

A Reader's Theater Script for
The Lost Treasure of Tuckernuck
Written by Emily Fairlie
Script Adaptation by Mary Pettit, TBA Committee Member

Readers:

Narrator 1

Narrator 2

Narrator 3

Narrator 4

Maria Tutweiler

Laurie

Bud

Narrator 1: Eighty years earlier, at a student assembly held on the day that Tuckernuck Hall opened for the first time, school founder, Marie Tutweiler, spoke:

Maria Tutweiler: Welcome, Tuckernuckers! You are the first, the proud students who will lead future generations and carry this school to greatness. But first, a challenge. Who among you can unravel the puzzle? To reveal what is hidden, you will need a great many things—courage, persistence, intelligence, and creativity. The prize? A treasure beyond bounds!

Narrator 2: We now skip to eighty years later, when the puzzle is still unsolved, the treasure of Tuckernuck is still not found:

Narrator 3: Laurie's parents had gone to Tuckernuck, so that meant that Laurie had to go too.

Narrator 4: Never mind that her best friend in the world was going to Hamilton Junior High, where they didn't have dumb things like school treasure challenges. And to make matters worse, the Tuckernuck school mascot was a chicken, and the students were called Cluckers!

Narrator 1: Laurie had tried to be a good sport. She'd flapped her arms in the morning assembly. She'd clucked. But then she got her classroom assignment: Gerbil Monitor.

Narrator 2: Regular gerbils were one thing, but Ponch and Jon had gotten a reputation. Word around school was that the kid who drew gerbil duty last year had lost a finger.

Narrator 3: This was just too much. This was beyond the call of duty. No one should have to endure gerbil duty. And her co-gerbil monitor was Bud Wallace, who had gotten the school to ban sweets the year before. Half the class still wasn't talking to him.

Narrator 4: Bud looked down at the gerbils, Ponch and Jon, who were standing up against the aquarium walls watching them, their jaws dripping with venom. He looked doubtful.

Bud: Okay, well, maybe we ease into it? Let them get used to us before we try playtime: I'll change their water and you change their food.

Laurie: I can handle food. How hard could food be?

Narrator 1: Bud carefully took the lid off of the top of the aquarium and put it on the table. Then he lifted out the water bottle and headed to the sink.

Narrator 2: Laurie took a deep breath, stuck her arm into the cage, and successfully grabbed the food dish.

Laurie: I don't know what I was so worried about. Gerbils are no big deal anyway. Puny little dimwits, that's what they are.

Narrator 3: Unfortunately, they were also puny little dimwits with powerful jumping muscles. Ponch (or Jon) crouched and gave an enormous leap, landing squarely on Laurie's arm.

Narrator 4: In one smooth motion, Ponch (or Jon) grabbed hold of her sleeve and shimmied up towards her shoulder.

Narrator 1: It was like he was a stunt gerbil in an action movie, that's how slick his moves were.

Laurie [shrieking]: AAERRRRREGHHHH!

Narrator 2: Laurie shrieked, jerking her arm back and flinging gerbil food all over the room.

Laurie [shrieking]: GUUUUHRREAAEEEEAAAA!

Bud: What the heck?

Narrator 3: Bud looked up from the sink just in time to see Ponch (or Jon) go flying across the room and land on one of the pillows in the reading nook.

Bud [yelling]: Laurie, what are you doing?

Narrator 4: Laurie shuddered convulsively and rubbed at her arm, trying to get rid of the feeling of tiny claws.

Laurie [wailing]: He went after me!

Narrator 1: Jon (or Ponch) was no dummy. With Bud and Laurie distracted, he knew it was time to make his move. He leaped up and grabbed the edge of the aquarium, pulling himself up onto the rim.

Laurie [shrieking]: Aaaah! They're after me!

Narrator 2: She grabbed the aquarium lid, pushed Jon (or Ponch) back inside before he was able to make the jump from the aquarium to her shirt front, and slammed the lid down hard.

Bud: Get a grip, Laurie, they're gerbils! Come on, we've got to catch that one.

Narrator 3: He made a move toward the tiny escapee on the pillow.

Narrator 4: But Ponch (or Jon) wasn't giving up that easily.

Narrator 1: He hissed at Bud in a very non-gerbil-like way, turned tail, and raced out of the room and down the hall.

Narrator 2: Bud and Laurie stared at each other in horror.

Laurie [gasping]: He'll kill half the school!

Bud [groaning]: Mrs. Hutchins will kill us! We'll fail sixth grade!

Narrator 3: Without another word the two took off running down the hallway.

Narrator 4: And so we leave our two main characters with many questions left unanswered:

Narrator 1: Do they find Ponch (or Jon)?

Narrator 2: What does this runaway gerbil have to do with the lost treasure, anyway?

Narrator 3: Will Laurie have to stay at Tuckernuck Hall and be a Clucker?

Narrator 4: Read *The Lost Treasure of Tuckernuck* by Emily Fairlie to find out the answers.

THE END

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