

Don't Stop Believing

FADE IN:

EXT. BILSON HOUSE - BACK YARD - MORNING

Tall Redwoods encircle a picture perfect two story log cabin and immaculate yard, enclosed by a wood fence.

SUPER: JUST OUTSIDE MIRANDA, CA - AVENUE OF THE GIANTS

HANNAH, 5, as cute as little girls can be, plays on a rope swing, attached to a huge redwood, a Bugs Bunny stuffed animal in one arm.

Next to the back fence, a curious BUNNY RABBIT watches her, nose constantly twitching.

Hannah notices the bunny, slows her swinging, a big smile on her face.

She hops off the swing, Bugs still in tow, lands on her hands and knees. She stands, approaches the rabbit.

HANNAH

Hello there, little bunny. You sure are cute.

The rabbit watches, stands up on its hind legs.

RABBIT

(young female voice)

What's up, Doc? You're awful cute, yourself.

Hannah's eyes go wide, a confused look on her face, which quickly changes to one of wonder and awe. She opens her mouth, but nothing comes out.

The rabbit cocks its head, nose still twitching nervously.

RABBIT (CONT'D)

I'm so hungry. Do you have any carrots I could have? Pretty please?

An audible gasp escapes Hannah's lips, as she turns, and runs toward the back patio.

The rabbit turns towards the fence, revealing an inky black gelatinous mass on its neck.

INT. BILSON HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

JASMINE, 9, an older version of Hannah, sits at the kitchen table, as MOM, 31, pretty but tired looking, serves pancakes and sausages.

Hannah bursts in on the run.

MOM

Perfect timing, Hun. I made pancakes.

Hannah rushes up to Mom.

HANNAH

Mommy...there's a talking rabbit out back.

Jasmine watches, laughs out loud.

JASMINE

Riiiiight...Hannah, you need to stop making up stories.

MOM

A talking rabbit, huh? What did he say?

HANNAH

He's a she, and she said she was very hungry and asked for carrots.

Mom pulls a chair back, motions for Hannah to sit.

MOM

She did, huh? Well, I hope you're hungry too. Wash your hands and sit down here...let me have Bugs.

MOMENTS LATER

The three sit at the table, almost done with their breakfast, but the sausages still remain on Hannah's plate.

HANNAH

But, Mommy, I'm not making it up. She really did talk and she sounds like a little girl.

Jasmine finishes off her plate, eyes on Hannah.

JASMINE

Mom, how many times have you told Hannah not to make up stories? I think she should get a punishment...don't you?

Mom eyes Jasmine, raises her eyebrows.

MOM

You do, huh, Jazz? Did you make your bed this morning? Did you clean your room, like I asked last night?

JASMINE

Mom...really?

Hannah sticks her tongue out at Jasmine.

HANNAH

Yeah! Maybe Jasmine should get a punishment, too! Meany!

Mom looks down at Hannah's plate.

MOM

Baby, eat your sausages, OK? For me?

(beat)

If you finish your plate, I'll cut up some carrots for you, and no one will get a punishment...but if not...

Hannah forks her sausage, swirls it in syrup.

HANNAH

I'll eat 'em. I promise!

EXT. BILSON HOUSE - BACK YARD - MOMENTS LATER

Hannah and Jasmine exit the back patio, Bugs in Hannah's arms and a bag of cut carrots in Jasmine's hand.

The rabbit is nowhere to be seen.

Hannah grabs Jasmine's free hand.

HANNAH

C'mon...I wasn't making it up about the bunny rabbit.

JASMINE

Sure you weren't.

(beat)

Hey, Mom said Dad is coming over for dinner and may even sleep over.

Hannah stops in her tracks, looks up to Jasmine.

HANNAH

Daddy's coming over? You think Mommy and Daddy will sleep together?

Hannah snickers.

JASMINE

Hannah! I'm telling Mom what you just said. That's not very lady-like.

HANNAH

You're always telling on me, and you know what? I'm not a lady...I'm still a little girl, so just...

The rabbit scampers under the back fence, eyes directly on the girls.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

...there she is! See? I told you.

Jasmine scrunches her nose, shakes her head, looks from the rabbit down to Hannah.

JASMINE

You said it was talking. I don't hear any talking. It's just a dumb rabbit, Silly.

The rabbit stands on its hind legs.

RABBIT

That's not very lady-like, calling me dumb, now is it?

Jasmine's eyes go wide. She stares, dumfounded at the rabbit, then down to Hannah.

HANNAH

See? I told you I wasn't fibbin'.

RABBIT

C'mon, follow me. I want to introduce you to some of my friends...and bring the carrots!

The rabbit scurries under the fence.

Hannah tries to follow, but Jasmine holds her back.

JASMINE

We're not allowed to go outside the fence without Mom. I'm gonna get her.

HANNAH

No! C'mon. We won't go far. Mommy won't believe you either...c'mon, Jasmine...please!

EXT. FORESTED TRAIL - MOMENTS LATER

Huge redwoods surround a dirt trail that meanders back into the forest.

Hannah and Jasmine stand together, looking down at the rabbit. Hannah hands the rabbit a carrot.

JASMINE

I cannot believe this. How can you talk?

The rabbit chews the carrot madly. What looks like a smile, forms on its lips.

RABBIT

Don't stop believing. Never lose the wonder of believing in what you think can't be.

Hannah watches, smiling from ear to ear.

HANNAH

I told you! See? Isn't she cute?

The rabbit finishes the carrot, looks up into Hannah's eyes.

RABBIT

Can I have another carrot? They're so good and I'm still so hungry!

HANNAH

Of course you can, silly rabbit.

Jasmine laughs.

The rabbit looks perplexed.

RABBIT

Why did you call me, silly?

JASMINE

She was kidding. It's from an old commercial about a rabbit eating cereal. My Dad always called us, silly rabbits.

RABBIT

Is your Mommy and Daddy home now?

HANNAH

Our Mommy is, but our Daddy doesn't live with us anymore.

JASMINE

But he's coming over tonight for dinner...

HANNAH

And he may sleep over with Mommy!

The rabbit watches, as it chews.

RABBIT

Well, that's too bad your Daddy doesn't live with you anymore, but it's good he's coming over tonight.

HANNAH

Mommy doesn't believe in talking rabbits.

JASMINE

She will now!

RABBIT

Hey, c'mon, I want you to meet my other friends.

The rabbit bounds off down the trail.

JASMINE

Hannah, we should go back.

The rabbit stops, turns around.

RABBIT

It's not much further...you'll love my friends. C'mon!

Hannah looks up to Jasmine with pleading eyes.

JASMINE

Oh, OK...but not much farther.

EXT. BURNED OUT CLEARING - MOMENTS LATER

The ground is scorched. All the trees are toppled, with thin wisps of smoke wafting up from their charred trunks.

In the middle, a dull metallic cylindrical cone juts out of the burned ground. Next to it, a mound of fresh earth with a dark opening.

A BEAR CUB and a FAWN play near the mound of earth.

The rabbit bounds up to the other animals, with Hannah and Jasmine close behind.

Jasmine stops in her tracks, pulls Hannah back with her.

JASMINE

Woooo...what happened here?

She points at the cone shaped object.

JASMINE (CONT'D)

And what's that?

Hannah looks on in wonder and amazement.

HANNAH

Look! A little bear cub and fawn.
Do you talk, too?

BEAR CUB

(young female voice)
Of course, we do, you silly rabbit.

FAWN

(young female voice)
Me too. Want to be our friends?

The rabbit watches as Jasmine covers her mouth in shock.

Hannah breaks free of Jasmine's grip, rushes over and hugs the bear cub. As she pulls back, she looks down at her arms, covered in a dark gelatinous liquid.

HANNAH

You're so cute, but you're all wet.
I have a stuffed bear that looks
just like you...but he doesn't talk.

BEAR CUB

Stuffed? Why did you stuff him?

Jasmine slowly walks forward.

JASMINE
 He's not real...like Hannah's Bugs
 Bunny...they're just toys.

The rabbit looks at Bugs in Hannah's arms.

RABBIT
 I was wondering about him...he's
 pretty quiet.

The girls both burst out in laughter.

JASMINE
 We're gonna be rich when people see
 what we've found!

BEAR CUB
 Rich? What is rich?

JASMINE
 It's money. You're the only talking
 animals in the whole world!

RABBIT
 And what would you do with all that
 money?

Hannah spins around, Bugs above her head.

HANNAH
 We'd go to Disney World and make
 Mommy and Daddy love each other again
 and be a happy family for ever and
 ever and ever!

The fawn approaches, nuzzles Hannah's cheek. On the back of
 its neck is an inky black gelatinous mass.

FAWN
 That sounds wonderful. Here, in our
 forest, Mommies and Daddies always
 love each other, and I think you're
 going to be a happy family again
 real soon.

BEAR CUB
 And all animals love each other,
 too.

Jasmine scrunches her nose, approaches the bear cub.

JASMINE
 But, bears eat deer...sometimes they
 even eat people.

RABBIT

Not anymore...not since our newest friend arrived. We all live in peace and harmony...and always will.

JASMINE

Who's that? Who's your newest friend?

The rabbit turns to the mound of earth.

RABBIT

She's in there.

FAWN

We call her Queenie!

BEAR CUB

Yeah, Queenie! She's so nice.

RABBIT

She came to us last night, in the storm. She wants to meet you.

Hannah smiles wide, runs up to the mound of earth.

She peers inside the dark hole.

JASMINE

Hannah, don't get too close...you don't know what's in there.

Jasmine looks to the rabbit.

JASMINE (CONT'D)

What is Queenie? She's not a lizard, is she? We're scared of lizards.

Seven gleaming pinpoints of light stare back at Hannah from inside the mound.

RABBIT

No, she's not a lizard, but lizards are nice, too...all the animals are nice.

(beat)

Queenie is different, but so nice. She made us all what we now are.

Hannah moves closer to the dark opening.

HANNAH

I can see her, I think. She's shiny...and really big!

Jasmine attempts to go to Hannah, but is blocked by the bear cub and fawn.

Three jet black appendages lash out of the hole with the speed of a striking snake. They wrap around Hannah's upper half, and pull her inside, in a split second.

Jasmine screams...turns around, and hightails it back down the trail.

The three animals look at each other inquisitively.

INT. BILSON HOUSE - GREAT ROOM - DAY

It's a big, beautiful room, with two story windows, looking into the back yard. Mom sits on a sofa, laptop in front of her.

Through the windows outside, Jasmine throws open the fence gate, runs up to the house as fast as she can.

The back door opens with a bang.

MOM

I need you two to get cleaned
up...we're heading out to the market
to get some stuff for a special dinner
for your Dad tonight.

Jasmine rushes in, panting, completely out of breath.

JASMINE

Mom...Mom...

Mom looks up, alarmed, quickly stands.

MOM

Honey, what's wrong? Where's Hannah?

Jasmine tries to catch her breath.

JASMINE

Mom...Hannah wasn't making it up.
The animals...they all talked and
something got her..dragged her into
a hole. We have to go help her...NOW!

EXT. BURNED OUT CLEARING - DAY

Hannah stands in front of the mound, a strange smile on her face, Bugs Bunny in her arms. The animals are nowhere to be seen.

Mom and Jasmine enter the clearing on the run.

HANNAH

Mommy! I'm over here. I want to show you something.

MOM

Honey, are you OK? Jasmine said something...

JASMINE

In the hole! It's in the hole!

Hannah opens her arms, beckons Mom over to her.

HANNAH

Mommy, I'm cold. Will you pick me up and take me home with you?

Mom looks to Jasmine.

MOM

Stay here. I'll get her.

JASMINE

Mom...don't go. Something's wrong here.

Mom runs to Hannah, hugs her tight, then quickly pulls away, looking at her arms, which are wet with a dark gelatinous fluid.

MOM

Honey? What's on your neck? You're all wet and sticky.

Hannah smiles wide.

HANNAH

It's Queenie. She's my new best friend. She wants to be your best friend, too.

Three jet black appendages fly out from behind Hannah, wrapping up Mom, and spinning her around backwards.

Mom fights, but is no match for the unseen creature's power.

She's quickly pulled down and back into the hole.

Jasmine screams, turns to run, but is blocked by the bear cub and fawn.

She screams again, only this time, much louder.

EXT. BILSON HOUSE - FRONT YARD - EVENING

A Jeep pulls into the driveway, headlights leading the way.

The garage door opens in front of it.

INT. BILSON HOUSE - GREAT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mom, Hannah, and Jasmine sit together on a sofa, looking out to the kitchen. Three jet black appendages unwrap themselves from around their necks, disappear behind the sofa.

Hannah giggles as the sound of the garage door opening into the kitchen rings out.

Mom smiles, hugs her two girls.

MOM

Hey Babe, we're in the great room.

HANNAH

We have a BIG surprise for you, Daddy.

FADE OUT.