



# GOING VIRAL

JEFF GOTTESFELD



**MEET THE**



*Annie*

**Age:** 12

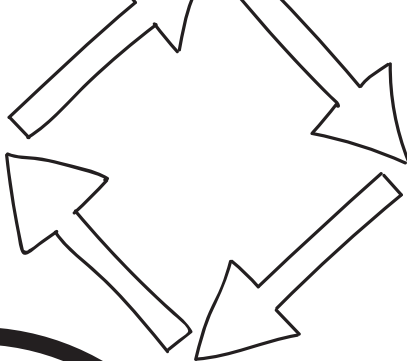
**Favorite Dog Breed:** St. Bernard

**Hobby:** growing pilea peperomioides (Chinese money plant)

**Dream Job:** KidVid star

**Best Quality:** fun to be around

# CHARACTERS



erin

**Age:** 12

**Favorite Cat Breed:** Ragamuffin

**Secret Skill:** knows lyrics to any song after hearing it once

**Greatest Fear:** getting hit by a flying ball

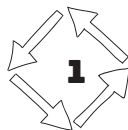
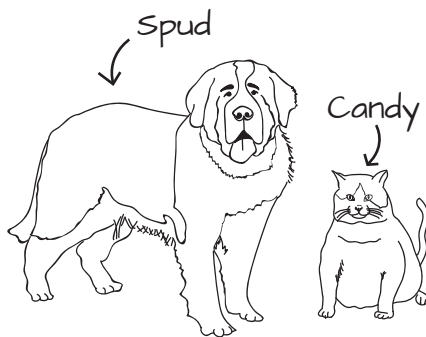
**Best Quality:** goes with the flow

# 1

## WE CAN DO THAT

Annie Hart and Erin Garcia were best friends. The girls didn't look alike. Annie was short and had red hair. Erin was tall and blonde.

Still, they liked many of the same things. Both liked ice cream. They also loved big dogs and fat cats. Annie had a dog named Spud. Erin's chubby cat was called Candy.



The girls lived in a little town on the same street. Both were in sixth grade. Their favorite thing was viral videos. Annie and Erin were huge KidVid fans. They knew about all the biggest video stars.

Every day after school they would get together at Annie's house. Annie would make popcorn. They would hang out on her bed. Then they'd binge videos.



Their parents didn't approve. But they didn't say anything. The girls got great grades. Both were soccer stars. They were good kids, so their parents let it slide.

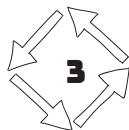


The only TV show the girls liked was *Big Don Tonight*. It was a talk show. Bands and big stars were on it. But the show came on too late for them to watch.

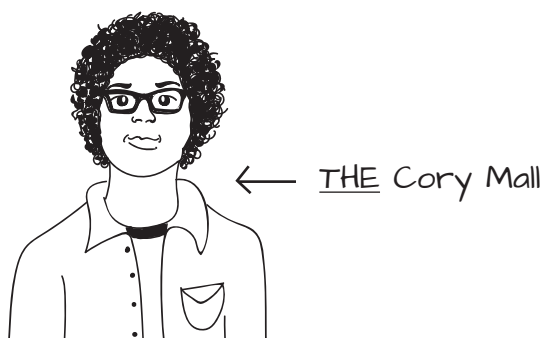
Their parents let them watch KidVid for one hour a day. The girls made the most of it.



It was Tuesday night. Erin was coming over. Annie made popcorn. Outside, it was raining. *Yes! Perfect hang-out weather,* Annie thought.



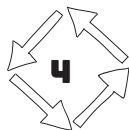
Their favorite KidVid star was Cory Mall. He posted new videos every Tuesday. Sometimes he did food dares with his friends. Other times he played trivia quizzes. Cory would do movie reviews too.



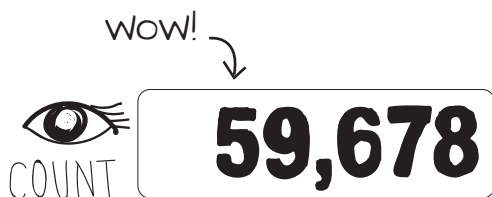
Annie was all set when Erin got there. Popcorn was made. She had sodas on ice. Her laptop was ready. Spud was on the bed when Erin came in. He took up a lot of room.

“Ready to rock and roll,” Annie told her. “I’ve got Cory’s new one pulled up.”

“How many views?” Erin asked.



Annie looked at the laptop screen.  
“Almost 60,000.”



“Wow! And the video just went up today?”

Annie nodded. “Yep.”

“It must be cool to be Cory. He’s such a star. I’d love to meet him.”

“Me too,” Annie said. “I wonder what he’s like.”

Erin moved Spud to one side. Then she got on the bed. Annie clicked play. Cory came on the screen. He had dark hair. Thick glasses framed his big, blue eyes. His own face smiled back from the Cory Mall T-shirt he had on.



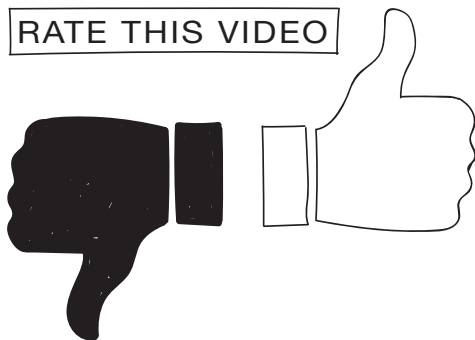


“Hi, hi, hi! It’s me, Cory Mall! You know what day it is. New vid day! I’ve got a great one for you guys. It’s called, ‘Cory Gets a Mani-Pedi!’ Check it out!”

The new video was a snooze. Cory went to a nail salon. He got his fingernails done first. Then he had his toenails painted bright green.

The staff joked with him. He teased someone with super long nails. They were filed to a point. It was not Cory’s best work. Annie and Erin didn’t laugh once. Then it was over.

RATE THIS VIDEO



“Bye!” Cory said, waving to the camera. “See you next week. I’ll be on *Big Don Tonight* soon. Check me out! And don’t forget to buy a T-shirt.” He pointed to the shirt he had on. Then the screen went dark.

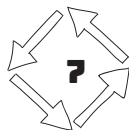
That was it.

Annie looked at Erin. “Weak. I think he just wants to sell his shirts.”

“I know. He can do better than that.”

“Yeah. We can do better than that.”

“Stop it. No, we can’t. Let’s watch something else. What do you say, Spud?” Erin petted the dog. He barked with joy. “How about a slime how-to? Fluffy slime looks cool.”



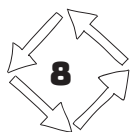
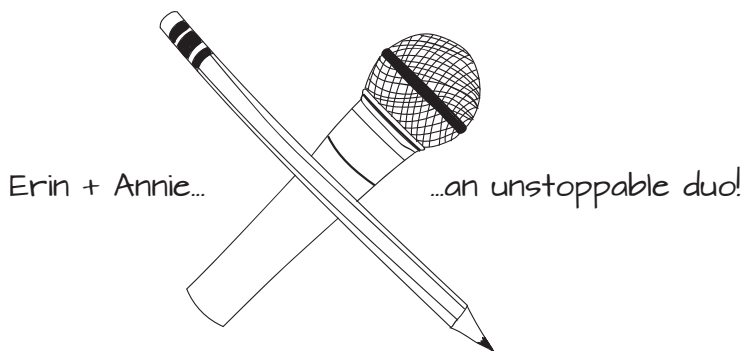
“No. I am so over slime.” Annie got off the bed. She had an idea. When one came to her, it was hard to let it go. “Let’s do that!” she said, pointing to her laptop.

“What? Make a video?”

“No. Build computers,” Annie said dryly. “Yes, make a video. Don’t you want to be as big as Cory?”

Erin made a face. “Ugh. No thanks. Kids make videos all the time. Most are so bad.”

“Ours won’t be. It will be great. I’m a good writer. You’re a great singer. We can figure something out. Something awesome!”



Annie was excited. What if they did get as big as Cory?

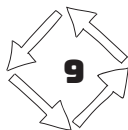
“Let’s say we do this.” Erin rolled over to face her bestie. “We still have a problem.”

“What’s that?”

Erin stared at her friend. “Our parents. No way will they let us. They barely let us watch KidVid. You think they’ll let us make a video for it?”

“True,” Annie said. “But what if they say yes?”

There was one way to find out.



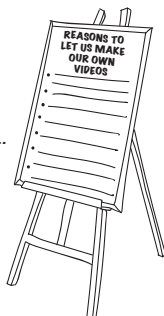
# 2

## TO BE A STAR

There was a picnic table in Annie's backyard. The girls gathered their parents there. Everyone seemed happy. But this would still be hard.

Annie had written a speech. She gave it to Erin. Of the two of them, Erin was the best speaker. They had practiced it a few times. Both girls took a deep breath. Then they went outside.

We  
came  
prepared...



“Thank you all for coming,” Erin said. “Annie and I have an announcement. We want to try something new. Making videos for KidVid. A lot of kids do it. We’ll make our own content. It will be on our own channel. You can see it before we post. What do you think?”

The adults looked at each other. Mr. Hart took a drink of soda. Then he held up his hand.

“Yeah, Dad?” Annie said.

“Why do you want to do this?”

Annie’s mom spoke up. “I know why. They want to be like Cory Hall. He’s a viral video star.”

“Mom,” Annie said, rolling her eyes. “It’s Cory *Mall*. Like where you shop. Not Hall.”

“I bet he makes a lot of money,” Erin’s dad said.



Mrs. Garcia made a face. “From what?”

“He must sell stuff,” Annie’s dad replied.

Annie’s mom laughed. “Not to us.”

“Yes,” Annie said. “He sells shirts. But that’s not what we want to do.”



Pretty soon his face will be everywhere.

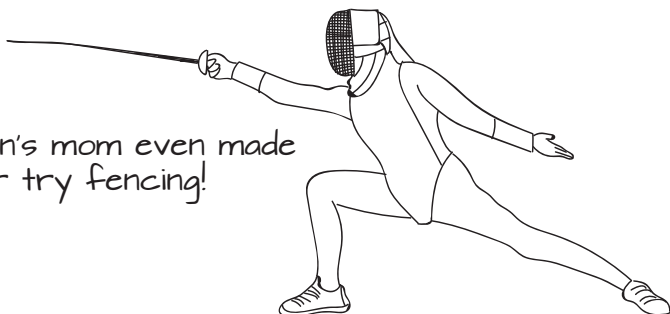
Her parents gave her a knowing look. “Okay,” she sighed. “I’ll admit it. It would be cool to be a star. We’d like that. Every kid would. But we would just be doing this for fun.”

That was not entirely true. Annie knew it.

Erin turned to her mom. “Please, Mom?”

You like it when I try new things. This is new.”

Erin's mom even made her try fencing!



“It is,” Mrs. Garcia agreed. “Give us a few minutes. Okay? We need to talk about this.”

The girls went to Annie’s room. They sat on her bed. Spud jumped up with them.

“What do you think?” Erin asked.

Annie shook her head. “I think they will say no.”

Erin nodded. “I think so too. Want to check Cory’s site?”

That’s when Annie’s cell sounded. It was a text.



“Who is it?” Erin asked.

“It’s my dad.”

“Well? Were we right?”

“Good luck, girls,” Annie read. “Have fun.”



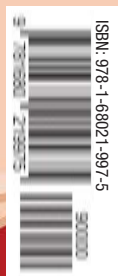
# GOING VIRAL

Some kids are viral  
superstars. We're next.  
Watch out world!



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