

## Weremouse!

Daniel stood in line with his dad at the Pet Mercado. He could barely contain his excitement. Finally, FINALLY, he was getting a pet!

His dad had said no to a ferret. He had said no to a lizard. He had said *absolutely not* to a snake. Then, just this morning, his dad had said yes to a mouse! He had said yes to a small, white mouse with red eyes. The mouse that was, at this very moment, hiding in a tunnel in the cage Daniel had picked out for her.

“A small mouse can’t do any harm,” said his dad.

“She’ll be no trouble at all,” said Daniel.

The cashier rang up all the gear for the mouse. The cage, the tunnel, the wheel. The food dish, the water bottle, the mouse pellets. They loaded it all in the car and took it home to Daniel’s room. He was officially a pet owner.

For the first few weeks, everything was great. Daniel liked watching the mouse peek her head out of the tunnel and nibble the pellets. He liked seeing her whiskers twitch when he fed her a carrot treat. At night, Daniel liked hearing the faint squeak of the wheel as he drifted off to sleep while the mouse played.

The only thing Daniel didn't like was the way her long claws scratched him when he reached in to pet her. But she was so small that they were only small scratches. And so he really didn't mind.

One night, Daniel woke up to a different sound. It was not a faint squeak. It sounded more like a low growl. A low growl that was growing louder and louder.

Daniel sat up in bed. Bright moonlight was streaming in his window from the full moon. And there, in the shaft of moonlight, Daniel saw a creature.

The creature was the size of a big dog, but it was standing on its hind legs. It had shaggy white fur and bulging red eyes and fangs that were dripping with foam. Its feet had long claws. They curved in a menacing way as the creature slashed the air and growled again.

"Help!" shrieked Daniel. He bolted from his bed and ran down the hall. Daniel bumped into the wall in his hurry to get away from the beast. There were no windows in the hall and it was pitch black. His dad came out of his bedroom, rubbing his eyes.

"What's going on?" asked his dad.

"Something's after me!" shouted Daniel.

When his dad switched on the hallway light, all they saw was the small, white mouse sitting on the rug, innocently eating a carrot. Its red eyes blinked up at them.

“It’s just the mouse,” said his dad. “It must have escaped somehow.”

But Daniel knew the truth. He thought about the full moon and the moonlight coming through his window. He thought about the darkness of the hall, where no moonlight could reach. There was only one explanation. Weremouse!



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NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Which of the following pets did Daniel's dad allow?
  - a. A snake
  - b. A lizard
  - c. A ferret
  - d. A mouse
  
2. Which of the following items did Daniel and his dad buy for the mouse?
  - a. A tunnel
  - b. A leash
  - c. Medicine
  - d. A ball
  
3. Which characteristics of the creature did NOT give Daniel a clue that the creature was really the mouse transformed?
  - a. White fur
  - b. Red eyes
  - c. Fangs dripping with foam
  - d. Long claws
  
4. What makes Daniel think the creature is a weremouse?
  - a. It likes to eat carrots
  - b. It transforms only in the light of the full moon
  - c. It growls
  - d. His dad didn't see it

Instructions for teachers:

These questions can be used to assess understanding of the reading passage.

The item in bold is the correct answer for each question.

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