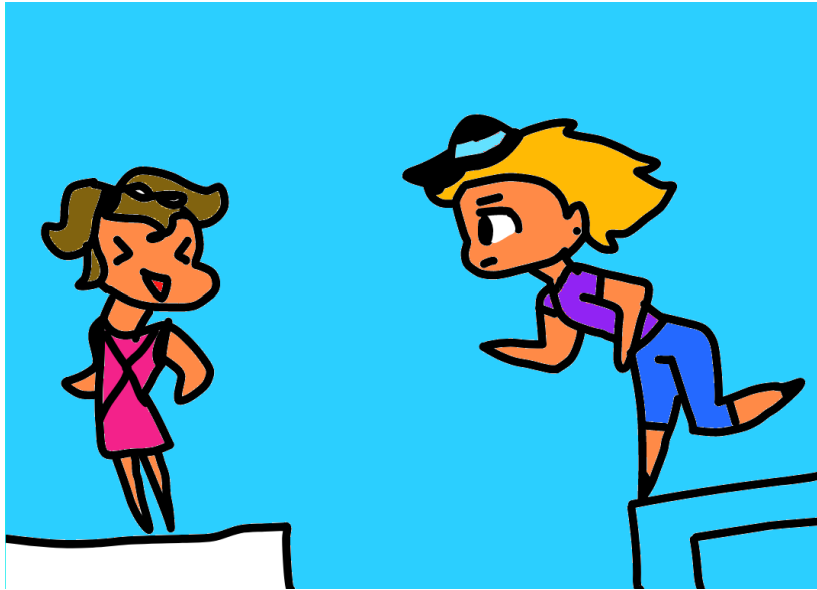


Run. Jump. Throw. Catch.

Those were the four things you would need in a regular chase around a big giant city in the middle of the day. But when it includes your career on the line, your dignity and an evil



mastermind genius, I throw those rules out the window and also throw caution to the wind.

Okay, the evil mastermind? A FIVE YEAR OLD. But don't be fooled- she's smarter and more crafty than you think.

"What's wrong, AGENT?" The evil mastermind said, poking out her tongue. I threw a random umbrella pole (umbrella included) at her, but she cruised out of the way and I missed by a mile. "Too fast for you?" She said, hopping from the ground to a tree, shimmying up until she grabbed hold of a railing on a roof and I followed her, and we were running on the rooftops, hopping from one to another, barely breaking a sweat. She poked her tongue out at me again, until she skidded to a stop. I ran at her, until she took a leap of faith across at least a five-metre gap, grabbing hold of the roof at the last moment, and swung herself up; and she landed NEATLY ON THE ROOF.

Told you she was crafty.

I yelled and kicked at a soup can left on the roof before jumping down and dragging myself all the way back to my bike. Life is unfair, yada yada yada. My watch beeped relentlessly, and I tapped on it. "What?" I said, finally reaching my bike and unlocking it. "Agent Amélie, report to my office. NOW." My boss was NOT happy with me. I sighed, and deleted the message. Another failed mission. My boss had given me 256 jobs, and I had failed all 255 of them. Oh, except for the one

with the Ice cream truck, you know, where I had to get Ice cream for my boss because they were at a meeting and they wanted ice cream to give to the guests. And? Oh and wait wait wait..... WHO ARE YOU I'M IN A PRIVATE EDIT MODE HOW DID YOU GET HERE OFF NOW well anyway I leaped on my bike and rode off.

"You have failed your last mission," Boss said, tapping their pen on the table. "Soooooooooooooooooooo, you're kicking me off? Is that it?" I said nervously, fearing for my job. "No," Boss said, looking at me expectantly. "This is your last mission on your own."

My jaw dropped open.

Somehow, that was worse.

"U-um," I said. Desperate times call for desperate measures. "What a-about my sister? She could.....help...." I hoped and prayed I wouldn't be questioned further ; I didn't even have a sister.

"You do not have any siblings. You must take in the quirkiest recruits as I have accustomed you. You are dismissed--" "EXCUSE ME BUT I HAPPEN TO HAVE," I burst out, "A HATE OF WORKING WITH OTHER PEOPLE--" "Amélie." Boss warned. "You need someone that can help calm you down. Visit these rooms for recruits." They slipped a piece of paper out of a desk drawer and slid it across the table towards me.

As I walked down the hall I stared at the paper. "Calm me down," I mumbled to myself. "Yeah, right." Disguise room, 6G. I ran my hand across the letters, hoping that the new recruits would be smart and take a hike. I opened the door and was surprised when I looked at the floor. It was littered with pieces of fabric, all different shapes. "Um," I said. "What's this?" A figure detached itself from the shadows, before running towards me. "Oh my gosh Amélie I am such a big faaaan!" I sighed. Vashti Perez. She obviously won't leave. The fabric expert, but still pretty confusing. She picked up a piece of fabric from the floor and started chopping with her scissors, and threw the remains around my neck. Auuuugh. Even a fabric flower wreath couldn't make me feel better. We

walked off to the next room (Science 3A) and as we walked into the room I knew immediately who we were picking up.

Pierre Woodstock.

Unfortunately.

The guy who really does like all things science and made awesome potions and stuff but wasn't quite sure what to do with them. "Oh, hi Pierre," Vashti started chatting as soon as she was through the door and I wished I could just tell them to leave me alone and to not bother me.

Pierre turned toward us with a questioning expression, as if he wasn't quite sure whether he was assigned to me or a broom. "Ya?" he said, lifting up his goggles. "Out, out, everyone out," I ushered them out before they had drawn breath. "No time for chitchat."

Pierre and Vashti both looked at me and their faces were plainly saying one thing: THERE IS ALWAYS TIME FOR CHITCHAT.

The next recruit was in the interrogation room, A5. I kicked open the door and who did I see? Probably the most weird person on the planet, Romel Brown.

The really noisy guy with the 'interrogation face', I think now Boss is just being mean. "WHAT DO YOU WANT, YOU FOUL BEAST!" Is the yelp volcanically spewing out into the universe (looking back, it should be multiverse). Vashti and Pierre were already wearing fabric earmuffs leaving me to suffer this punishment alone. "Well?" He exclaimed, sharpening his pencils. I just stood there.

"Why aren't you talking? What have you got to hide?!" He pointed the extremely sharp pencil at me and for a minute, I was scared he was going to skewer me on it. Romel's phone pinged with a message and he briefly consulted it before setting it down and smiling sheepishly at us. "Oop.

New recruitment, AOK?" He knew his smile must be getting manic by now but he had put it on too long to get rid of it. I rolled my eyes and led everyone to the final recruit, Newbie Room, A1.

"Ooooooh, a newbie! I find it confusing how they call it the Newbie room. Can't it be called the recruit room? Much more catchy." Vashti asked. Pierre stayed quiet. "Yeah, and can't you be called I Rode To The Moon On A Piece Of Burnt Toast? It's the Newbie room, duh!" I said rudely, swinging

open the Newbie door. I walked down the line of newbies until I came to one I thought was our new recruit. "Ah, yes! Newbie, we're your new team!" I gritted my teeth at the word team. "I'm your manager," said the agitated manager.

Oop.

Well, that's a story you could tell your friends; 'There's this workplace and they have a room for new recruits called the Newbie room, where the Newbies had to line up and be picked for jobs, and one day a very gullible dumb person went to pick a job for one newbie and they chose one that they thought looked efficient. And guess what the newbie they picked said! "What? I'm your boss!"'

I deeply regret breaking my chances.

A small girl raised her hand. "Tôi là người mới của bạn, tôi tên là Tranh!"

Let's just say I had no idea what she said. "Heeeello," I said, making hand gestures, "My naaame iiis Aaameliie and you are our neew reecuiit." She waved a hand in my face and said, "I know English! I'm trying to tell you that I'm Tranh and that I am your new Newbie. Pay attention!"

She was right in my face now. I leaned back and fell on the ground because someone was supposed to catch me! Ello it is Pierre here and it completely was a mistake because Vashti did it! I'll get Romel later.

Anyway she was carrying a large bag behind her and lugging it around in as it scraped on the ground and shot sparks when it dragged on the floor aaall is the way to my planning room, G2. Which is a long way away (echo). So I had to deal with a really annoying noise bursting my eardrums, a crazy scary interrogator with his pencil knives, a mad scientist and wow what a fan club I see!

Worst. Day. Ever.

The next morning I finally found what was in the bag, because when I woke up the scraping sound was back and was getting noisier and noisier. I thought it was the coffee but instead Vashti and Tranh and Romel were outside my door: insert a bang head on wall sound. "Oh. Hi! Pierre's back at

the lab experimenting with his newest potions and he wants you to go test them. And plus, the planning room is on fire. Oh my gosh, what did you make for breakfast , it smells good..." I only just registered what Vashti said. I have three letters that one back up my argument and two explain what I was thinking.

WDYDTMBPR. Okay, not three letters. It stands for What Did You Do To My Beloved Planning Room!?

"Pierre said come before his sticky potion breaks on his head and he'll be stuck in the fire," I know. It's weird. "But how does he know that?" I said , panicked. "Freda the psychic. NOW GET YOUR FACE OUT HERE THIS SECOND!" Romel brandished his sharpest pencil at me and I did what I was told. Tranh wasn't with her bag anymore, instead she had what was inside making the noise and sparks— A SWORD. I know you're confused, I still am. The long metal blade was old and nicked in a lot of places and the gems at the top were pink. "I got it from Grandma who yanked it out of a rock," Tranh told me. I think she still does. But my planning room and maybe the whole base was in flames so I sprinted and leapt on my bike and waited for the whole fan club to catch up. "How do we get on there?" asked Romel, poking the pedals with his shoes. "It's tiny." I rolled my eyes. "Go make a human pyramid and balance on top," I snorted acerbically (sarcastically, if you don't know).

Terrible mistake. They all piled up and crowded the one- person bike until Romel almost got poked in the face by Tranh's sword and he yelled and said only one person at a time.

So I wheeled off and Romel was behind me on the bike, but at least he wasn't yelling at me or anyone because he'd been so squished he'd dropped his pencil. He was holding onto the back seat intensely, and I had t