

Magnets Messed With My Bird's Brain
by Thomas van Kalken

The pop ups. Stay seated. Three, two, one, ignition. Get ready for an adventure of magnificent proportion.

The pop ups. (Singing.) I don't know what you've been told, but we're in a golden age - so many discoveries that are jumping off the page. Wow in the world. Wow in the world. Wow in the world. Wow in the world. Wow in the world. Wow in the world. Wow in the world.

The pop ups. With Guy and Mindy. We're on our way, Houston.

<<A bustling mall>>

Guy. So what are we doing at the mall again Mindy?

Mindy. Oh we're here for magnets Guy Raz!

Guy. Magnets?

Mindy. Uh huh magnets!

Guy. What do you need magnets for Mindy?

Mindy. The ice cream truck!

Guy. Why does the ice cream truck need a magnet?

Mindy. Well it's not just the ice cream truck. I need some for the sleigh cats.

Guy. The sleigh cats?

Mindy. Yeah, we're going wireless!

Guy. I'm confused.

Mindy. Ok I can explain. I'm going to attach a bunch of tiny little magnets to all the sleigh cats ...

Guy. Okay...

Mindy. And then one giant magnet to the front of the ice cream truck.

Guy. Riiiiight

Mindy. And then the magnetic attraction between the cat magnets and the ice cream truck magnet will help to pull the ice cream truck along... no leashes required!

Guy. Are you sure that's going to work Mindy?

Mindy. Yes, of course i'm not sure it's going to work Guy Raz

Guy. Ughhh

Mindy. Now we just gotta wait for Reggie. He said he'd meet us here in 30 minutes but I haven't seen him yet.

Guy. Huh, maybe he got lost.

Mindy. Not way, Reggie has an excellent sense of direction. Ya know he took orienteering in high school.

Guy. Huh ...

<<A flutter of wings as Reggie arrives>>

Mindy. Reggie! Where have you been buddy?! I was starting to get worried.

Reggie. Coo ...

Mindy. You got lost?

Guy. I told you Mindy!

Reggie. Coo

Mindy. Yeah I told him about the orienteering.

Reggie. Coo coo coo

Mindy. Huh ... that's odd.

Guy. What? What is it Mindy?

Mindy. Reggie said that he got all turned around and lost his sense of direction.

Reggie. Coo!

Mindy. ... He ended up ... at the knucklehut?!? Reggie that's nowhere near here!

Reggie. Coo coo

Guy. Well it's actually quite common Mindy, ya know birds losing their sense of direction, it's actually called vagrancy and it usually happens when there's bad weather.

Mindy. Huh ...

Reggie. Coo

Mindy. But Reggie says that the skies were clear today. Perfect weather for flying.

Guy. Interesting.

Mindy. Reggie, are you feeling okay?

Reggie. Coo

Mindy. Okay, good call buddy. You go take a soak at bird bath and beyond. And we'll come find you when we're done. Okay?

Reggie. Coo! <<Reggie flies off>>

Mindy. Aww poor little Reggie. He's all shook up.

Guy. I wonder what caused him to get all turned around.

Mindy. Yeah. I wonder too. <<Snapping to>> well, sounds like a mystery for future Mindy to solve. Right now we need to figure out how to get to ... pulling out my map here ... <<pulls out map>> <<reading>> Magnet Mikes Modern Magnet Mega store

Guy. Catchy name

Mindy. Well it's more of a warehouse than a mega store but ... <<lightbulb moment>> wait a minute. <<Egg crack>> I just hatched an idea.

Guy. I don't like that look in your eye Mindy.

Mindy. Hold on <<rummaging around>> let me just find it here in my adventure toolkit ...

Guy. You brought your adventure toolkit to the mall?

Mindy. Yeah! You never know when an adventure is going to break out ... <<continues rummaging>> where is it? Ah! Here it is ... Guy Raz, quickly, put these on?

Guy. Roller blades?

Mindy. Yeah.

Guy. <<Putting on rollerblades>> Mindy why am I putting on these rollerblades?

Mindy. All will be revealed in a moment Guy Raz.

Guy. <<Finishing putting on rollerblades>> what else are you looking for in there Mindy?

Mindy. <<Rummaging continues>> Ah! Hang on. This!

Guy. Is that a magnet?

Mindy. <<Struggling to lift>> yeah ... pretty big one too. Here, hold onto this for me.

Guy. Why do I need to ... oh no ... what's happening Mindy? <<We hear the roller blade wheels start to turn>>

Mindy. It's working!

Guy. What's working Mindy! What's going on!? Whooooaahhh!

Mindy. <<Laughs>> Your magnet Guy Raz. It's dragging you straight to the magnet store!

Guy. It's getting faster Mindy!

Mindy. That just means you're getting closer!

<<The rollerbladed Guy Raz shoots off>>

Guy. <<Fading out as he goes>> agghhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!

Mindy. <<Chasing after him>> Guy Raz! Wait for me!

Guy. <<Fading in>> aaaaaaghhhhhh <<crash>> <<pots and pans>>

Mindy. Uh oh! I'll save you Guy Razzy! Run run run run run!

Guy. Mindy!!!

Mindy. Are you okay buddy?

Guy. Uggghhhh, I think so.

Mindy. Wow you really sped off there.

Guy. I didn't really have a choice Mindy. You put me in a pair of magnetic rollerblades.

Mindy. Ok that is true but look! Those magnetic rollerblades brought you straight to magnet megamart ... come on let's go inside!

Guy. <<Weak>> hoo-ray!

<<Tring-a-ling>> <<Guy and Mindy enter the store>> <<it's very large and spacious and has a warehouse kind of vibe>>

Mindy. Woah ... look at all these magnets Guy Raz! They're stacked sky high! Big magnets, little magnets, in between magnets ...

Guy. Yeah, there's barely room for anything else in here.

Mindy. Do you see anyone working in this place?

Guy. Well to be honest, I can't see a thing in here Mindy. There's magnets everywhere!

Mindy. Hello!? Anybody home?

<<Magical music starts to build>> <<a breeze wooshes through the aisle>>

<<Mike enters suddenly in a puff of smoke>>

Mindy. Uhh

Guy. What in the...

Magnet Mike. Poof!

Mindy/Guy. Ahhh!

Magnet Mike. <<Parody of wand salesman from harry potter>> well well well
what do we have here ... <<magical music continues>>

Mindy. Oh uh, Hi, my name is ...

Magnet Mike. <<Cutting her off>> yes... Mindy ... I was wondering when you
would show up ...

Guy. Uhhh, i'm sorry ... do you two know each other?

Mindy. Welllll ...

Magnet Mike. Ms. Mindy... I believe it was 12 individual magnets ... affixed to a cat
harnesses ...

Magnet Mike. One does not soon forget an order like that.

Guy. Wait, are you ... Magnet Mike?

Mindy. Of Magnet Mike's magnet megamart!

Magnet Mike. Mega **store**... and indeed I am.

Mindy. It's good to see ya again Mike! I'm here for more magnets ...

Magnet Mike. Naturally ... but you should know, one does not **choose** a magnet,
ms Mindy ... the magnet chooses them.

Mindy. Uh I don't get it

Magnet Mike. Allow me to demonstrate. Wait right here ... poof! <<Magical transition>> [Mike runs away to the back inventory room]

Guy. Well, he was ... interesting

Mindy. Yeah, super helpful though right?!

Guy. Uh huh. Hey look at this Mindy

Mindy. What is it?

Guy. Well it looks like a stack of old magazines ...

<<Magical music builds up again>>

Mindy. <<Reading>> Magnets Monthly?

Guy. There's a whole bunch of them here.

<<Guy picks one up>> <<they both flick through>>

Mindy. Let me see that. Woah ... the m23 ultra magnet! Now only \$234 plus shipping and handling!

Guy. Look at all these cool uses for magnets Mindy. There's articles on medical imaging machines ... magnetically levitating trains ... <<seeing something new>> woah, look at this!

Mindy. Well if you're talking about the m23 ultra i'm already waaaay ahead of you.

Guy. No Mindy ... look at this article...

Mindy. Magnets messed with my birds brain? What?

Guy. Yeah

Mindy. What's it about?

Guy. Well it says here that it's based on a new study from UCLA that has to do with bird vagrancy.

Mindy. Bird vagrancy? ... Isn't that what you were talking about before with Reggie?

Guy. Yeah, it's when a bird loses its sense of direction and ends up in the completely wrong place.

Mindy. Well what does it say?

<<A swoosh as Mike returns>> <<magical music>>

Magnet Mike. [Running up] poof!

Guy/Mindy. [Startled] ahh!

Magnet Mike. Ahhh, I see you've found my collection of magnetic periodicals.

Mindy. <<A beat>> what?

Magnet Mike. The magazines.

Mindy. Oh right

Guy. There's some really interesting stuff in here

Magnet Mike. Yes, of course! I am, after all, the editor in chief of Magnets Monthly.

Mindy. <<Overly excited>> oh my wow! You're the editor in chief of Magnets Monthly?!

Magnet Mike. Indeed I am.

Guy. Mindy, you didn't even know the magazine existed 2 minutes ago.

Magnet Mike. <<Moving the conversation along>> now ms Mindy, I believe I have something here for you ...

Mindy. Oh right! The ice cream truck magnet!

Magnet Mike. Ahem ... now why don't you try ... <<swish>> this on for size ...

Mindy. Woaahhhh ... <<Mindy takes the magnet>>

Magnet Mike. 12.4 inches with a neodymium core and a pull strength of–

<<It immediately clamps onto something>>

Magnet Mike. ...Oh my.

Mindy. <<Struggling>> ugghhhhh! I think this one might be too strong Magnet Mike!

Magnet Mike. Yes, the magnet appears to have clamped to that steel wall.

Guy. Uh huh

Magnet Mike. But fear not Ms Mindy, the right magnet is out there! We just need to find it! Wait here– i'll be right back. Poof!

<<Swoosh and magical noise as Mike run away>>

Guy. There he goes again

<<Pages flicking>>

Mindy. Ok back to the magazine! Gotta find that article about the bird brain so I can figure out what's up with Reggie ... ah looking, looking, looking. Here it is!

Guy. What does it say?

Mindy. It says here that a recent study from the university of california los angeles suggests that disturbances to the earth's magnetic field might lead birds astray.

Guy. The earth's magnetic field? You mean like the north pole and south pole?

Mindy. Yeah, so the earth is actually a giant magnet right?

Guy. Right.

Mindy. And the north pole and the south pole both attract things like certain kinds of metal.

Guy. Right! And that's how compass' works right? The little metal tip in the compass is pulled towards the poles.

Mindy. Exactoritos.

Guy. So what does that have to do with birds and vagrancy?

Mindy. Well lets see here. So according to this study that they conducted at ucla, many birds use this magnetic field to navigate ...

Guy. Like a compass in their brain.

Mindy. And when the earth's magnetic field gets disrupted it could cause them to lose their sense of direction.

Guy. And what sort of thing would disrupt the magnetic field of the entire planet?!

Mindy. It says here that it can be affected by the sun's magnetic field.

Guy. The sun has a magnetic field too!

Mindy. Yeah, and when the sun starts burping out fire ...

Guy. You mean like with solar flares and sunspots?

Mindy. Yes - these kind of sun burps can affect our magnetic field right here on earth.

<<Swoosh as Mike returns>>

Magnet Mike. Poof!

Guy. Gahhh!

Magnet Mike. I have returned!

Mindy. Oooh!

Magnet Mike. Here we are Ms Mindy.

Mindy. Thank you

Magnet Mike. 7.2 inches of a metallic blend of copper, cobalt, nickel, titanium...
<<magnetic sucking sfx>> <<smack sfx>>

Guy. Dah!

Magnet Mike. Oh my...

Guy. My glasses! It sucked them straight off my face.

Mindy. That's a good magnet.

Magnet Mike. Curious ... very curious ...

Mindy. What's curious?

Magnet Mike. I think ... yes ... wait right here ... I have one last magnet for you to try. Poof!

<<Mike runs off again, followed by his magical music>>

Mindy. Thanks buddy! So do you think this disrupted magnetic field could have anything to do with why Reggie's been getting lost lately?

Guy. Maybe ... how did they find out in the study?

Mindy. Well it says here <<page flicking>> that the first thing that the researchers did was collect almost 60 years worth of data or information from 2.2 million birds.

Guy. Woah, that's a lotta birds ...

Mindy. Yeah. And then had a look at which birds had suffered from that strange thing where they get lost

Guy. You mean vagrancy?

Mindy. Yeah, and they found that although the main cause of vagrancy seemed to be stuff like bad weather, there was a strong correlation between disruptions to the earth's magnetic field ... and lost birds.

Guy. Huh and a correlation is a scientific way of saying that there was a strong link between these two things?

Mindy. Exactly, it looks like just about any time there was a distribution to the earth's magnetic field the amount of birds getting lost went up!

Guy. Wow, so maybe Reggie really was affected by a disruption to the earth's magnetic field.

Mindy. Sure does look that way ... but how could we know for sure?

Guy. I've got it!

Mindy. What?

Guy. My Guy phone!

Mindy. What about it?

Guy. I can see if there was any major solar activity in the last couple of days ...

Mindy. And if there was that would mean that the earth's magnetic field would have been affected or disrupted....

Guy. And Reggie's sense of direction could have been messed up!

Mindy. Yes! Well what are you waiting for! Come on Guy Raz, get out your Guy phone!

Guy. Okay okay, I'm getting it! <<As he types>> solar activity ... okay let's set this to last 24 hours ... aaaaaand <<ding>> <<gasp>> Mindy ... look at this!

Mindy. Let me see that. Heightened solar activity in the last 24 hours?! Guy Raz, do you know what this means?

Guy. Well, I'd say we've cracked the case Mindy!

Mindy. Look at us Guy Raz! Come on, we have to tell Reggie!

Guy. Let's do it!

Magnet Mike. Aaaaand poof!

<<Swoosh>> <<Mike appears>>

Magnet Mike. Surprise!

Guy. <<Sigh>>

Magnet Mike. Now, Ms Mindy ...

Mindy. Sorry Magnet Mike! We were just about to leave ... we have to go tell our friend Reggie about ...

Magnet Mike. <<Cutting her off>> ah-ah-ah... before you go ...I have one last magnet for you to try

Mindy. Okay but we're in kind of a hurry ... but alright, let's see it.

Magnet Mike. Here you are...

<<Big magical music build up>>

Guy. Woaaahhhh ...

Mindy. Magnet Mike it's ... it's ...

Guy. Perfect.

Magnet Mike. Precisely!

Mindy. We'll take it! It'll fit perfectly on the hood of my ice cream truck! How much do I owe you?

Magnet Mike. This one is on the house.

Guy and Mindy. It's free?!

Magnet Mike. I did not get into magnets to make money

Guy. You didn't?

Magnet Mike. No ... I help the right magnet find the right hair-brained inventor ... and today I believe we've done just that.

Guy. Huh

Mindy. Aww. Thank you so much Magnet Mike.

Magnet Mike. Indeed you're welcome! Until next time my friends! Ta-ta! Poof!

<<A big swoosh>> <<Magnet Mike runs away>>

Mindy. What a nice magnet salesman.

Guy. A little odd.

Mindy. All the best people are! Come on Guy Raz ... we got to go find Reggie and tell him what we've found out.

Guy. Right behind you Mindy.

<<Tring a ling>> <<back to mall atmos>>

Mindy. Alright ... now which way to bird, bath, beyond?

Guy. I think I saw it next to where I got my elbows re-patched.

Mindy. Well what are you waiting for Guy Raz? Come on, put on Dennis's roller blades and let's get going.

Guy. Wait, these are Dennis's rollerblades?

Mindy. Come on

Guy. Fine

<<Puts rollerblades on>>

Mindy. Ok, and then you hold on to our new magnet here, and I'll hold on to your ankles!

Guy. Okayy

Mindy. And here... we... goooo!

Guy. Whooooah!

End