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The Hamster

"Is it dead? What happened!" I said as I rolled my sister's hamster around in it's little cage. It was a Sunday evening when I said these words, I was all alone, and I was very confused. I didn't know what I was going to do at that point. The only person who I could talk to and help me out in this situation was a friend that I had been talking to for a few minutes. My friend also did not know what I should do. I poked the poor creature several times to see if it still had any life left in it. Instead of waking up and moving about its cage, the hamster lay there motionless, like a little stuffed animal. I sat there in the living room, talking on the phone, and examining the hamster's cage. My little sister's hamster had died while it was under my care.

My parents had gone to San Fransisco for the weekend, and instead of staying at my grandparents' house like my parents recommended, I decided to stay at home. Both of my sisters went to my grandparents' house, so I had the whole house to myself. I even had some company: my sister's hamster. I was the hamster's sole caretaker. Without me, it would starve, die of thirst, or somehow find a way to escape the confines of its little cage and wreak havoc throughout my parents' house. Because I've never taken care of a hamster before, my sister had to tell me how I was to take care of her hamster. I was to feed it, make sure there was plenty of water, play with it, and give it some exercise by putting it inside of a plastic ball and let it run around inside of it for exercise Simple, or so I thought...

The first day went smoothly, and the hamster was doing its hamster thing: eating, drinking, and running like crazy inside of its hamster wheel. At certain times of the day I would put the hamster in the little plastic ball so that it could run around freely. While the hamster did this, I would watch TV, eat a snack, or talk on the phone with a friend, as the little hamster ball ran into walls. After several bags of chips and a pizza, the first day had passed without any problems, and I went to sleep.

The next day I woke up and headed upstairs to the kitchen to eat some breakfast. After a tasty bowl of Trix, I headed over to the hamster cage. As I peered inside, I

noticed that the hamster wasn't moving. I observed the hamster for a few minutes, and then I decided that the hamster was asleep. I put some food in the cage, checked the water, and went about my business until it was time for me to go to sleep.

On the third and last day of my freedom from my family, I did what I usually would do on the previous two days: I got up, ate breakfast, and walked to the hamster cage. As I observed the hamster again, using my great powers of deduction, I found the truth: The hamster was dead. At first I didn't believe it. I began to go into a small state of panic. There were questions running through my mind that I could not answer at that specific moment in time. "Is it dead?" "What will my sister say?" "Will my sister ever trust me?" I was scared. I didn't know why I was scared, or how I was going to deal with my sister in the immediate future. The worst of my hamster experience happened very quickly after I discovered the dead hamster. The phone call. Uh oh...

Shortly after the hamster's death, my mom called, and asked me how everything was going. Unfortunately, she asked me about the hamster, so I decided to tell the truth instead of making up some excuse. My mom wasn't very surprised, and she told me to get rid of the hamster, so I buried it. I was really pissed and very sad. I think that I was also scared because I was going to have to tell my little sister what had happened. In fact, shortly after I buried the little guy, my sister called me from our grandparents' house. The very first thing that she asked me was, "How's my hamster?" Those words hit me like an uppercut, and I didn't know what I was going to say. After about five minutes of saying, "Uh, I don't know, uh, how is everything," I decided to tell her the truth. At first she thought that I was kidding, and she hung up right after I told her. My grandmother called me to ask if I was playing some mean practical joke, but I told her that I was serious. I could hear my sister in the background crying as my grandmother bothered me with questions.

Even though I had told the truth and the worst of the situation was over, an alternate plan was working through my mind. I could have lied about the hamster, stalled for time, and bought a hamster that would have resemble the decease hamster, but I had no way to get to a pet shop. I also decided against this plan because I didn't want to warp my little sister's sense of reality into thinking that living things don't die, but live on forever. No, that wouldn't have been the solution, and even if I successfully did it, I wouldn't have felt good about myself. I knew that my sister would get over the hamster's death eventually, and she did. In fact, she got over it quickly. She even bought another hamster. Oh boy...

