

Synopsis

Characters and Ensembles in ALL CAPS. Songs in *[italics]*

The care and keeping is a 90 minute musical revue divided into 5 sections with a prologue and finale. Each section is rehearsed in one week of the rehearsal schedule.

Prologue

The prologue opens the show with MAGICAL PET OWNERS, and MAGICAL PETS singing *Strange Magic* by ELO.

A narrator explains:

“There are few things as magical as the bond between a child and a pet. But there are few pets as magical as those belonging to children struggling down the murky path of childhood.”

Section 1



Our attention shifts to a single mom and five kids, the PARKER FAMILY, moving into a new home. Each of them has a magical pet.

6th grader WINTHROP PARKER takes his miniature pet shark Marina to attend an activities fair at the middle school. He is searching for something cool to do. [*Searching*, Del Shannon] He attempts to join several groups including SOCCER PLAYERS, LUNCH WORKERS, DRAMA QUEENS and CHEERLEADERS. In frustration, he lets MARINA out of her jar and magically she transforms into a full sized nurse shark. She gives him advice and encouragement that allows him to face his fears. [*Say Geronimo* by Sheppard]

Section 2



In SECTION 2 we meet the irrepressible SAGE and her cheerful unicorn SUNBEAM. SAGE goes to bed early to prepare for her first day in a new school. Despite her optimism, SAGE has a scary nightmare about school the next day about her CLASSMATES, BOOKS and LETTERS. [*Dream On*, Aerosmith and *ABC 123* Jackson 5] In the morning, her unicorn assures her that all is well. [*Get Back Up Again*, Trolls soundtrack]. At school she makes a confession to her TEACHER that allows her to make great progress. [*Miracle*, Barry Manilow]

Section 3



SECTION 3 is about 13 year old CHANCE and his pet gremlin CHIFF, short for Mischief but don't call him Miss. They are harmless trouble makers but fall into a crowd of SLACKERS. [*It's Always a Good Time, Owl City*] They invite CHANCE to some evening trouble making where upon they transform into tiny WEREWOLVES (played by smaller children. They're tiny but vicious). [*Born to be Wild, Steppenwolf*] CHANCE only succumbs to peer pressure so far, so instead of becoming a werewolf himself he carries the furry CHIFF on his back to disguise himself.

Meanwhile PETRA, her pet rock ROCKY and several NERDS sing about wanting fit in. [*Cool Kids, Echosmith*]. They find the SLACKERS lying on the steps of the school after a night of Werewolf-fun. Embarrassed, the SLACKERS pick a fight with the NERDS but CHANCE comes to PETRA's defense and throws the first punch. [*Fight Song, Rachel Platten*]. CHANCE discovers he doesn't want to be a rebel after all. [*You Can Go Your Own Way, Fleetwood Mac*]

Intermission

Section 4



In Section 4 we learn that the oldest Parker child DRAKE is stressed out trying to be the man of the house. And as a result he has quite a chip on his shoulder that takes the form of a dragon. [*Working for the Weekend, Loverboy*] He is trying to fill in for his mom, keep up in school, work at the local dogwash and doesn't even have time to talk to BREE the girl he likes. In a fit of stress he fantasizes about his dragon growing full size, breathing fire on all the sources of his stress and flying away on the dragon's back. [*Disco Inferno, The Trammps*] But he is visited by FAERIES led by a fantasy interpretation of BREE who talks a bit of sense into him. [*Fooling Yourself, Styx*] When he comes to, they realize the youngest child is missing.

Section 5



In Section 5, KEEGAN who has been wandering off and hiding throughout the play seems now to be thoroughly missing. She is on a quest to heal her sick bird. So she is spirited away to the land of the GONMES by a CENTAUR. [*Home, Philip Philips*] The GNOMES attempt a healing ritual. [*Gone Daddy Gone, Violent Femmes*] Meanwhile the family discovers that KEEGAN is not missing, but she passed out while hiding and is now burning with

fever. The family in reality and the gnomes in the dream rally around her [*Light* – Next to Normal]. And the finale is [*The Best Day of my Life* – American Authors]