SAMPLE OF SCRIPT FOR THE MIRACULOUS LIBRARY

**The Miraculous Library**

V. O A story is something that inspires us. It can bring to life your wildest dreams, most terrifying fears and the craziest adventures you can imagine. Everyone has a story. It might not be a prize-winning best seller, but it can hold the most magical moments if you know how to find them. My story is, well, a little complicated. It isn’t just one story. My story began the day I was born, but you don’t want to hear all about that, or the years I spent as a small child doing, pretty much what all children do. The story I want to tell you is the one where everything changed. The story where I became a piece of more than just my own story and part of a whole lot of other stories. A story should have a title, so let’s give this one a name… let’s call it ‘The Miraculous Library’.

And so we start at the beginning, because it wouldn’t make sense to start in the middle and it would ruin the story if we started at the end. So here we are, at the beginning. As I remember it started one day in the holidays. I was meeting up with some friends to go to the video arcade.

*Jack enters and stands in a frozen pose.*

V.O That’s Jack. My best friend. He makes me laugh, and I know he’s always got my back. He’s a bit of a drama nerd, and, don’t tell him, but I always envied how confident he was on stage. I tried acting once and got so nervous I forgot my lines, but Jack never forgets his lines. He bailed me out in that show and that’s when we became best friends.

*Ash enters.*

Ash, or Ashley in full, not that you’d ever dare call her that, is the final member in our group. We’re like the three musketeers, inseparable. Ash is really good at sports and always the first one picked for team games, but still chooses to hang out with us instead of with the ‘popular’ kids which is pretty cool.

So, we were meeting at the arcade…oh, wait a minute I forgot to introduce myself. That’s me. Tobias. Toby for short.

*Toby enters.*

So we were all on our way to the arcade to play some games and…

Kaylee Toby! Wait for me!

*Kaylee runs on, they all freeze again.*

V.O Cue the annoying little sister. I should have known then that it wasn’t going to be my day.

*They unfreeze.*

Toby Kaylee, what are you doing here?

Kaylee Mum told you, remember, you have to take me with you.

Toby and I told her no.

Kaylee she said you don’t have a choice. If you don’t take me with you I’ll tell her you left me alone all day and that’s against the law.

Toby Can’t you go to a friend’s house or something, or grandma’s?

Kaylee There’s nobody free today, that’s why mum said you have to look after me.

Toby Great.

Jack Hey Toby, come on.

Toby Sorry guys, mum says I have to look after my annoying sister today.

Ash That’s ok. Hi Kaylee! *(waves at Kaylee who waves back*) She can come with us.

Toby You sure?

Ash No problem. It’ll be fun, right Kaylee?

*Ash high-five’s Kaylee. They look at Jack. He looks as annoyed as Toby, but he shrugs.*

Jack I guess. There are loads of games at the arcade. (*to Toby*) it’s not like we’ll be stuck with her every second. Just give her some money and let her go play on the games she enjoys. Ash can always babysit her.

Toby Fine, Kaylee, but if you’re coming with us don’t start whining about stuff, ok?

Kaylee I won’t.

V.O so, where was I? oh yeah, we were on our way to the arcade to play some games, annoying little sister tagging along, but it wasn’t looking that bad a day until….

*They walk up to the arcade door. A sign on the outside says ‘closed for refurbishment’*. *Serena is standing by the door on her phone.*

Ash Closed for refurbishment? It didn’t say that yesterday.

Toby Great, now what are we going to do?

Ash They should have put up a sign or something saying it was going to be closed today.

Serena They didn’t plan on closing it. They’ve had a power failure or something.

Ash I guess we’re going to have to find something else to do today.

*Serena looks at the others and recognises Jack. He clearly knows who she is, but is trying to look like he hasn’t noticed her.*

Serena Jack?

Jack Serena. Hi. I didn’t realise it was you. I’ve not seen you at the arcade before.

Serena It wasn’t my idea. I was supposed to be meeting David here, but he’s just text me to say he’s got to go somewhere with his family today, so…

Jack Oh, that’s too bad. So, does that mean you’re on your own now?

Serena Looks like it, and I don’t really know this part of town. I might just go home. It was good seeing you, Jack.

*Serena starts to leave. Jack tries to stop her, but he can’t find the words. He turns to Toby.*

Jack Tell her she can hang out with us.

Toby Why don’t you tell her? She’s your friend.

Jack Toby, just ask her. Please.

*Toby gives Jack a confused look, but he calls after Serena and she stops.*

Toby You can come with us if you like.

Serena Are you sure? I don’t want to mess up your plans.

Toby The only plans we had were the arcade, so they’re already messed up anyway.

Serena Thanks, that’s really kind.

*Jack nudges Toby.*

Toby No problem. (*he waits for Jack to introduce them, but he doesn’t*) So, I’m Toby. This is Ash and my little sister Kaylee.

Ash Hi. So how do you know Jack?

Serena We’ve done a couple of plays together.

Kaylee Cool.

Jack She’s really good at acting.

Serena Thanks. You’re really good too.

*There is an awkward moment between them. Ash changes the subject.*

Ash So, what do you guys want to do?

Toby I don’t know.

Ash We could go to the park, play some football.

Toby You know we’re not very good at football.

Ash I could be one team, you could all be the other.

Jack And you’d probably still win.

Ash Only because I’m awesome.

Kaylee We could go to the cinema.

Toby Is there anything good on?

Kaylee There’s the new Disney film.

Ash No.

Kaylee Why not?

Toby Ash doesn’t like Disney.

Serena How can you not like Disney?

Ash It’s not Disney I don’t like. I just don’t like magic and fairy tales and stuff like that. It’s not real.

Serena Isn’t that sort of the point though. To imagine it?

Jack Ash doesn’t really like imaginary stuff.

Toby Apart from Zombies.

Ash That’s horror, not fantasy, that’s why. I don’t like all that fairy tale happy ending stuff. It’s so fake.

Serena And zombies aren’t?

Ash Zombies are gross and scary, and ‘The Walking Dead’ is the best TV show ever. We could go see a horror film.

Kaylee No. I hate horror. It’s too scary.

Toby That’s only because you’re a baby.

Kaylee I’m not. I just don’t like scary things.

Ash We don’t have to go and see something scary, it was just a thought.

Toby Kaylee’s too young anyway. They won’t let her in.

Jack We could go for a walk round the shopping centre for a bit. There might be something else to do there.

Toby Ok.

Kaylee Toby?

Toby What?

Kaylee I’m thirsty. Can we get something to drink?

Toby We’ll get something when we get there.

Kaylee But there’s a shop just down the road. Please.

Toby It’s in the wrong direction.

Kaylee But it’s only two minutes walk.

Ash Come on Toby. It’s not like we’re in a hurry to get anywhere.

Toby Fine. But no more whining.

*They exit.*

V.O And that’s how it started. How the five of us went from having a normal day at the arcade to a day as far from normal as you could get. I sometimes wonder what would have happened if we’d gone straight to the shopping centre and turned right instead of left. It’s funny how one simple choice, left or right, can make such a difference.

*They enter again, carrying drinks. There is a doorway with a sign on it ‘Books’.*

Toby Happy now?

Kaylee Yes. Thanks Toby.

*Serena stops by the door.*

Serena Look at this cute little old book shop.

Ash I’ve walked up and down this street hundreds of times. I’ve never noticed this before.

Jack Maybe it’s new?

Serena It doesn’t look very new.

Toby Maybe they wanted to make it look old. Like a sales gimmick or something.

Serena Let’s have a look inside.

Toby A bookshop? Really?

Jack Come on Toby. It’ll only be for a couple of minutes.

*Freeze.*

V.O A couple of minutes. That’s what he said. Only a couple of minutes. Except it wouldn’t be a couple of minutes at all. It would be… sorry, I got ahead of myself. I don’t want to ruin the story. Back to the doorway…

Jack Come on Toby. It’ll only be for a couple of minutes.

Toby Ok.

Ash Seriously?

Kaylee Come on Ash. There might be some books about football.

*Serena, Jack and Kaylee enter.*

Ash I doubt that.

Toby We won’t stay long.

*They enter. The lights blackout. A doorbell chimes. The curtains open to reveal the library. Books are stacked up everywhere. Quillery is fast asleep in the middle of the books buried. The door chimes again. Ember flutters on, followed by Hobble who is carrying the fairy lamp.*

Hobble Did you hear that? The door! It just chimed.

*The fairy lamp jingles.*

Hobble Yes I know that, Gloria. We all know what that means. What do we do though? What do we do?

Ember Calm down Hobble.

Hobble Calm down. I can’t calm down! This hasn’t happened in fifty years!

Ember But it has happened before, and just like last time we need to stay composed.

Hobble That’s easy for you to say. They are already inside!

*Fairy lamp jingles.*

Hobble Oh no, I’m not falling for that one. You’re staying in here, Gloria… ‘just go and see who it is…’ do you think I was born yesterday. Last time I let you out you caused chaos.

Ember Hobble. Concentrate!

Hobble It was her fault.

*Fairy lamp jingles and Hobble sticks out his tongue at it.*

Hobble Stupid fairy.

Ember Find Quillery.

Hobble *(shouting)* Quillery!

Ember Sh. They can’t know we’re here. Only Quillery, remember.

Hobble Oops. Sorry.

Ember Quillery has to be here somewhere.

*The hunt around, whispering. Hobble discovers Quillery under the books.*

Hobble Here!

Ember Quillery. The door. Wake up! The door just chimed. Quillery! Quillery!

*Quillery wakes with a start.*

Quillery Hm?

Hobble The door, the door. Somebody opened the door!

Quillery The door! Hobble why didn’t you tell me sooner.

Hobble You were busy snoring.

Quillery I was not snoring.

*Fairy lamp jingles.*

Quillery If I wanted your opinion, Gloria, I’d ask for it. Ember, who is it?

Ember I don’t know. We thought you should great them first, seeing as you’re the only human looking one.

Quillery I suppose the talking bird thing could be a bit overwhelming. You could have pretended to be a parrot.

Ember I am a Phoenix. We don’t lower ourselves to the level of common parrots.

*Quillery tries to put on coat, but ends up with it inside out, tries again.*

Quillery Sorry. I didn’t mean to offend, but I don’t even know what to do. The last time the door chimed it was me opening it. This is big. This is exciting. This is so much I don’t think I can handle it. What do I do?

Ember Just greet them and try not to scare them away.

Hobble Avoid mentioning anything about the library.

Ember And try not to look crazy.

*Ember hides. Hobble ducks to the back of the stage and freezes. Quillery tries to straighten up clothes and hair, but still looks eccentric. Toby, Ash, Jack, Serena and Kaylee walk in. They are looking at the books stacked up everywhere.*

Quillery Good Evening!

Ember (whispers) Morning.

Quillery Morning. Welcome to the Miraculous Library! I am Quillery, keeper of the books and master of the volumes!

*Ember shakes her head. Hobble whispers to Gloria. The children look at each other nervously.*

Hobble So, this is going well.

Toby Hi.

Quillery A pleasure to meet you.

*Quillery shakes Toby’s hand vigorously.*

Serena This is a lovely book shop.

Quillery Book shop? Book shop? This isn’t a book shop, my dear.

Ash You could have fooled me. There are books everywhere.

Quillery There are. In fact I was meaning to do some tidying up, but as fast as I try the books have a tendency to move again.

Kaylee You mean people move them.

Quillery Oh no. They move themselves. There hasn’t been a person walk through the door of this place in almost 50 years.

Jack Maybe we should be going.

Toby Good idea.

*Kaylee has noticed the fairy lamp in Hobble’s hands. She is trying to get a good look at it, but it makes Hobble move. Kaylee screams and Hobble screams. Kaylee runs over to Toby and hugs him.*

Toby What is that?

Hobble That? That, he calls me! I’m not a that!

Serena I thought it was a statue.

Quillery It is. It’s a moving statue. Very complicated to explain. Clever little invention isn’t it. It’s all animated of course.

Hobble No I’m not!

Quillery (laughs) so amusing too. I bought it at an antiques fair.

Hobble No you didn’t, you…

Quillery It’s really nothing to worry about. I’m sure it will stop moving again in a minute, once the clockworks have wound down.

Hobble Clockworks?

Quillery I’m very sorry it frightened the little girl.

Jack This is getting really weird. Toby, let’s go.

*They start to leave. Ember flutters out and blocks their path.*

Ember No wait! Please!

Serena That bird just talked.

Quillery Oh, yes. Don’t mind my parrot. It does that.

Ember Parrot?

Quillery Yes. Pretty Polly. Pretty Polly.

Ember I told you, I will not be reduced to the status of ‘parrot’.

Hobble and while we’re at it, I’m not a statue!

Quillery Really, you two are not helping.

*Fairy jingles.*

Quillery And we don’t need you chiming in either. Who was it that told me not to scare them? Who was it who said not to act crazy?

Ember You’d already messed that up yourself. Can’t you see they are trying to run out of the door.

Hobble That’s it. We failed.

Serena Hold it. Just a minute. I don’t know what is going on here, but I don’t want to leave until I know. I think you owe us an explanation.

Hobble I like her. She’s curious.

Toby Serena, I think we should get out before it gets any weirder.

Serena But if we leave now, won’t you be wondering about all of this, because I know I will.

Toby Alright. What is going on here?

Quillery That might be a little difficult to explain.

Toby Try.

Quillery Do you remember I told you this isn’t a book shop, it’s a library. This is the Miraculous Library. In it, every book ever written, every story ever told and character created can be found.

Ash If you’re trying to say this place is magic, stop right there. Stuff like that doesn’t exist.

Ember Don’t I look real to you? How can you not believe in something when it’s right in front of you.

Ash I don’t know what sort of trick this is, or where the hidden cameras are, but…

Ember There is no trick going on. I’m a Phoenix and we are incredibly honest creatures.

Hobble And I’m a gargoyle, not a statue!

*Fairy jingles.*

Toby I’ve had enough of this, come on, let’s go.

Quillery You can’t.

Toby We’re not staying here.

Quillery You don’t have a choice.

*They run to the door, but it won’t open.*

Ash It’s stuck.

Toby Open the door.

Quillery I wish I could.

Jack Why won’t it open.

Quillery It’s locked.

Toby Give us the key.

Quillery We don’t have the key. There isn’t a key.

Serena I’m calling the police.

Quillery You can try, but it won’t do any good.

*Serena pulls out her phone. She tries to dial, but the phone is dead.*

Serena It’s dead.

Quillery Of course it is. The one on the desk doesn’t work either. Trust me, I tried when I got locked in.

Toby You mean we’re stuck here.

Quillery I’m afraid so.

Jack Let us out.

Quillery I can’t. It isn’t me that’s keeping you here. It’s the library. It likes to play tricks like this.

Toby You’re talking about it as if it’s alive.

Ember It is.

Ash No. You’re all just making this up.

Quillery I wish I was. Believe me, when I got locked in I thought the same, but it’s far more complicated than it seems.

Serena What do you mean?

Ember The library is special. It doesn’t exist in reality all of the time. It just appears every now and then and somebody walks through the door.

Serena Like us?

Quillery Yes. The library chooses who to bring in here and then you stay locked in until you have completed whatever the library wants you to do. You have to find the password to open the door.

Toby Where’s the password?

Quillery Wherever the library has decided to hide it. It depends on what you need to learn.

Kaylee I don’t understand.

Quillery It is complicated. Basically you have to find the pieces of the puzzle hidden in the books.

Serena Then do the doors open?

Ash You don’t actually believe this rubbish do you?

Serena Under the circumstances I don’t think we’ve got much choice.