

FADE IN

EXT. SAND DUNES - DAY

A beach with a rabbit colony on it. Young rabbits are playing games, older rabbits are talking or digging burrows. WINTHROP, who is on his own, is sitting under a tree. He has a puzzled look on his face. He is watching the other rabbits and listening to music on his iPod.

WINTHROP

I hope grandad arrives soon, this
is boring.

He picks up some pebbles and throws them into the sand. He starts to sing along with the music on his iPod. (Digging Your Scene - The Blow Monkeys) he closes his eyes and starts to dance. His GRANDAD is leaning against the tree, watching him and smiling.

Grandad clears his throat.

Winthrop continues to sing and dance. His DAD (GERALD) is now standing near the tree, looking from Winthrop to his Grandad alternately. Winthrop is dancing around. He moves close enough to his Dad for him to snatch the headphones off Winthrop's head. Winthrop Stops dead, opens his eyes and looks shocked. Dad and Grandad both chuckle. Winthrop runs to his Grandad and hugs him.

WINTHROP

Grandad!

GRANDAD

Hello Bouncer, I see you've still
got that Walkman stuck to your
noggin.

WINTHROP

iPod Grandad.

(To himself)

For the millionth time.

He retrieves the headphones from his Dad.

WINTHROP

Have you got a story for me today?

DAD

Slow down Winthrop, your Grandad's only just arrived. Let's all go and get something to eat and drink, and maybe Grandad will tell you a story later. Your Mum has made your favourite for supper.

WINTHROP

Carrot, turnip and leek pie?

DAD

Come on, let's go inside.

Dad smiles at Winthrop.

GRANDAD

Carrot and leek pie's my favourite too.

WINTHROP

Carrot, TURNIP and leek Grandad.

GRANDAD

Yes, carrot, turnip and leek. Let's go and get some before it gets cold.

INT. BURROW KITCHEN - NIGHT

MUM, Dad, Grandad and Winthrop are sat around the dining table after supper.

MUM

Would anybody like some more pie?

WINTHROP

No thanks, Mum. Grandad, will you tell me a story now? You said you'd got a new one for me tonight.

DAD

Manners, Winthrop. Come on now.

WINTHROP

Sorry. Grandad, will you tell me a story now, please?

GRANDAD

OK Bouncer, you go and get your PJs on and I'll come and tell you a story all about a magical pot of gold that's hidden at the centre of the earth.

Winthrop Looks excited and runs out of the room. Mum and Dad look at each other and smile, then Dad looks towards Grandad.

DAD

I remember you telling me that story Dad, it was one of my favourites when i was his age.

GRANDAD

And my Dad told it to me. That gold has been down there a long time. It would be nice if someone could retrieve it so I can add the last chapter to the story and we can all live happily ever after.

They all laugh.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Winthrop is in his pyjamas, brushing his teeth and turning his head to one side to better hear the adults talking in the others room.

INT. BURROW KITCHEN - NIGHT

MUM

Oh now shush you two, you know what he's like. You'll have him trying to dig down if he hears you.

DAD

Well that might not be a bad thing if he did, I could make good use of a pot of gold I reckon.

GRANDAD

Aye I think we all could, 'specially if the spell could be cast to stop the rats harassing us and causing havoc.

DAD

Steady Dad, you know he'll be listening in, you don't want to give the story away, or frighten him.

MUM

Now don't either of you go putting any ideas into his head.

Winthrop's voice can be heard, calling from his bedroom.

WINTHROP

I'm in bed Grandad.

GRANDAD

I'd better go.

Grandad gets up and leaves the room.

INT. WINTHROP'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Winthrop is in bed.

WINTHROP

So what's my story about tonight Grandad?

GRANDAD

Well, it's a magical story that goes back to the very beginning of time when the dark dwellers built the earth. There was one of each kind, and they all worked together to build a home where everyone could live together. It would have everything every type of animal needed; fresh water and salt water for the swimmers, lots of green grass, herbs and vegetables for the plant eaters and tall trees and places to hide for the meat eaters, so they could stalk their prey.

WINTHROP

I don't understand why we need meat eaters, they make things scary.

GRANDAD

That's right Bouncer, they do. And that's what the dark dwellers of our kind thought too. They tried to talk to the meat eaters to see if they could perhaps use the waters to separate their different habitats so we plant eaters would always be safe, but they argued that if they couldn't get to us then they're have nothing to eat and they'd all die. Plus they said that there are so many plant eaters in the kingdom that if we all lived in one place no matter how big it was, we'd eat all the plants before they had chance to grow back and then we'd end up with nothing to eat and we'd all die. They said that everything could only remain balanced if every creature of every type was allowed to live together and follow their path.

The plant eaters weren't happy with this and thought that they should be allowed to exist without being food for other animals, so they got together and decided in secret that while they were making the earth, they'd hide a pot of gold right at the centre which would have the ability to transform all the plant eaters so they would no longer be food for meat eaters. The thing was though, even when they were all talking and trying to make a deal, they forgot about the rats. Rats make everyone's life miserable and they make a mess and steal everything.

WINTHROP

And they can swim too, so they could get across the water even if the big meat eaters couldn't.

GRANDAD

That's right, they can indeed.

WINTHROP

How is the gold magical grandad,
what does it do?

GRANDAD

(Caught off guard)

Well, it makes us all taste funny
so the meat eaters wont want to eat
us anymore and they'll leave us
alone.

WINTHROP

Oh.

GRANDAD

And that's why we live in burrows
underground, not just to hide from
the meat eaters but because it's in
our nature to try and get as close
as possible to the centre of the
earth, so that one day we can get
the magical gold. And then from
that day on, we never need to be
afraid of the meat eaters.

SERIES OF SHOTS

A) While Grandad is telling the story, several animals e.g.
a rabbit, a fox and a fish against a background of space,
float together interacting.

B) The fish creates a vision of a river flowing onto the
sea and presents it to the others.

C) The fox creates a vision of a meadow with trees etc.
with prey animals grazing by the river created by the fish.
Then foxes appear, chasing and hunting the prey animals.

D) The rabbit combines the visions, making the river wider
to form an island for the prey animals, keeping the
carnivores away from them. A very subtle image of a rat
swimming across the river is included.

E) The rabbit meets with other prey animals and they
visualise the centre of the earth and put a pot of gold
there, making it glow.

BACK TO SCENE

Grandad leans back in his chair and Winthrop pulls a funny face as he mulls the story over.

WINTHROP

Do you think I could dig for the magical gold grandad? Do you think I could change the world?

GRANDAD

I do Bouncer, I think if you put your mind to it you can do anything you want.

WINTHROP

Wow! I'd be the most famous rabbit in history.

GRANDAD

You most definitely would. Now it's time for you to go to sleep...

WINTHROP

And dream of pots of magical gold.

GRANDAD

Yes, and dream of pots of magical gold. Goodnight Bouncer.

WINTHROP

Night Grandad.

SERIES OF SHOTS

A) Winthrop digs tunnels.

B) He finds a pot of gold.

C) He's standing by the pot of gold and lots of rabbits are around him, cheering.

BACK TO SCENE

Winthrop turns over in bed and closes his eyes. He dreams of digging to the centre of the earth, finding the pot of gold and changing the lives of rabbits forever. Winthrop wakes from his dream in the middle of the night. He creeps out of bed, picks up his backpack and goes into the kitchen where he fills it with food and drinks. He then gets a head torch and goes back to his room. He picks up a compass and

tries to use it to find the centre of the earth. It just says 'down.' He moves his bed and starts to dig underneath. He digs quickly and within a few seconds is out of sight. Then he appears again, bum first, wriggling out of the hole. He grabs his iPod and puts on his headphones.

MUSIC (Way Down - Elvis Presley)

INT. TUNNEL - NIGHT

Scene of digging with music montage.

INT. CAVERN - NIGHT

Winthrop breaks through into a cavern, he falls to the floor, slowly gets up and looks around. He looks nervous. He slowly explores the cavern. He hears a scampering noise in the distance, he stops still and listens. He hears the scampering again, closer this time. Winthrop looks frightened. The scampering becomes the sound of running towards him, then suddenly he sees DUDLEY the rat who runs to him and stands next to him.

DUDLEY

Hello.

WINTHROP

Err, hello.

DUDLEY

Who are you?

WINTHROP

I'm Winthrop, who are you?

DUDLEY

Dudley. Dudley Du Plicite, at your service

Dudley bows to Winthrop.

DUDLEY

So what brings you to my humble abode? And what have you got against my ceiling?

They both look up at the hole Winthrop fell through.

WINTHROP

What? Oh sorry, I fell. I didn't know this was here, I mean you were here, I mean. Duplicate?

Dudley scampers around, sniffing at Winthrop and his backpack.

DUDLEY

Du Plicite, It's French. I don't get many visitors, not many people pass this way.

WINTHROP

It was Grandad.

DUDLEY

Your Grandad's here as well?

Dudley scampers over to the hole through which Winthrop entered the cavern and looks into it.

DUDLEY

Im not really in the mood for a party.

WINTHROP

What? No he's not here, he's why I'm here. He told me a story. He told me about the gold at the centre of the earth that can make our lives better.

DUDLEY

Gold? What gold? There's no gold here.

WINTHROP

No, not here. At the centre of the earth. We're not at the centre of the earth are we? I expected it to be brighter.

DUDLEY

The centre of the earth? No. Not here. I think I know what you're talking about though. Yes, I know about the gold. I know where it is.

WINTHROP

Do you? Really?

DUDLEY

Do you doubt me? I'm a rat, rats know everything. We make it our business to know everything. Knowledge is power. Take your situation for instance. I know where the gold is and you don't. That gives me the power...to help you on your way.

WINTHROP

Power to help?

DUDLEY

Rats like to help. If I help you then you'll owe me something, a favour. That gives me power. Helping is power.

WINTHROP

I thought knowledge was power.

DUDLEY

Ah but knowing how to help, that's double the power. I have the knowledge of how to help you. I have the power to help. At your service sir.

WINTHROP

You already said that.

Dudley bows again.

WINTHROP

And did that. Can you really help me? I'm not sure I need any help. It's the centre of the earth, I can't really miss it can I? I mean, it's there. Down.

DUDLEY

Ah, but which way is down? It's easy to tell which way is down when you're up, but you're not up anymore are you? You're down, and now you want to go farther down. If

(MORE)

DUDLEY (CONT'D)

you just start digging again how do
you know you're digging farther
down and not out, or even back up?
Farther down isn't as simple as
down.

Winthrop looks puzzled.

DUDLEY

Come on, we need to go. No time to
stop. Never stop, always go, going
is power.

WINTHROP

Is it now?

DUDLEY

Yes, yes. Come on, lets go. I'll
show you, I'll show you where to
dig. The ground is soft over here.

They go to a corner of the cavern.

DUDLEY

Here, dig here.

WINTHROP

What direction?

DUDLEY

What? Down, dig down. Just dig
down, its not important.

Winthrop starts digging and disappears into the hole.
Dudley jumps in after him.

WINTHROP

So why do you live in an
underground cavern?

DUDLEY

Everybody's got to live somewhere,
I live here.

The earth around them is so soft that the tunnel starts to
cave in and Winthrop is trapped. Dudley panics, he's going
to run back up the tunnel to safety. However, first he
tries to pull Winthrop's backpack off and steal the food,
but because its caught tight on Winthrop's shoulders,

Dudley inadvertently ends up pulling Winthrop out from the dirt and saving his life. Winthrop is so happy that his new friend has done such a good thing for him that he gives him a big hug.

WINTHROP

Dudley, you saved my life.

DUDLEY

Err.

WINTHROP

You're such a good friend, the best friend I've ever had.

DUDLEY

Friendship is power?

WINTHROP

Do you like carrots?

Dudley looks puzzled.

WINTHROP

I collect them. Sort of, strangely shaped ones. Sometimes when we dig them up they're sort of, well, not carrot shaped. I collect those ones. I've got quite a collection, I'll show them to you when we go back home. You can take any one of my collection that you want. Even my favourite one that looks like a potato. You can have that because you're my best friend.

Winthrop hugs Dudley again. Dudley looks uncomfortable.

WINTHROP

Well we'd better start digging again.

DUDLEY

Be careful this time, dont dig so fast. Dig carefully. Careful is power. Being dead has no power whatsoever.

Winthrop starts digging again with Dudley behind him. Dudley sniffs at the aroma of food coming from Winthrop's backpack and periodically, when Winthrop is concentrating,

he reaches in and steals a snack.

WINTHROP

Carrots can be all sorts of shapes you know. My Dad says it depends if there are any rocks in the way when they're growing or something. The colours can be different too, they can be all sorts of shades of orange.

DUDLEY

Winthrop.

WINTHROP

Yes?

DUDLEY

Can we talk about something else? Something other than carrots.

WINTHROP

But carrots are brilliant. They're not just food you know, you can use them as tunnel supports, door jams, all sorts of things. And they come in so many weird shapes. Carrots can do or be anything. Well, so many things. Carrots have power.

Dudley is dumbstruck. Winthrop looks smug.

WINTHROP

Come on, we'll dig a bit further then we'll stop and have something to eat. It's weird, the closer we get to the centre of the earth, the lighter my backpack feels. I wonder if it's something to do with gravity.

DUDLEY

Let's not stop digging now, we're nearly there. Let's just keep going then when we get there we can stop and eat, next to the pot of gold.

WINTHROP

Hmm, maybe.

DUDLEY

There is just one thing.

WINTHROP

What's that?

DUDLEY

Well, I'm not sure I can get too close to the gold. I'm sort of allergic to it.

WINTHROP

To gold?

DUDLEY

Yes, it's the strangest thing. So, when we get there, just before you break through into the chamber where the gold is, I'll have to go back up the tunnel a bit and wait for you outside.

WINTHROP

Well if you do that, how are we going to eat while we're sat around the pot?

DUDLEY

Maybe you could cover the gold.

WINTHROP

Would you be alright then?

DUDLEY

I think so, yeah.

WINTHROP

What would I cover it with though?

DUDLEY

I don't know. Look this is your party, I only said I'd show you the way that's all.

WINTHROP

OK, I'm sorry. I'll find something
when I get there I guess.

Winthrop's backpack is almost flat to his back because it's
almost empty.

DUDLEY

Keep digging, there's not far to go
now.

Dudley reaches in to the backpack and takes out the last
piece of food, a carrot. He rolls his eyes, shrugs his
shoulders and eats it.

DUDLEY

We're nearly there Winthrop, I'll
have to go soon. I'll just go back
up the tunnel a bit and wait for
you to tell me it's OK for me to go
into the chamber.

WINTHROP

OK.

DUDLEY

Right, it's just another metre or
so, I'm going to go.

WINTHROP

Right.

Dudley scampers away up the tunnel and Winthrop starts
digging as fast as he can.

WINTHROP

Knowledge is power, digging is
power, gold is power.

He keeps digging for much more than a metre but no chamber
opens up, he's just digging through more and more earth.
Eventually he stops digging, he looks back up the tunnel.
Dudley isn't there. Winthrop slumps down and takes off his
backpack. He opens it and sees that it's empty. He looks
thoughtful for a moment then realises Dudley has eaten all
the food.

SERIES OF SHOTS

A) Dudley jumps onto Winthrop's back pretending to play a
game, but is actually looking into the backpack to see

what's inside.

B) Dudley reaches into the backpack and Winthrop shrugs his shoulders because he feels something odd.

C) Dudley talks to Winthrop after taking a bite of apple. Winthrop looks back because Dudley was talking strangely and Dudley quickly puts the apple behind his back.

BACK TO SCENE

WINTHROP

He doesn't know where the gold is.
He's not my friend. He's a thief.

Winthrop slumps down and starts to cry. The sound of his crying echoes up the tunnel and Dudley hears it. He stops, looks round, then shakes his head and carries on running.

Still crying, Winthrop sets off back up the tunnel to go home, running as fast as he can. He can see the back end of Dudley in the distance and he runs even harder. He catches him up and jumps on him, they start to fight. Dudley bites Winthrop badly and runs away again. Winthrop is lame from a bite on his leg and bleeding from his neck. He struggles up the tunnels and eventually comes out in his bedroom.

INT. WINTHROP'S BEDROOM - DAY

Winthrop crawls out of the tunnel and lies on the floor next to his bed, sobbing. His parents come in to the room. His Mum is shocked by what she sees and both parents rush to him.

DAD

What happened to you son?

WINTHROP

I wanted to get the gold, from
Grandad's story. I wanted to help
everyone. I wanted—

MUM

Oh child, come here.

Mum hugs Winthrop tight and rocks him in her arms.

DAD

But what happened? How did you get so hurt?

WINTHROP

There was a rat. I thought he was my friend. He stole my food and attacked me.

DAD

A rat eh? Well there's seldom any good comes from an encounter with a rat.

MUM

Gerald, this isn't the time. Come on Winnie, come into the kitchen. Let's get you cleaned up.

INT. BURROW KITCHEN - DAY

Winthrop and his Dad are sat at the kitchen table. Mum is tending to Winthrop's wounds. There's a bowl of hot water on the table and she's using it to bathe Winthrop.

DAD

So tell me what happened son.

WINTHROP

He attacked me Dad. He stole my food and then attacked me.

There's a noise from Winthrop's bedroom, the three rabbits stay still and go very quiet. After a moment there's another noise.

DAD

Wait here.

INT. WINTHROP'S BEDROOM - DAY

Dad is at Winthrop's bedroom door, Dudley is in the room with an apple in his hand that he's taken from a table by the bed.

DAD

You...Rat.

DUDLEY

Hello, er I came to see if Winthrop
is alright, he got hurt. I was
helping him.

Dad lunges at the rat and chases him round the room,
jumping over the furniture. The chase continues into the
kitchen, Dad picks up a large knife from the worktop.
Dudley runs and jumps on the furniture, knocking things
into the air and onto the floor. The chase continues up the
burrow and outside.

EXT. SAND DUNES - DAY

Lots of rabbits are outside, they stop what they're doing
and look towards the entrance to Winthrop's burrow as
nosies can be heard. Dad and Dudley burst out of the
entrance and are chasing around.

DAD

RAT! He bit Winthrop!

Chaos ensues. Young rabbits run around frightened and are
gathered together by some of the adults. Other adults join
in chasing the rat. Some of the rabbits pick up stones and
start to throw them at Dudley. Some of the stones miss but
others hit him. He's slowing down because he's injured and
the gang of rabbits catch up to him and tackle him. Dudley
looks frightened, he's lay on his back and is battered and
bleeding. He's looking up towards the sky and is partially
blinded by the morning sun. The rabbits encircle him, they
all have ammunition of some kind, one is holding a stick of
celery in one hand and hitting it against his other hand
menacingly.

DAD

He attacked Winthrop and bit him,
he's really hurt.

RABBIT 1

I'm so sick of rats, they bring
nothing but trouble. We don't need
any more rats round here do we
boys? In fact one less would
improve things a lot.

The rabbits close in on Dudley, he is terrified and puts up
his hand in self defence. Dad notices Winthrop and Mum in
the entrance to their burrow. Winthrop is crying and looks
afraid.

DAD

Wait, wait. We hate rats, lets not behave like them. Look rat, we know you now. If you ever come around here again I won't be so inclined to show you any mercy. You'd better go, now. Go far away, for your own good. If you come here again we will kill you, and the same goes for any others of your kind too. No more chances. We're letting you go only so you can tell others to stay away from here. We're not scared of you, you won't intimidate us or our children. Do you understand?

Dudley nods breathlessly. The circle of rabbits around him opens a little and he drags himself up and limps away slowly. The rabbits all watch him as he leaves. Dad walks over to Mum and Winthrop. Grandad appears.

GRANDAD

Good morning everyone. Good morning bouncer. Oh dear, what's happened to you? You look likes you've been in the wars.

WINTHROP

We caught a rat, Grandad. He was in my bedroom and Dad chased him out.

GRANDAD

A rat? However did a rat get into your bedroom?

WINTHROP

Through the hole I guess. I was digging down to get the gold and he came up through the hole and

MUM

Now come on Winnie, calm down. You can tell Grandad all about it while we eat breakfast.

WINTHROP

But I was trying to get the gold Grandad, to keep the predators away and make everything better. Then

(MORE)

WINTHROP (CONT'D)

this rat came up and everyone
chased him. Dad was brilliant.

GRANDAD

Really?

WINTHROP

Yeah, the rat was running around
everywhere and knocking things over
and stealing food and Dad and the
others all chased him and caught
him.

GRANDAD

Well it sounds like you've had
quite the morning here.

WINTHROP

He was horrible Grandad, I'd never
really seen a rat before, I'd only
heard the stories about them.
They're as bad in real life. Worse.

GRANDAD

Well Bouncer, it sounds to me like
you might not have found the gold
but if your Dad and the others
managed to teach a rat a lesson and
keep the other rats away from the
warren then you certainly managed
to improve everyone's lives. I don't
think we need to be afraid of rats
coming here and terrorising us
anymore.

Winthrop looks thoughtful then smiles at Grandad, Mum and
Dad in turn. Other young rabbits come over to Winthrop to
look at his wounds. They're all fascinated. Winthrop goes
off with them, telling them the story of his adventure and
how he fought a rat. He's a hero to the other young
rabbits.

FADE OUT.

THE END