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**READER 1:** Many many years ago in a remote village, there lived a young man named Thomas Stern.

**READER 3:** Although Thomas's name was Stern, his personality certainly was not. He was a very friendly fellow who liked to laugh, spent a lot of time with his friends, and was engaged to be married to his neighbor Mary Sillatoo.

**5/MARY:** I am the luckiest girl in the world. I know I'll have a happy life.

**READER 2:** We're guessing that Mary sounds like a perfectly ordinary girl to you. But this was not so.

**READER 1:** What made Mary different was the goofy way she thought.

**READERS 1,2,3,  
6,7,8:** Goofy!

**READER 3:** For example, one day Mary was sitting under a tree looking through a book.

**5/MARY:** What a good idea I've had. Since I'm sure that everything in books is true, I've drawn pictures of what I want my life to be like and bound them into a book. Here is a picture of Thomas and me getting married. Here is a picture of the fine white cottage he will build for us. And here is a picture of the three children we will have. I'm sure all these things will come true.

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**READERS 1,2,3:** Do you see what we mean?

**READER 2:** Twice a week Thomas had supper with Mary and her parents. One evening Mary went down to the cellar to draw some cool cider to go with the meal.

**READER 3:** While the cider was pouring into the pitcher Mary happened to notice a very large hammer sticking out over the edge of a higher shelf. This set her to thinking.

**5/MARY:** Oh, no. Look at that hammer! What if the daughter Thomas and I will have grows up and then comes down here one day to draw cider. That hammer could fall on her head and kill her. What a dreadful thing it would be!

**READER 2:** Mary began to cry and cry. The cider flowed over the top of the pitcher and onto the floor.

**READER 1:** Upstairs, they began to wonder what was taking Mary so long.

**READER 3:** Finally, Thomas went down to see what was the matter.

**4/THOMAS:** Mary, why are you crying and letting the cider run onto the floor?

**5/MARY:** Look at that hammer. It could fall down at any time. What if we have a daughter and she comes down to fetch cider someday and the hammer falls on her head? It could kill her. And then we would be so sad.