the trashcan full of cats and run as far away

from Mr. Crabson as they possibly can)

OLD MAN

Where are you punks going with my trashcans? I know where you live! Don't make me call your parents!

(Mr. Crabson realizes he does not feel like running after these troublesome children)

Oh, forget it. I'm sick of those noisy cats anyway.

fin.