

...in which the protagonists visit the Magic Speech house and find out that not all students are equally studious

He was a good boy. He was never naughty, almost never did any mischief in class. Honestly, he wasn't the brightest student, but I think it was a matter of time. Many low-performing students get better with time. Such cases are widespread," said Mister Ludo Vic, a handsome red fox who grew up in the walls of the Academy and turned from a silly cub into the unmatched Mister Ludo Vic, Professor of Belles-Lettres and Magic Poetry.

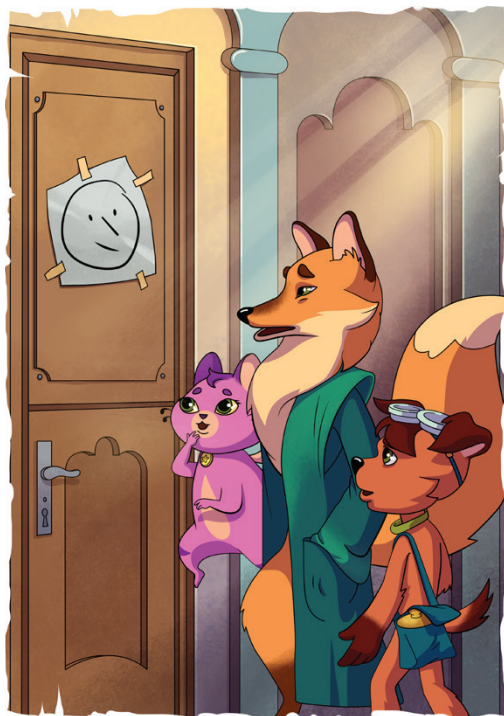
"What do you mean by saying he wasn't the brightest student?" Luna inquired.

"Was he a D-student?" Astro asked directly.

"Astro, how can you say things like that?" Luna exclaimed indignantly.

"Sorry. I just thought it would be easier to understand," Astro apologized.

"Oh, my friends, actually, both of you are not too far from the truth," Mister Ludo Vic responded calmly. "In fact, Mister Nicky was quite... a lazy student. He could have achieved much better results, had he spent more time studying vocabulary and language arts, pronunciation, and prosody. Well, here is the door to his room."





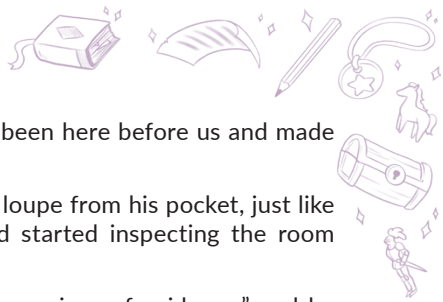
There was an overtly simple picture on the door, as if drawn for fun: a circle, two dots as eyes, a stick for a nose, and a stick for the mouth.

“What a funny picture,” Luna giggled. “The student we are looking for seems to be unable to draw at all.”

Mister Ludo Vic just sighed:

“All students of our house make their avatars themselves and put them up on their doors. Some do their best to create something magnificent,” the fox looked at the opposite door where the heading ‘Peggy M.’ was shining pink, and an animated image of the prettiest unicorn was gleaming. “While others...” the fox paused, then added, “Others are lazy, so they do something primitive.” He touched the doorknob and said the magic word “Open the door”, which threw the door to the room open.

A bleak picture of utter chaos and disorder struck the eyes of the investigators and the fox: clothes hanging on a chair; a blanket and a pillow in a heap on the bed; desk littered with books, papers, food wraps and torn-out sheets of paper. What’s more, there was a layer of garbage under the table, as if no one had cleaned there for several years. Mister Ludo Vic just shook his head and closed the eyes with his hand. But Luna could not refrain from exclaiming:



“What a chaos! Is it possible that someone has been here before us and made this mess?”

“Definitely not, colleague,” Astro said, getting a loupe from his pocket, just like his favorite detective Sherlock Holmes would, and started inspecting the room sniffing at all things.

“Well, well!” Astro exclaimed. “It seems we have a piece of evidence,” and he pointed at the book laying on top of a dusty book pile. The title read: ‘How to Do Nothing and Get Everything Done.’ “This book seems to be the last one the missing student had read.”

“It seems to be the only book he had read,” Mister Vic concluded, dragging his finger across the book pile only to find a thick layer of dust.

“But how?” Luna asked in surprise. “How can someone choose not to read books on the magic language? They are so exciting!”

“Oh, young lady, we’ll never understand these lazybones, may the Tree of Knowledge forgive me, but such lazybones as Mister Nicky was... I mean Mister Nicky is... need to be expelled from the Academy at once!” Mister Ludo Vic was clearly in discontent: his eyes became bloodshot, and his hair bristled up.

“Please, don’t get so angry. I’m sure, when we save him, he will definitely stop behaving like that and get to studying at once. I think he just got off track,” Luna tried to calm the teacher down.

“Of course. I apologize, lady. I think, you are absolutely right, and Mister Nicky will definitely change for the better,” Professor Ludo Vic agreed, with a note of sadness in his voice.

