My Sock Puppet
I hadn't had a very good day at school. I'd spilled my hot lunch all over my new sweatshirt. I got in trouble for telling my friend about my favorite commercial, which was apparently "inappropriate" for school. A bully had threatened to tell a teacher I'd been cheating on my homework if I didn't finish his.
I jammed my scrawny finger into the doorbell. My little sister, Ellie, answered the door. "Hewwo, bwuddah-wuddah!" she squeaked.
"I'm not in a good mood," I grunted, trudging into my house with clenched fists. I'd left muddy footprints all over the floor, but I didn't care. Nothing mattered right now, not when I felt like a slab of beef.
"When you're done with your homework, clean your room!" Mom yelled. "Oh, boy. Fun," I muttered.
It wouldn't even be possible. My room was a pigsty. Moldy pizza, filthy, wadded-up clothes, even a broken window.
I unwillingly started searching under my bed. I yanked out baseball-sized wads of dust and dirt. Suddenly, I felt worn fibers in between my fingertips. Slowly, I pulled out my sock puppet.
I'd had the old sock puppet since preschool. I made it myself. I sighed happily as I remembered when I was a little kid, making the sock puppet. Life was easier, and I didn't have to do a jerk's homework in order to save myself from being barbecue. I closed my eyes, peacefully taking deep breaths, and felt the two red button eyes and pipe-cleaner mouth. I slipped my hand inside.
"Oh, Principal Brown! Your body is shaped like an egg!" I croaked in a funny voice, moving the puppet's mouth. "OW!"
Pain buzzed on my hand. I instantly dropped the sock puppet, frightened, and suspiciously eyed its pointy teeth, made from fuzzy, white slivers of felt.
"Ever felt someone put their hand up inside YOUR body?" he scoffed. "Gosh, kid..."
I gasped and rubbed my eyes. STANDING in front of me was the sock puppet I'd made myself, years ago. And it had never done this. I've seen this kind of stuff in storybooks and movies... but in real life, I was utterly shocked by this.
"Did you... talk?" I whispered. "Well, of course, kid! You think I'm some kind of animal that can't talk? I have vocal cords, y'know!" he rambled.

No, you actually don't, I thought, but I didn't say that. Instead, I asked, "Can you do my homework?"
Without saying anything, the sock puppet walked (without legs? how?) approached the two identical math papers. His button eyes glowed, and scorching flames zapped the homework sheets.

I looked down at them. They were completely finished, with all the right answers, in the neatest handwriting possible.

"Wow," I whispered in disbelief.

The sock puppet helped me with everything after that, and soon, I became a famous success in life. It was all thanks to him, that enchanted sock puppet that I'd made myself at just age four.

**EPILOGUE: FIFTY YEARS LATER**

"Mom, I don't wanna move into a new house!" Ruby wailed.
"You have no choice. Your father has to work," her mother sighed. "Go unpack your things in your new room upstairs."

Ruby shoved random things under the bed. After a while, she froze... and squinted as she felt the fibers of an old sock.