



Class Trip

By David Lubar

I'd really been looking forward to our class trip. I know I'd gone there before, but I can't get enough of the Center City Science Museum. I could tell that the rest of the kids were ready, too. Everyone was full of energy when we walked into class. That's when I saw him. "Oh no," I groaned, "not Mr. Peggler."

"Phooey," Dale said. He curled his nose and sniffed like he'd smelled something bad.

You'd think a classy private school like Wolfson Academy could afford to hire good substitutes. And, to be honest, I guess I'd have to say that most of the time they did. But Mr. Peggler was terrible. He thought he was great with kids, but he had no idea what we really liked.

This is going to ruin the trip, I thought. I'd been looking forward to going to the museum with Ms. Howell. She was such a great teacher.

"Listen up," Mr. Peggler said. "Your teacher is out today. But don't worry, we're still going on the class trip. Isn't that wonderful?"

There was silence in the room.

"Well," Mr. Peggler said, "I'm looking forward to it. So, let's go get on that bus and have a great time."

We got on the bus. I took a nap. Morning isn't my best part of the day. When we reached the museum, Mr. Peggler led us into the lobby.

"We always go to the Hall of Mammals," I told him. "That's our favorite place." I loved seeing the bunnies and the squirrels and the other small creatures.

"Well," he said, looking around at the signs on the wall, "it's no good to get into a rut. You need to experience new things. Otherwise you'll all become creatures

of habit. Ah, this is perfect," he said, pointing to one of the signs. "There's a show about to start in the planetarium."

I shook my head. "I don't think that's such a good idea."

"It's a wonderful idea," he said.

Then I saw the name of the show and a chill ran across my scalp. "I really don't think it's a good idea at all."

"What's wrong, afraid of the dark?" Mr. Peggler asked.

"Hardly," I said.

Before I could argue any further, he was leading everyone into the planetarium. We took our seats. The room grew dark. Mr. Peggler was sitting right next to me. "See," he said as the stars appeared projected on the ceiling. "This is wonderful. You should just relax and enjoy the show."

"Welcome to the planetarium," the taped voice of the announcer said over the loudspeaker.

"I really think we should leave," I told Mr. Peggler.

He shushed me. Okay, I thought. That's it. I'd tried. There was nothing more I could do except sit and listen to the announcer.

"Our show is called Phases of the Moon. If you look toward the eastern horizon, you'll see a spectacular full moon rising."

It was a fake, of course. I wasn't really sure if it would work. But it certainly did the trick. By the time the whole moon was visible over the horizon, we'd all changed. I'd tried to tell Mr. Peggler it was a bad idea taking us to the planetarium. Maybe I should have told him our secret. But what use is a secret if it gets out? And even if I'd told him we were all werewolves, he'd never have believed me. But it's true. When the full moon rises, we turn into wolves. All of us. I don't mean those pretty wolves you see in nature shows on TV -- I mean snarling, raging, howling monsters.

The school should have known better than to hire him. I guess good substitutes are hard to find. Of course, by the time we get through with Mr. Peggler, he's going to be pretty hard to find, too.

