

**FOXED**

by

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EXT. CHISWICK - MAGIC HOUR

A burnt orange sun sets on a bucolic small town with cobblestone roads. A sign reads "Welcome to Chiswick. It's home!" Package delivery dirigible drones crisscross the sky.

Electrified horse carriages and vintage cars with satellite antennae, bubble windows and rivets holding chunky metal parts together chug up and down the road.

It's a STEAMPUNK world.

AUNTIE FOX (V.O.)  
Chiswick. Nice place to raise kids.  
If you're human.

"**Goo Is Good**" on a billboard -- featuring an interracial family in a shiny new ride while a soot-covered family frowns upon their broken-down old steam vehicle.

All sponsored by the "Amalgamated Consolidated Corporation."

Behind the billboard: at the treeline, a towering contraption, five storeys high, is under construction. Work crews weld at a feverish pace.

AUNTIE FOX (V.O.)  
The Goo-ulator. You'll know it when  
you see it.  
(sarcastic)  
Amalgamated Consolidated's love  
letter to the planet.

A HOODIE GIRL (10) gazes at this monstrosity. Smaller goo-drilling platforms extend into the razed hills. A blight.

AUNTIE FOX (V.O.)  
Not long ago, we used to frolic  
through sunlit meadows. Rest our  
heads on soft moss. Build our homes  
in the shade of massive oak trees.

TOWN SQUARE

Hoodie Girl walks amidst vendors selling steam-powered robot duck toys and people riding expando-domed unicycles.

AUNTIE FOX (V.O.)  
Then they came. They fenced off the  
meadows, chopped down the trees and  
hunted us mercilessly.

Hoodie Girl spots

SHERIFF TONY DERRINGER (50s)

Beefy, intimidating, with salt and pepper goatee and bristling with weaponry. There's no mistaking he has a certain charm, with a twinkle -- and a hint of menace -- in his eye.

He's flanked by two MALE DEPUTIES. They wear hunting gear with orange vests covered in gadgets and rifles with scopes. Foxtails dangle from hats.

AUNTIE FOX (V.O.)

Now they want to destroy our last refuge. When that mechanical beast comes online... we're done.

Sheriff is clearly the big man on campus. People bow and scrape when he saunters past. He feasts on the adulation.

AUNTIE FOX (V.O.)

This is our line in the sand. It's why we have to send you away. Do you understand, honey?

-- Hoodie Girl, nods and whispers "yes" and TRANSFORMS into a pale, spotty-furred, creepy-looking FOX right before everyone's eyes.

Everything comes to a full stop when a BYSTANDER points at --

BYSTANDER

A fox!!!

HOODIE GIRL/FOX

Uh-oh.

Families SCREAM. Hoodie Girl/Fox desperately digs through her pocket for BLUE CAPSULES. But her hands, now paws, can't handle them properly, and they scatter. Panicked, she bolts.

The horrified Sheriff lifts his piston-festooned rifle.

SHERIFF DERRINGER

Miserable pest!

BANG! The blast wallops the corner of a building a nanosecond after Hoodie Girl/Fox rockets past.

Sheriff and his Deputies stumble over each other, bringing up the rear.

SHERIFF DERRINGER

Get the fox! Get the fox!

## DEPUTIES

Get the fox! Get the fox!

Hoodie Girl/Fox jumps over garbage cans, crawls through fences, jinks and weaves through running legs.

She swipes a bag of groceries right out from a YOUNG DAD'S arms. Apples fly as she scrambles through an intersection --

WHAM! 3-vehicle pile-up with an OLD LADY DRIVER. No one is hurt, but lots of smashed metal, CAR HORNS and SHOUTING. Hoodie Girl/Fox chortles as she bites into an apple.

## OLD LADY DRIVER

Filthy fox menace!

Young Dad shakes a can of aerosol cheese at the fox.

## YOUNG DAD

When will this foxy reign of terror  
end?!

The can EXPLODES, coating Young Dad in orange spray-cheese.

But Hoodie Girl/Fox still can't shake Sheriff, who emerges from behind the pile-up on a scooter contraption.

## SHERIFF DERRINGER

You're dead, ya rodent!

He fires round after round! She hoofs it to the city line.

## EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Thick, dark, foreboding -- at least the parts that haven't been clear-cut to make room for ugly goo-drilling derricks.

A SQUIRREL peeks out from a knot in a dead tree, extending its paw. Hoodie Girl/Fox HIGH-FIVES Squirrel as she flies past and flips it a bag of peanuts from a grocery bag.

## SQUIRREL

Sh-weet!

Sheriff and Deputies peter out to a confused halt. The Deputies look under rocks, move aside leaves, shrug helplessly.

Sheriff FIRES his rifle in the air several times.

DEPUTY LANAGAN (30s), burly and baby-faced, and trying to look tougher than he is, huffs and puffs up alongside.

DEPUTY LANAGAN

Sir, you're not supposed to shoot  
your gun --

-- BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! The bullets rain down, ripping three  
holes in the brim of Deputy Lanagan's hat.

DEPUTY LANAGAN

... into the air.

Deputy Lanagan, his white face set in a rictus of terror,  
faints. Ignoring him, Sheriff seethes.

SHERIFF DERRINGER

In the name of Frederic... I won't  
rest until every last fox is in a  
wooden box!

INT. EMILY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

A warm space lit by gas lamps. Oddball appliances everywhere.

EMILY STERLING (12)

Tomboy cool with grass-stained knees, difficult brown hair  
and plain-Jane clothes that complement her big, expressive  
eyes, whistles as she works.

She sits on a rug surrounded by rivets, bolts, glue and  
wires. She is building something... but what?

JOSH STERLING (9), Emily's bratty little brother with mopy  
brown hair and chipmunk cheeks, watches from around a corner.

Emily rivets a hand-painted wing into place. It's a  
mechanical butterbug (sort of a butterfly meets a cootie  
bug). She presses the "START" button expectantly --

-- it whirls and rattles... then SHAKES TO PIECES. Clink,  
clank, clunk. Metal parts scatter.

Defeated, Emily slumps onto the couch. Josh rushes in. He  
expertly gets to work on Emily's machine, reassembling it.

EMILY

Hey! That's my science project! I  
was gonna fini --

JOSH

Sure you were. Watch and learn from  
the master.

The mechanical project COMES TO LIFE. It scuttles forward like a crab, front legs snapping and taunting Emily.

Upset, Emily stomps it to pieces. Josh snickers. Enraged, she gives him a wedgie, stuffs him in the coat closet. Locks the door.

JOSH (O.S.)  
(muffled)  
Dad? DAD?!

JULES (40s, balding, milquetoast) rushes in, but trips and face-plants, ripping his white collared shirt with a "Cochrane Engineering" laminate.

He gets up, adjusts his eyeglasses, puckers and smacks his large lips as he thinks.

JULES  
Emily, what did you do?

The closet door pops open. Josh, tighty-whities up by his armpits, holds a small gizmo (think car alarm remote.)

EMILY  
How...?

JOSH  
Universal key. Built it after the last time you stuffed me in there.

She rips it from his hand, throws it into a fish tank. Josh flashes a smug grin.

JOSH  
Oh, did I forget to mention it's waterproof? Silly me.

Emily's eyes narrow. She points to her crushed project.

EMILY  
You are rottener than a year-old jelly donut, Josh Sterling.

JULES  
Emily, you should, umm, really know better, dear.

EMILY  
Me? What about him? He's always ruining my stuff! Bratty Bratwurst!

JOSH

If by "ruining" you mean actually finishing it and making way awesomer in the process, guilty as charged.

He's standing in front of the Wall of Josh: shelves of ribbons, medals, and trophies. "1st Place -- Mathletes." "Academic Excellence." "Student Inventor of the Year." Etc.

Buried in the back, almost out of sight, there's a laughably small karate trophy for Emily. "Thanks for showing up!"

JULES

Josh, just because you inherited my scientific mind, doesn't mean you should lord it over your sister. And, Emily, as the eldest, I, umm, expect you to set an example.

Emily fumes, but before she can respond:

JULES

Will you both, um, sit down?

Grumbling, they disobey his order and keep fighting.

JULES

Hey, hey... you guys... would you rather me do this, or your mother?

That gets their attention. They knock it off. Jules is clearly unsure how to handle this situation.

He sees an old photo on the mantel: Jules (13), with his arm around a TEENAGE GIRL (15) who looks a lot like him.

JULES

Your Aunt and I...  
(he fights emotion)  
When we were kids, we fought day and night. She called me "Julie Drooly," "Jules the Pest" and my favorite, "Platypus Lips." No idea where she got that one.

He absently smacks his lips, a la a duck bill.

JULES

Used to glue her shoes together, she'd rewrite my homework to make me seem like an idiot. Good times.  
(sighs)  
Since she vanished, all I've wanted  
(MORE)

JULES (CONT'D)  
 is to be able to tell her how much  
 I love her, how much I miss her...

He returns the frame to the mantel, looks at Emily and Josh longingly... finds them rolling on the ground, GRAPPLING.

JULES  
 Please, umm, stop...  
 (they keep fighting)  
 Hey, I said, umm, knock it off...  
 (they tussle even harder)  
 Enough...!

Emily and Josh immediately stop fighting and stand up straight. Jules thinks he was the reason and smiles. Until he turns and sees --

-- his wife, VERNA (30s), standing in the doorway. She wears grease-streaked "Town of Chiswick Blimp Maintenance Crew" coveralls. Clearly wears the pants in the family.

VERNA  
 To your rooms, the both of you.

EMILY / JOSH  
 Yes, ma'am.

They scam. Verna kisses Jules' cheek. He eyes her sheepishly.

INT. EMILY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Teddy bears and dolls are pushed into corners, unused. Emily can't put together pieces of cloth and a copper pipe. She tosses them aside, frustrated.

A KNOCK. Verna enters.

VERNA  
 I'm not here to take sides.

EMILY  
 Yeah, right.

Verna sighs, sits next to Emily.

VERNA  
 When you were three, you took baby  
 Josh and put him into the trash  
 can. I asked you "Why?" and you  
 said, "Bad gobbich."

Emily tamps down a devilish grin.



VERNA

Honey, you have to get over this...  
this sibling rivalry.

Emily makes a guttural, disgusted noise.

VERNA

Ah, the classic pre-teen groan. I  
expect a certain amount of  
respect... and respectable  
behavior.

EMILY

But he... know what? You guys NEVER  
listen to me anyway.

VERNA

Enough. Emily Aurora Sterling,  
you've been nothing but stubborn  
and difficult lately.

Emily loses it, her eyes welling up.

EMILY

You don't have to deal with him  
like I do. And I'm expected to set  
an example because I'm the "big  
sister." But that just means he  
gets away with everything!

VERNA

Dad knows how strong you are.

Emily doesn't get it. Verna puts a hand on Emily's shoulder.

VERNA

You know, your dad is our best  
mediator on the council. Deals with  
people who couldn't be farther  
apart. Somehow... he gets them to  
meet halfway.

EMILY

By giving in to the bully?

Verna is stunned. But her eyes betray the absolute truth in  
Emily's words. Verna considers her daughter for a beat.

VERNA

The way you are... your... your  
damn gumption. How you stand up for  
what you believe -- even if that  
means not listening to your parents  
or teachers or anyone -- not easy

(MORE)

VERNA (CONT'D)

things for a parent to stomach. But some day, Emmy... some day they'll lead you to do great things. Until then, you've got to let your emotions cool before reacting to Josh, or any other challenging situation, for that matter. Understand?

Emily's gazes up into her mom's eyes and finds warmth and understanding and a goofy smile. What she needs. They hug.

Verna bites her lip... a little worried.

THROUGH EMILY'S MIRROR

Two sets of beady eyes narrow, watching her...

INT. EMILY'S SCHOOL - 7TH-GRADE CLASS - DAY

Inkwells clash with built-in round computer screens. Shadows move randomly; cobwebs fill the corners. Creepy.

The KIDS, including Emily, stare at the front of the class.

MRS. PATTERSON (40s) horn-rimmed glasses, beams at teacher's pet... Josh. He scribbles calculations beside a diagram of a football field on the board.

JOSH

Then this -- quadrilateral X-Y -- equals forty percent of the total.

Mrs. Patterson smiles her approval. Josh chucks himself on the chin, saunters back to his seat, high-fiving as he goes.

Emily grumbles under her breath.

MRS. PATTERSON

Thank you, Josh -- proof, yet again, that your parents were correct in having you skip ahead three grades last year.

Emily rolls her eyes.

MRS. PATTERSON

Now... Miss Sterling. Maybe you could enlighten us about how we can find the fastest way from one end of our football field to the other?

All eyes are on Emily... a few snickers here and there.

Emily's BFFs CORINNE (a ditzy airhead, dolled out in pink clothes and makeup) and MAKIKO (Asian, mousy with glasses, slyly playing with her steampunk smartphone on her lap) look on nervously as Emily grasps for a response.

EMILY

Zipline!

MRS. PATTERSON

What?

EMILY

There's a steam turbine next to the bleachers and one on top of this building. They're connected by a wire. So ziplining would be the fastest way to get from one end to the other. Assuming the voltage doesn't fry your butt. Bzzt!

The kids burst out laughing. Emily preens. The befuddled Mrs. Patterson stares at Emily, but before she can respond... the BELL rings. The students pack up books, grab coats, etc.

EXT. SCHOOL - ROAD - DAY

Corinne freshens her makeup and Makiko focuses on her smartphone as they walk with Emily. Goo derricks in the BG. The girls stop when they see Josh and his FRIENDS laughing.

JOSH

"Zipline"? Seriously?

CORINNE

Ignore them, Emmy.

MAKIKO

(without looking up)  
Brainiacs.

Corinne and Makiko board a yellow school bus. But Emily, her anger boiling, slows her gait --

EMILY

Got something I gotta do, guys.  
I'll see you tomorrow.

INT. STEAMPUNK ARCADE - DAY

Football-sized, brightly-colored fish with propeller tails float through the arcade, dispensing glowing game tokens.

Emily plays RUMBLE-STILTSKIN -- a monster-truck-driving game with gearshift, pedals and oversized piston contraptions.

Emily owns it. Expertly throws her vehicle into a skidding side-stop to wipe out a slimelord cluster, then backs up (beep, beep, beep) to score a power-up.

Kids gather, watching the master at work. Emily's clearly been getting her money's worth from that one token.

Then: she spots a SAD REDHEADED GIRL (7) alternately staring at the game and her token-less hand.

Emily bites her lip, conflicted. Then she steers deliberately into a tree, wrecking her vehicle. Game Over.

EMILY

Darn. Hey. Hey. Did you want to try this game?

The Girl nods timidly. Emily digs in her pocket. Last token. She hesitates, but then... she helps the Girl into the cockpit. Pops the token in. Redheaded Girl lights up as the game powers up.

SAD REDHEADED GIRL

You rock!

Emily shrugs "not really," but smiles at her.

EXT. STEAMPUNK ARCADE - DAY

Emily exits, kicking the ground... and an empty METAL CAN. POP! The lid springs open, revealing eyes as the can comes to life. Via spidery metal legs, it scurries into a storm drain.

EMILY

Whoa! Hey! Hey, where you going, little 'Tinny' can?

O.S. WHISPERY, INDISTINCT VOICES draw Emily's attention. She kneels at the drain, listens. Voices echo before fading away.

WHOMP! A mudball splats against her face --

JOSH

Boom! The hammer!

A fuming Emily spits mud, wipes her face, forces composure.

EMILY

Ten, nine, eight, seven...  
(her rage surfaces)  
(MORE)

EMILY (CONT'D)  
 ... Oh, who'm I kidding? TWERP!  
 Fist sandwich, comin' up!

Josh turns and runs. Emily disappears after him.

TWO SETS OF EYES in the sewer grate watch. The first set turns to the other and nods. The second set nods back.

EXT. WOODS - SUNSET

Josh runs towards the woods on the edge of town. Emily picks up a branch, ready to clobber him.

JOSH  
 Why don't you try ziplining?

He sticks out his tongue and speeds farther ahead.

Teeth grinding in anger, Emily jumps over a boulder -- but her foot gets caught. BAM! She falls, scraping her knee.

EMILY  
 Owwww!

Emily scrambles to her feet, limps after Josh.

EMILY  
 (calling out to him)  
 I wish those garbage men had taken  
 you away.  
 (she limps faster)  
 I wish a sinkhole would open up and  
 swallow you.  
 (she gains on him)  
 I wish --

-- She stops dead in her tracks. Ahead of her, FIVE BIG FOXES (pale, patchy fur, cartoon scary and almost adult human-size) stuff a screaming and writhing Josh into a burlap sack.

EMILY  
 Hey!

JOSH  
 EMILY! HELP!

Emily charges them. The foxes close the bag -- with Josh's left foot sticking out -- and disappear into the undergrowth.

EMILY  
 JOSH!? JOSH!

Emily doesn't see the MOVEMENT under fallen autumn leaves heading away. She rustles in the undergrowth --

A MINUTE LATER

-- spent and coming up empty, Emily gazes at the deep, dark, quiet woods in front of her. Her face awash in panic.

INT. EMILY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Emily storms in, winded.

EMILY

Mom! Dad! They... they took Josh!

All is quiet.

EMILY

(freaking out)

Mom! Dad!

(remembering)

The town council. Crud!

EXT. TOWN HALL - NIGHT

Made of pretty brick tiles with an ornate, wrought-iron door.

Scuffed and muddy, Emily pushes it open --

INT. TOWN HALL - LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

-- and comes face to face with the dowdy RECEPTIONIST.

EMILY

I need to see my mom and my dad  
like STAT, like ASAP --

RECEPTIONIST

You'll have to wait until after --

EMILY

No, listen to me! My brother --

RECEPTIONIST

Have a seat, dear. We've got some  
lovely mechanical bun-buns.

EMILY

What am I, five? No, listen --

RECEPTIONIST

Right over there.

Receptionist puts in some really clunky-looking earbuds and listens to OOMPAH MUSIC on her Steamphone.

Emily throws up her hands in frustration and rushes out.

EXT. TOWN HALL - CONTINUOUS

Emily runs around the building until she spots...

A WINDOW AJAR.

It's too high up, but Emily, huffing and puffing, and with enormous effort, drags over a bench from the nearby park.

She climbs on the bench and firmly grabs the windowsill.

INSIDE

12 COUNCIL MEMBERS, including Verna and Jules, at a conference table, including female MAYOR MARTINEZ (60s.)

Sheriff Derringer, mid-presentation:

EXPLAINER ANIMATION ON THE BIG-STEAM KINESCOPE

Shows goo derricks increasing exponentially along hillsides, with dollar signs rising from each. Happy stick-figure children cheer even as they're crowded right off the screen, where they fall to their deaths with little shrieks.

SHERIFF DERRINGER

My vision of the future, friends,  
Mayor Martinez. We'll be not only  
well-off, we'll be rich. Chiswick  
will lead the way to a modern, high-  
tech future, free of the  
limitations and danger of steam.

Derringer flashes that ol' eye-twinkle; the Mayor coos, clearly in his spell.

Jules and Verna exchange wary looks. Sharp-dressed businessman RODNEY CHAMBERS (40s) chimes in:

RODNEY CHAMBERS

But, Tony, more goo derricks?  
Blight on the landscape. And that  
enormous contraption... What is it  
again?

The Sheriff clicks a remote, and the Goolator appears on-screen. By comparison, "Giant (stick figure) Kong" is only half its size, and tries desperately to climb it but it's too slick with goo, and he crashes earthward.

SHERIFF DERRINGER

The Geohydraulic High-Velocity  
Pneumatic Gelatinite Extrication and  
Processing Platform. Goo-ulator, for  
short.

JULES

Erm, now, Sheriff, I appreciate  
your, umm, passion on this, but,  
well, it's untested. We don't even,  
umm, know what it's going to do to --

SHERIFF DERRINGER

Oh, we know exactly. Once it's  
operational -- three weeks from now  
-- it'll flood the underground  
caverns with water needed for the  
goo extraction process. This in  
turn will erode the rock, yielding  
even more gelatinite, or goo.  
Science!

On-screen, water run-off from the chugging Goo-ulator drains down into the fox caves, and stick figure foxes with exes for eyes are washed away into a giant toilet bowl, where Kong flushes them down.

VERNA

I dunno about this. The woods.  
They'll be gone.

SHERIFF DERRINGER

All we've got in those woods are  
foxes.

On screen, Kong has moved on to eat a nearby banana factory. Stick figure workers scream and flee.

SHERIFF DERRINGER

It's time to fight for our  
families. Our country.

On screen, a very full Kong salutes as PATRIOTIC MUSIC plays. The banana factory is in flames.

Everyone in the room swaps nervous looks.

Then: Emily appears in the window.



EMILY  
Help! Mom! Dad!

Verna hastens to the window and pulls Emily inside.

EMILY  
 They have Josh! They kidnapped him.

JULES  
 What!?

EMILY  
 They were awful -- white and pale,  
 like -- like giant rats.

VERNA  
 Who were, sweetie?

SHERIFF DERRINGER  
 (getting it)  
Foxes.

CH-CHUNK of the Sheriff locking and loading his rifle --

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

-- ominous and foreboding, despite the sea of magnified gas lamp flashlights and searchlights powered by Rube Goldberg mechanisms. The entire town is out searching for Josh.

Sheriff and Deputy Lanagan lead the search party, their rifles at the ready. Emily, Jules, and Verna walk alongside.

VERNA  
 Josh?! Josh?!

EMILY  
 I'm so sorry, Mom.

JULES  
 Now, now, honey. I'm almost certain  
 you probably had... not that much  
 to do with this.

EMILY  
 Josh is right. Nothing I do is  
 right.

VERNA  
 Don't be silly. You did a good  
 thing. Finding us like you did.

BANG! Gunshot. Everyone jumps in fear, but...

SHERIFF DERRINGER

I thought I saw a fox. In the name  
of Frederic, I won't let one more  
person be hurt by these menaces!

He stalks on. Deputy Lanagan exhales.

EMILY

Did... was Frederic... the  
Sheriff's son?

DEPUTY LANAGAN

(to Emily)

Rooster. Won a bunch of awards.  
Heckuva of a bird. Foxes got him a  
few years back. Sheriff ain't been  
the same since.

The search party continues through the woods.

JULES

Josh! Josh!!!

Then: a feeble voice in the distance...

JOSH (O.S.)

I'm here.

VERNA

Josh!? Oh, my God!

JOSH (O.S.)

Help me...

EMILY

Over there!

She races into a thicket.

JULES

Emily, wait!

Too late. She's gone.

VERNA

Emily!

EMILY (O.S.)

He's here.

Hoisting him in a fireman's carry, Emily exits with Josh.

EMILY  
 (tears of relief)  
 Found him.

Verna and Jules take Josh from Emily, shower him with hugs.

EXT. EMILY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Sheriff escorts the family home. Verna and Jules hold Josh's hands. Emily walks slightly behind them.

JOSH  
 ... and then his eyes slowly closed,  
 and I crawled away. I was so scared  
 they'd hear me, but they didn't.

VERNA  
 That was so brave of you.

JULES  
 I'm very proud of you, son.

SHERIFF DERRINGER  
 You got very lucky there. A  
 sleeping fox is nineteen times more  
 dangerous than when awake.

Emily shrugs and rolls her eyes and sardonically mouths the word "how?"

He misses her jab, glances at Emily.

SHERIFF DERRINGER  
 Stay out of the woods. Too  
 dangerous. One would think you're  
 old enough to know that, missy.

INT. EMILY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The family is worn and exhausted.

VERNA  
 All right, you two, it's late.

Josh looks at Emily. She is ready for the verbal assault.

JOSH  
 Emily... I just wanted to say...  
 thank you for saving me.

Emily is startled. Verna, too.

EMILY

Err... you're welcome?

Josh smiles at her and turns to go, but stops again and rushes over to Emily. To her complete consternation, he hugs and kisses her on the cheek before finally exiting.

Emily stares, pole-axed. Wiping yuck off her face.

VERNA

There's hope for you two yet.

EXT. SCHOOL - DAY

School's out. Emily, reeling, walks with Makiko and Corinne.

EMILY

And then he hugged and smooched me!

MAKIKO

I don't understand why that's weirdsville. He's your brother.

EMILY

Exactly!

Makiko frowns.

CORINNE

He was probably just glad to be home again.

Emily shrugs, unconvinced. It's only then that she notices that Corinne and Makiko are... not quite themselves.

EMILY

Hey, what's off about you guys?

Corinne and Makiko trade looks.

EMILY

Corinne, you're not wearing makeup. Where's your phone, Makiko?

CORINNE

It's inner beauty that counts.

MAKIKO

No time for technology. Had to unplug, too much homework.

Emily, her breath stolen, stops in her tracks.

EMILY

Corinne, you once skipped a week of school because of split ends. And, Makiko, you failed homeroom last year.

Just when things can't get any more bizarre --

JOSH (O.S.)

Emily!

-- Josh skips over, happy to see her.

JOSH

Let me carry your books home.

Emily gives a "what world am I living in?" look.

INT. EMILY'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

The family is in the middle of dinner.

JOSH

Dinner is deelish, Dad. Thanks for cooking.

Emily, shocked, gags.

JULES

Thank you, son.

Emily slams her fork down. She can't take it anymore.

EMILY

All right, what's going on?

JOSH

What do you mean?

EMILY

Fess up. What's wrong with you? Why are you acting like this?

JOSH

What's wrong with the way I act?

JULES

Nothing. You've been perfectly behaved ever since you got back.

EMILY

Exactly!

VERNA  
 (sarcastically)  
 Because our parental skills are  
 such that when one of our kids  
 behaves, we should suspect  
 something is tragically amiss.

Emily hovers over Josh, scrutinizing his forehead.

EMILY  
 Checking for lobotomy scars.

JOSH  
 I love your quirky sense of humor.

Emily thrusts two open hands at Josh: "See?" Jules merely shrugs.

Verna folds her arms and stops Emily with a stare. The meaning is clear: "Enough." Exasperated, Emily hastens away.

INT. FOX DEN - NIGHT

A mine cart moves along a rail, past small cages lit by dim lightbulbs. Weary shapes swing pickaxes at the dusty rock. A fog covers the floor; spider webs hang like silk curtains.

Over it all, the sound of quietly whimpering CHILDREN.

FOX #1 (O.S.)  
 Keep workin'!

FOX #2 (O.S.)  
 No work, no food.

INT. CAVERN - NIGHT

Vast with tall ceilings and glowing pastel-colored plant veins growing out of every crevice. A blue glow pulsates from deep within the rocks, blinks and then disappears.

The mining cart crawls along a bridge that expands across the cavern. A glowing river of blue goo flows beneath them.

Far below, HUMAN CHILDREN slave away with pickaxes. HAIRLESS GREY FOXES walk upright and haul wheelbarrows filled with glowing blue glop. Mining carts snake in and out.

CLARENCE, the Fox Boss, hairless but for a distinctive "mullet," which he's spent quite a bit of time grooming -- it shines of pomade -- and fancy steampunk threads -- clearly,

he cares about his image -- comes forth from the shadows. He scrutinizes one of the stooped kids slaving away.

KID (O.S.)

I want to go home.

CLARENCE

You are home.

The stooped kid turns to Clarence. It's a tear-stained Josh!

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. JOSH'S ROOM - NIGHT

"Josh" lies in bed. Verna tucks him in.

VERNA

'Night, Joshy.

JOSH

Love you, Mom. G'night.

He kisses her cheek. She's touched. She kills the light, exits. Our POV retreats into his closet, where we find --

-- Emily, staring intently at her darkened brother. Out a window, a cloud moves, allowing a bright moon to illuminate --

-- Josh's face, which is now that of a FOX!

What happens next happens fast: Emily explodes from the closet, leaps for the bed. She and Josh grapple, tumble to the floor, taking the covers with them. Verna, having heard the commotion, throws open the door and flicks on the light.

VERNA

Emily!

Emily is bear-hugging Josh from behind. His head and torso are shrouded in a tangle of bed sheets.

VERNA

Just when I thought you two were finally starting to get along --

EMILY

It's not Josh. It's a fox!

VERNA

Uhhh...

EMILY

Look.

She dramatically rips off the sheet, revealing... Josh.

EMILY

But... his face. I saw a fox!

Josh pulls a fox Halloween mask from one of several boxes on the floor. One is filled with toys. Another with old clothes.

JOSH

I cleaned out my room, was gonna donate some of my old stuff -- including my Halloween costume from last year -- to charity.

Josh reaches into the box and removes... a costume fox tail and paws. Verna levels a death stare for the ages at Emily.

VERNA

Sweetie... you're just having bad dreams after Josh's kidnap. Yeah, that's it. Get to bed. And don't make me come out here again.

Verna escorts Emily to her room. Josh hangs back, thumbing a medicine bottle filled with blue tablets. He exhales relief.

INT. EMILY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Emily paces back and forth. A black-and-white Chiller Theater-type scary movie plays on her kinescope in the BG.

EMILY

Something's wrong. Something's really wrong.  
(gazing out her window)  
Josh. Makiko. Corinne...

She notices the movie -- ZOMBIES walking brainlessly at us --

EMILY

They're all... pod people!

Emily's eyes flare in realization. Could it be...?

She empties out her backpack, then quickly stuffs in snacks, a water bottle, a flashlight and an old compass.



INT. EMILY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Emily hastily writes a note onto a piece of paper. She senses something behind her, spins her head in fright.

EMILY  
(a scared whisper)  
Hello?!

Satisfied she's alone, she returns to the paper, finishes writing, folds it in half, and thumbtacks it to a corkboard on the fridge. She climbs out the window and disappears.

And WE PUSH IN on the paper --

EMILY (V.O.)  
"Mom and Dad, I know you won't believe me, and thanks for that, by the way... why do I even bother?  
(sighs)  
Anyway. Josh is an imposter. I've gone back to the woods to look for the real one. If I'm not back by morning, well... that wouldn't be good. E."

"Josh" enters from the darkened hallway and angrily grabs the note off the board.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

It's pitch black. Emily's torch barely makes a dent in the darkness as she staggers along. Branches scratch her face.

The oppressive silence is only sometimes broken by HOOTING OWLS, their plaintive cries cutting through the night.

From the darkness, in a thrush of movement... HUNDREDS OF BATS! Emily screams, rolls into a ball as the swarming bats engulf her.

It's all over. Emily, her heart beating out of her chest but her jaw clenched in purpose, gathers herself and forges on.

She finds the place where Josh was kidnapped and lets her flashlight glide over the spot.

EMILY  
Nothing.

She looks around... finds some disturbed bracken. Aha.

EMILY

They went that-a-way.

She tries to retrace the foxes' steps, moving deeper into the forest. She sits, enveloped in darkness. This is hopeless.

She senses something behind her. Her hackles rise. Before she can turn around... WHAM! She's upside down in a sack.

INT. BAG - NIGHT

Blackness. Just eyes.

EMILY (O.S.)

Hey! Help!

Emily, now upside down, is dragged along in the bag.

EMILY

Let me out! You rotten -- Ow!

INT. CAVE - MACHINE ROOM - NIGHT

Three hairless GUARD FOXES lift the bag. Emily falls into --

EMILY

Yaah!

-- a big tub. The Guard Foxes pour DARK BLUE GOO over her. The sound of a plugged-up vacuum cleaner fills the room.

EMILY

Stop! Ick!

Foxes hold the blubbering Emily down. She squirms free and makes a run for it. Guard Foxes throw her back in with a gloopy SPLOOSH. The tub whirls like a spin cycle.

EMILY

Heeeeeeeelp!

Finally, as it all slows down...

EMILY'S DIZZY POV

Everything's off-kilter. She settles on what looks like...  
HER OWN IMAGE?

She swoons and PASSES OUT.

INT. CAVE - CELL AREA - NIGHT

Emily -- scared and woozy -- is escorted by two Guard Foxes into a big, fog-drenched cavern.

Cells are lit by lone flickering bulbs, which highlights the elaborate and ubiquitous spiderwebs.

EMILY

Where... where are you taking me?

HUNCHBACK is a slumped-over, old fox with a fierce, dog-like, saliva-filled snarl. He wears a spiked leather longcoat with matching boots. He yanks Emily's hair, growls in her face.

HUNCHBACK

Did we say you could talk, rotten little human?

A tear runs down Emily's cheek. They reach:

INT. CAVE - CELL BLOCK - NIGHT

Each has a metal door with a window-sized, barred slat for peeking inside. The area sits next to smaller caves, each with an open metal door dug into the wall of the cavern.

A three-foot-wide ledge connects them and falls off into an abyss.

GAH! Emily walks through a web, jumps as a softball-sized spider brushes her cheek. Heart hammering, she's prodded forward by Hunchback and JAILER.

Jailer opens a cell door and shoves her into --

INT. EMILY & JOSH'S CELL - CONTINUOUS

She hits the dirt floor, face first. Outside, on a pathway, she sees two Guard Foxes leading a procession of WORKER KIDS.

Emily spots a bedraggled Josh among the kids.

EMILY

Josh! Josh! I'm here!

JOSH

Emily!

HUNCHBACK

Quiet!

He shoves Josh in the cell with Emily and directs Jailer to lock them in. Emily hugs him. The lightbulb flickers and burns out. Darkness. Only a sliver of light enters the cell from the main area. Emily sags to her knees, reeling.

EMILY

Are-Are you okay?

Josh first nods, then shakes his head.

JOSH

I-I'm scared.

In another cell across the way, curled up asleep on the cold, hard ground in their PJs:

EMILY

Corinne? Makiko?

Josh nods. Things are grim.

EMILY

What is going on? Why are you so filthy?

Sobbing, he's too scared to answer and barely musters --

JOSH

I want to go home.

Emily holds him tightly and looks around, becoming aware of the soft CRYING of children in other cells.

INT. CAVE - CELL AREA - NIGHT

TINNY -- the little metal can with legs -- peeks above a ledge, watching the last fox tail disappear from view. Then he climbs up Emily and Josh's cell door and peers inside.

Emily and Josh are cuddled up, asleep. Tinny CLICKS.

INT. EMILY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Verna fries eggs in a skillet on a cast-iron stove top.

VERNA

Emily, Josh... breakfast.

On cue, and perfectly dressed, FOX EMILY and FOX JOSH descend the stairs, all smiles. Verna double-takes at them.

VERNA

Well, you two look smashing today.

FOX JOSH

A good night's sleep is always refreshing. Right, Emily?

Fox Josh nudges Fox Emily slightly.

FOX EMILY

You betcha!

(faces Verna)

I don't know what came over me last night, Mom. I'm so sorry.

She hugs Verna, who then brings them plates of food.

FOX EMILY

(drooling)

Mm, chicken eggs! I've heard about these!

Fox Emily digs in, face-first. Fox Josh elbows her. Now composed, she properly eats with her knife and fork.

Jules, entering the kitchen with his coffee and newspaper, flashes a "wow" look at his wife. She nods back, pleased.

INT. CAVE - EMILY & JOSH'S CELL - DAY

Emily wakes, still holding Josh. She creeps to the bars, sees the other cells.

EMILY

Hey, you guys! Anyone!

MAKIKO (O.S.)

Shh! No talking!

Josh wakes up, urgently shaking his head "no" --

Just then, Clarence and Hunchback enter the cell block. Clarence's hair is slicked back and he sports an ascot. Bulbs flicker, casting long, creepy shadows.

CLARENCE

You must be the one and only Emily.

EMILY

You -- you know my name?

CLARENCE

I know many things.

Clarence smiles devilishly.

CLARENCE

Induce me to introallow myself. My name is Clarence. And we are very pleased to have you as our guest. And by guest, I mean, um... what's that thing with, um... you know, when you're confined?

Passing by in the corridor: AUNTIE FOX, a kind-eyed female fox who wears a metal apron with large pockets.

AUNTIE FOX

Prisoners.

CLARENCE

Thank you, Auntie Fox! That.

Auntie Fox continues on her way, never seeing Emily.

CLARENCE

Now. You will be well taken care of. And in return, you will join your brother Josh, your besties Makiko and Corrine, and dozens of other kiddos, in working for us...  
(milking the reveal)  
...in the mines.

Clarence cackles. Josh nods in confirmation. Emily defiantly thrusts her hands on her hips.

EMILY

Why?

Clarence gags on the insolence. Hunchback grabs Emily.

CLARENCE

What? Did you say -- I mean, can you believe this kid? "Why?"

EMILY

(mustering courage)  
Fair question, I'd say.

Hunchback has to nod. "Yeah, fair question."

CLARENCE

You'll know what I choose to tell you, when I choose to... um... to... say it to you! Hunchback, hurl her to the floor! And be, like, mean!

Hunchback shrugs, complies. Whoomph. Emily eats dirt.

CLARENCE

Now I'm sorry if this is all a bit jarring... if your lives have been, well, shaken and stirred. Too bad!

(turns to go, stops)

And if you feel bad... good!

THE CHILDREN

They're terrified and whimpering. Guard Foxes arrive. Hunchback directs them as Jailer opens the cells and they march the kids, including Emily and Josh, away.

INT. CAVE - AUNTIE FOX'S QUARTERS - DAY

Auntie Fox sits on a rocking chair, knitting a scarf. There's a knock on the door, and Clarence sulks in, expecting a dressing-down.

CLARENCE

What is it?

She sets down her needles, sternly folds her arms.

AUNTIE FOX

You've been particularly harsh on our visitors of late. Need I remind you they are children.

CLARENCE

Human children. The humans don't care about our families. Why should we care about theirs?

EXT. WOODS - FOX DEN - DAY (FLASHBACK)

PAPA FOX, picking berries with YOUNG CLARENCE -- even then with distinctive mullet.

A SHADOW looms over them. PAPA FOX'S eyes wide with fear --

PAPA FOX

Sheriff? Wait -- we had a deal!

THE SHERIFF

BOOM goes the rifle. We hear a THUD.

YOUNG CLARENCE

Daddy Fox!

As the Sheriff turns on him, Young Clarence YELPS, scrambles for cover --

SHERIFF (O.S.)  
 Sorry, Pete. Got a better offer.  
 (looks around)  
 Come out, little foxy fox. I won't hurt ya.

Young Clarence fights back the tears, stays hidden in a thicket. Sheriff Derringer just a few feet away...

FOOTSTEPS get closer and closer... and then recede.

CLARENCE (O.S.)  
 (chokes up)  
 You know what he did.

END FLASHBACK

AUNTIE FOX  
 ... And in return you ate his pet rooster. When will it end?

CLARENCE  
 Oh, come on. He was delicious.

AUNTIE FOX  
 True. You make a mean lemon garlic butter sauce.

CLARENCE  
 (strutting)  
 Did I ever!  
 (somberly)  
 You know the stakes. When -- not if, but when -- they turn on that machine, we're done. Kaput! Once our agents are in place, we'll turn the tables. We have hostages. We have the beverage!

Auntie Fox puzzles for a beat, then realizes:

AUNTIE FOX  
*Leverage*, Clarence.

Clarence looks disappointed. Auntie Fox pats his shoulder.

AUNTIE FOX  
 No, you're doing great. Really.



CLARENCE

It's important everyone take me seriously, Auntie. I-I gotta say things and be -- be leader-y.

AUNTIE

I --

CLARENCE

I-I'm reading all the books you gave me. Shakes-Pierre. Darles Chickens. Mac-and-Cheesy-avelli.

AUNTIE FOX

Oh, boy. Clarence... I just... I don't know what we're fighting for anymore. Our families have been destroyed. Fox kids are gone --

CLARENCE

They're safe.

AUNTIE FOX

Masquerading as humans? For how long? The humans will figure out what the goo does --

CLARENCE

"Never was anything great achieved without danger," Auntie Fox. Mac and Cheese himself said that. We only need until nightfall Friday. When we attack.

COUNTDOWN CALENDAR on the wall. Friday -- five days from now - - is circled; the previous days are crudely X'ed out.

Off Auntie Fox's worried face:

INT. CAVE - PATHWAY - DAY

Emily, Josh, other kids are led along a precarious path by -- -- SHRIMPY, a short, pot-bellied fox who carries a metal pole that looks like a weapon. Zero self-esteem.

-- and MEATHEAD, a fox with an oversized head, hanging, drooling tongue, a missing left arm, and a Forrest Gump IQ.

Emily spies a SCREW on the ground by Josh. She nudges him.

He scoops it up, stashes it away. They continue down a path and pass an open door. Emily catches a glimpse inside --

INT. CAVE - CHILD IMITATION CAMP - DAY

-- TWO LITTLE FOXES sit at a rock table in front of a place setting: plate, silverware, napkin and a glass.

Auntie Fox shows the foxes how to eat using silverware. The Little Foxes try, but fail miserably, to imitate her.

Auntie Fox exhales. Sensing something, she looks back --

INT. CAVE - PATHWAY - DAY

-- but Emily has already rejoined the line of human kids. Auntie Fox, emerging in the doorway, has not seen Emily.

INT. CAVE - MINING AREA - DAY

The children dig with pickaxes and shovels throughout the rocky, pulsating blue cave walls. Guard Foxes stand post.

Emily strikes a vein. **Blue goo splutters out.** Shrimpy pushes over a wheeled tub, positions it to catch the goo.

SHRIMPY

Good job, kid. We'll put a few extra snails in your slop tonight.

EMILY

(sarcastically)  
Thanks, Shrimpy.

She stares at him a little too long. He buckles, abruptly self-conscious, and wheels the tub away.

Seeing an opening, an exhausted Emily sidles over to a fatigued Corinne and Makiko. Corinne's makeup and hair are in tatters. Makiko absently holds her hands up in front of her, as if thumbing a smartphone.

MAKIKO

Em, sorry they got you too.

Emily pulls them from the foxes' eye line. In whispers:

EMILY

How long have you been here?

MAKIKO

A few days, but we met one kid that's been here two months.

EMILY

Two months?! What do we know?

MAKIKO

They make us dig and dig for goo.

CORINNE

Manual labor! Me?! Working up a sweat, having to lift a finger?

Maniacal, she grabs Emily's shirt --

CORINNE

I've pleaded with them for the bare essentials -- mascara and eyeliner!

Makiko stares at her empty hands in despair.

MAKIKO

FOMO. I haven't checked my texts in days. Days!

Emily shakes them out of their respective stupors.

EMILY

FOCUS!

(they snap out of it)

What else do we know?

MAKIKO

Well... they're sending their own kids away.

Off Emily's look of confusion:

CORINNE

That's what the goo is for. It makes them... look like us.

EMILY

Yeah, I got that part. But why would they want to look human?

MAKIKO

It's the *kitsune*. They're coming for us all.

Before Emily can inquire further, Hunchback saunters over.

HUNCHBACK

Worthless, rotten human scum.

EMILY

Hey, you don't have to be abusive.  
We're here doing your dirty work,  
and you treat us like poop?

HUNCHBACK

(taken aback)  
Well, I, um...

EMILY

A little respect? What did we ever  
do to you? Our parents --

CLARENCE (O.S.)

-- Will never suspect a thing.

Clarence, emerging like a wraith from the shadows, confidently walks right up to a defiant Emily. He wears a steampunk, stiff-crowned hat adorned with moving gears, monocle and opera cape.

He pulls a bottle of "PURIFIED BLUE GOO CAPSULES" from his vest, pops a capsule.

CLARENCE

Behold -- the gift of goo mimicry.  
(in Emily's voice)  
Foxes rule and Emily drools! Not  
literally, of course. You don't  
actually have drool running out the  
sides of your mouth, obviously. I  
mean that by way of a put-down.

Emily white-knuckles her pickaxe and lunges. Clarence dodges, grabs her, and **dangles her over the abyss.**

GULP. Her pickaxe falls away into the darkness.

CLARENCE

(normal voice)  
Tell us about Emily, Hunchie.

Hunchback pulls a list from his pocket and reads.

HUNCHBACK

"Smart mouth. Torments her brother.  
Rarely does her homework. Blows her  
allowance at the arcade and has a  
secret crush on Wally --"

EMILY

That's ENOUGH!

Emily looks around, checking that Wally is not here. Whew.

JOSH

They got your number, Emmy.

EMILY

Oh, shut up. Twerp.

CLARENCE

Fox Emily, on the other hand, is a perfect angel. The only thing your parents will be sending is a *thank you note*.

Emily flinches. That hurt.

CLARENCE

This is a well-tuned operation. Planned as only a company of sly foxes could plan... an operation this sly... that we've planned. Nothing you can do will stop us. Face it, you've been **outfoxed**.  
 (to Hunchback)  
 Put her in the cage for a full day. Oh, and get even heavier pickaxes for her lazy friends.  
 (smiles)  
 Back to work, the lot of you!

MONTAGE

- Emily, emotionally gutted, sits in "The Cage" -- a bird cage barely large enough to house her body. It hangs fully over the abyss. It's a catbird seat, allowing her to see --
  - The children -- particularly Josh, Corrine, and Makiko -- working extra hard with extra-heavy pickaxes and shovels.
  - Mine carts filled with dirt and rocks roll past.
  - Guard Foxes stand post.
  - Hugging her knees in the cage, Emily watches as those closest to her serve her punishment. Josh, Corrine, and Makiko (all exhausted) throw her dirty looks. Mental torture.
  - Fog rolls in/out of mining doors as they open/close.
  - From a shadowy corner, two giant blue eyes shine: Enter GOGGLES. A cat-sized glowworm who wears Coke-bottle eyeglasses with an antenna over each lens.
- He peeks out from behind a rock enclave and spies Emily.

END MONTAGE

INT. EMILY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Jules, in shirtsleeves and tie, fiddles with a 3D blueprint for a Cochrane Engineering hydroelectric dam project.

Verna knits with a needle festooned with gauges that acts like a sewing machine -- it does most of the work.

In the BG, Fox Josh chases Fox Emily, having fun on all fours, back and forth across the room.

Jules and Verna share a contented look and a nod.

JULES

You ever get the feeling  
something's wrong?

VERNA

Wrong?

JULES

Yeah. You know... that this is, um,  
just a little too good to be true?  
That these can't possibly be our  
kids?

They look at each other, concerned. Then:

VERNA AND JULES

Naaaaah.

They happily go back to their activities.

EXT. CHISWICK - LOADING DOCK - NIGHT

Beep! Beep! Beep! A truck backs in, directed by none other than Sheriff Derringer. It WHACKS into the loading dock.

SHERIFF DERRINGER

And... good!

The truck stops. A LOADING CREW piles out, commences unloading. CORPORATE SPOKESPERSON sidles up to Sheriff. He wears a sleek, shiny suit and sunglasses.

SHERIFF DERRINGER

You realize it's ten P.M., right?

CORPORATE SPOKESPERSON

This better go off without a hitch.  
No more hiccups from the council.  
That's an awful lot of coin.

Loading Crew opens the lift gate, revealing: A GIANT COIN, as tall as the truck, strapped upright.

SHERIFF DERRINGER

Don't you worry. Soon the Goo-ulator will be spewing so much toxic blue glop that your wildest greedy dreams couldn't contain it.

CORPORATE SPOKESPERSON

We were supposed to launch in three weeks, but now with the stalling and legal challenges --

SHERIFF DERRINGER

How does Friday night sound?

Corporate Spokesperson allows himself an impressed smile.

CORPORATE SPOKESPERSON

Make that happen, you'll get...

SHERIFF DERRINGER

An even bigger coin?

Corporate Spokesperson shakes Derringer's hand.

WATCHING FROM A NEARBY CAR

Deputy Lanagan. Puzzled by what he sees, but clearly not happy about it.

INT. CAVE - ABYSS - DAY

Hunchback cranks a winch, pulling The Cage from the gaping chasm to the pathway. He lets Emily out. Dried rivulets from tears on her grimy face.

INT. CAVE - EMILY & JOSH'S CELL - DAY

Door opens, Emily enters. Josh sleeps in the corner. A fresh tear on her cheek, Emily is about to lose it, when --

-- she sees Josh, looking so small and vulnerable, shivering under a threadbare blanket. She forces composure. Josh stirs awake. He watches Emily wipe away tears, pretends not to see.

EMILY

Hey...

JOSH

Hey...

She sees the blisters on his hands.

EMILY

Josh, I'm so, so sorr --

JOSH

It's fine. You were doing what you  
always do: being strong.

She smiles, slightly taken aback.

EMILY

Gotta focus on getting outta here.

JOSH

Emily --

EMILY

We gotta try. We can't stay in this  
awful place forever.

JOSH

That's the thinking that landed you  
in a cage!

EMILY

The lesson from that isn't to stop.  
The lesson is to try harder.  
(he's hesitant)  
Don't you want to go home? No  
reward without risk.

Just then, Tinny peeks into the cell. Josh smiles at it.

EMILY

Hey!

Frightened, Tinny withdraws.

EMILY

Wait!

Hunchback's nose pokes through the barred door window.

HUNCHBACK

Quiet, mouthy ones! Um. Was that  
better?



EMILY

Eh.

She motions "a little." Hunchback allows himself a smile, continues on. Emily stares at Tinny, her brain churning.

INT. SHERIFF DERRINGER'S HOUSE - DAY

Sheriff puts on his tie in a mirror while an automatic shaving gadget goes to town on his foamed-up face.

SHERIFF DERRINGER

Ow! Ooh! Ow!

As the gadget finishes, having done a comically spotty job, Sheriff notices his EASEL. On it: a painting in progress of a man do-si-do'ing with a rooster at a square dance.

It's terribly amateurish. But Sheriff smiles and then is far away. Square dance MUSIC fades up...

A ROOSTER CROWS O.S., startles the Sheriff! He sees a **ghostly 6-foot rooster** leaning against his giant coin.

SHERIFF DERRINGER

Oh! It's -- it's you!

Frederic stares at him.

SHERIFF DERRINGER

No, no, I... Well, it's just...  
I... I miss you, and...

Frederic's eyes narrow, boring into Derringer.

SHERIFF DERRINGER

I... I'm doing it for you!

Frederic stares down Derringer.

Unnerved, Sheriff grabs his gun belt and hat, and heads for the door. He turns back to say one more thing, but...  
Frederic is gone.

SHERIFF DERRINGER

Swallows hard, catches his breath.

SHERIFF DERRINGER

This is absolutely normal.

And with that, he exits.

INT. CAVE - MINE PATHWAY - DAY

Foxes escort Emily and the other kids down a mine path. Red lights flash. They halt as a train of mining carts RUMBLES across their path. As she waits, Emily glances to her right.

CHILD IMITATION CAMP

Shoe-wearing young FOXES practice walking like humans. They stumble about. Auntie Fox supervises. She notices Emily, waves... then double-takes. Unsure, Emily waves, enters.

AUNTIE FOX

*Emily?*

EMILY

You -- you know me?

Before Auntie Fox can follow-up, Clarence moves in.

CLARENCE

Boo!

Startled, Emily jumps back, "falls" into the human kitchen table. She resets the felled silverware and flatware.

Today Clarence is rocking a Huggy Bear-style pimptastic threads and permed-out Afro.

CLARENCE

(to Auntie Fox)

Enough talking to the brats.

(to Emily)

Move along with your group.

EMILY

Yes, *sir*. My apologies, *sir*.

As Emily rejoins the line of kids, she stuffs a spoon -- which she clearly just stole off the table -- farther into her pocket. Burying a grin, she scurries off.

Furious, Auntie Fox shoves Clarence against the fridge. Magnets get stuck in his big-ass 'fro.

AUNTIE FOX

You promised me you'd leave her and her brother alone... We had a deal!

Annoyed, pulling an Area 51 UFO magnet from his hair --

CLARENCE

Yeah, well, *stircumsances* change.  
Our survival is at stake, or did  
you forget *why you're here*?

He hands her the magnet -- it reads:

"I AM ONLY A VISITOR" -- with a smiling alien on it.

Clarence exits. Auntie Fox considers the magnet and sighs.

INT. EMILY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Fox Emily stares at herself in the mirror, her gaze  
eventually finding her feet.

She wears heeled shoes that are way too big. It looks like  
she raided Verna's closet. She practices walking in them --  
the same way the little foxes in the child imitation camp do.

She stumbles, but keeps her balance. Fox Josh looks in.

FOX JOSH

Some sort of... torture device?

FOX EMILY

"Shoes," apparently.

FOX JOSH

Lunacy. I don't understand the  
whole shoe thing. Any of it.

Fox Josh stares at Fox Emily.

FOX JOSH

Errr... I think you forgot to take  
your goo pill today.

A foxtail grows over the top of her pants.

FOX EMILY

I want to go home.

Ignoring her, Fox Josh races to her desk, digs out a purified  
blue goo pill. She shakes her head 'no.'

FOX JOSH

(he extends the pill)  
Take it. Now. And think human.  
(his eyes narrow)  
We can't disappoint Dad, can we?

She nods and reluctantly swallows the pill. The tail recedes and, within seconds, she is 100% human again. Fox Emily kicks off the shoes in frustration. He eyes her with sympathy.

FOX JOSH  
 (answering her question)  
 We have to stay until they do the  
 thing with the thing. We're safe --

OUTSIDE THE DOOR

Jules walks past at that moment.

FOX JOSH (O.S.)  
 -- here hiding right under the  
 humans' insensitive noses.

He scratches his chin, shakes it off, continues away.

INT. CAVE - EMILY & JOSH'S CELL - NIGHT

A Guard Fox pushes Emily and Josh inside and slams the door.

Josh, tired after a long day's work, curls up on his cot.

Emily is just as spent, but instead of resting, she peeks out through the slats to make sure the foxes are gone.

Then she triumphantly pulls...

The wooden spoon out of her pocket and shows it to Josh.

Josh stares at her incredulously. Emily rolls her eyes and starts digging as a doubtful Josh watches her.

JOSH  
 Wake me in two hundred years when  
 you dig us outta here --

-- FOOM! A mass of rock and debris gives way, revealing a narrow tunnel hewn into the very rock.

JOSH  
 Uh... whoa?

EMILY  
 Ha! Maybe it's a way out!

She clambers in --

JOSH  
 Wait! Where are you --

EMILY

Keep a lookout.

She disappears. Josh cranes his neck into the hole:

JOSH

"Keep a lookout"??? How am I supposed to -- you see this massive hole in the... Emily, no! Emily!

INT. WORM HOLE - NIGHT

Emily snakes through the channel, illuminated by glowing slime. It's glowworm residue, and it gets all over her.

EMILY

Ptui! Eesh! Yuck!

Finally, the worm hole opens into...

INT. GLOWWORM CAVERN - NIGHT

A misty haze filled with sparkling lights coming from something hanging above the cavern, just out of sight.

Emily slides into the cavern head first. The glow-in-the-dark slime sends her slipping across the cavern floor.

EMILY

Yahh!

She grabs hold of a stalagmite and jerks to a slippery stop.

EMILY

Whoa. That was intense.

She stands, brushes dirt and glowing embers from her clothes and hands. She pockets the wooden spoon.

WIDE ON CAVERN

Emily gazes up in awe. A majestic multi-colored crystal cathedral endlessly surrounds her. But these colors aren't coming from the rocks, they're coming from --

-- GLOWWORMS hanging from the ceiling. Thousands of them. Most are kid-sized or smaller with translucent bodies that pulsate with alternating colors: blue, green, yellow.

The worms form icicle chains that, when linked together, resemble teardrops suspended in midair. They give off a slight TINK-TINK sound like chimes in a breeze.

FIREFLIES swarm Emily in a welcoming manner, land on bending willow-type trees. Tiny white petals float to the floor.

EMILY

Wow! It's beauuuuutiful!

INT. CAVE - EMILY & JOSH'S CELL - NIGHT

Josh hears CLITTER CLATTER. He glances at the cell door and... TINNY peeks inside. Its top spins around.

JOSH

Hello to you, too.

Tinny responds with more clanks and clatter.

JOSH

Of course I understand you.  
Hexadecimal code.

Tinny's top spins, excited.

JOSH

No, she didn't escape.

He stares into the hole where Emily disappeared, worried.

INT. GLOWWORM CAVERN - NIGHT

Goggles slithers over to Emily, stands upright when he speaks to her. He's a bit of a lovable space cadet.

GOGGLES

Hey, kiddo, you followin' me?

EMILY

Is this the way out?

Goggles glares at her over his eyeglasses.

GOGGLES

No. That's, like, totally deeper or something.

(he bows)

Goggles. Chief of the glowworms.  
Well... not really a chief. We're kind of an autonomous collective.

(whispers)

I'm the chief, though. Shhhhh.

He points up to the ceiling where other Glowworms hang.

EMILY

This place is amazing. You live here? With the foxes?

GOGGLES

Well, we, uh... I mean, we share. It's cool. I mean, the humans took over the foxes' home. So the foxes kinda like moved in, yeah.

EMILY

This cave's your home?

Goggles nods.

GOGGLES

Until...

He hangs his head, and sags in defeat.

GOGGLES

Well, there are, like, rumblings, you know? Yeah, the humans have some big machine or something. They want even more goo, so...

EMILY

About that. What's with this goo?

GOGGLES

Oh, it's like a by-product. We kinda leave it behind as we go. Kind of like poop, yeah. But, like, then the humans figured out that they can use it instead of steam to power things or something.

EMILY

The foxes -- they dunk us in it. Use it to impersonate us!

GOGGLES

Ah, yeah, yeah, that's one of the weird side effects. I don't think the humans have figured that out. Doesn't do anything unless you purify it, but then it has some... interesting properties, heh heh. Like, you can totally look like whatever else is in the goo with you. Lasts about a day... give or take a day.

Emily shakes her head -- too much info to process.

EMILY

What's the way outta here? I can dig.

She holds up the spoon. Goggles chortles.

GOGGLES

"A" for effort, but do you have any idea how far underground we are?

Emily's hopeful grin fades.

GOGGLES

Me neither, actually. No, but for reals, forget the whole "escaping" thing. In all the time Clarence has been kidnapping, um, kids, pretty sure not a one has escaped. He's, like, I dunno, like ruthless or something? Yeah, we steer clear. Bro needs his space, feel me? Glowworm motto -- don't get involved, you know? So hey, nice talk, but now you better get back. Scoot, scoot, scoot.

Goggles gently directs Emily back the way she came.

INT. CAVE - EMILY & JOSH'S CELL - NIGHT

Josh extends a stick -- onto which he's wire-tied a mirror glass shard -- through the cell's bars. Via this mirror, he sees Shrimpy and Meathead enter the cell corridor.

INT. GLOWWORM CAVERN - NIGHT

Emily resists as Goggles pushes her into the hole.

EMILY

Wait! Come on, there must be a way to escape.

JOSH (O.S.)

Emily! Hurry! Foxes!

INT. CAVE - EMILY & JOSH'S CELL - NIGHT

Hunchback enters the cell corridor with Shrimpy, who carries a clipboard.



HUNCHBACK

Head count, you rotten delinquents.  
Stand for head count.

The kids in other cells get up. Josh, meanwhile, positions his threadbare blanket and himself into an awkward position to cover the hole, and feigns sleep. He looks ridiculous.

JOSH

(urgent whisper)  
Emily, hurry...!

INT. WORM HOLE - NIGHT

Emily paws through the worm hole. Loose dirt falls. She wipes it from her eyes, keeps crawling as fast as she can.

EMILY

Agh! Ohh! Blah!

INT. CAVE - EMILY & JOSH'S CELL - NIGHT

In a cavalcade of dust and debris, Emily falls into the cell and flops onto her butt in a sitting position.

Josh pushes dirt into the hole a millisecond before --

-- Hunchback appears in front of their cage, shining his torch. Emily looks like she just tunneled out of a cave-in.

EMILY

What? You're telling me you don't eat dirt? Not like you feed us enough around here. Mmm-mm good.  
*Diiirt.*

Hunchback winces in disgust.

HUNCHBACK

Filthy creatures. Tomorrow, you clean up before sleepy time. You hear me, troublemaker?

EMILY

(low)  
Yeah, and you need to take a bath too, you mean old stinky fox.

Hunchback moves off, self-consciously sniffing his pits.

A moment later, Tinny pops up in the window. Its top spins and chatters when it sees Emily.

JOSH  
 (to Emily)  
 He said you're lucky to be alive.

EMILY  
 I remember him. The amazing spider-  
 can. Wait. It talks too?

JOSH  
 In hex code.  
 (matter of fact)  
 Learned it when I was three.

Emily reaches through the bars and gently picks up Tinny. He chatters at her a mile a minute while Josh translates.

JOSH  
 (nods)  
 When his family was recycled, the  
 compactor shorted out. Was hit with  
 an electric charge and lost his  
 ability to talk, but here he is.

EMILY  
 That's completely nuts.

JOSH  
 No more than our current situation.

Emily nods, good point. Tinny whines, hangs his head low.

JOSH  
 He misses his mommy and daddy...  
 (to Tinny)  
 You've been alone a long time?

Tinny nods. Emily sympathizes a moment, then she realizes...

EMILY  
 Hey, wait a minute...

QUICK FLASH

Emily watches Tinny disappear into the storm drain on Chiswick Town Road.

BACK TO SCENE

EMILY  
 The drain. Tinny, did you come in  
 through the town storm drain?

Tinny thinks for a blip, then nods happily.

EMILY

Yes! Okay. So how do we get to the storm drain?

Tinny chatters like mad. Josh listens, gasps.

JOSH

(decoding)

There's a way out!

Tinny's next few chitters become charades before getting lost in translation.

JOSH

I dunno, it sounds like dumplings, dunderheads... dingleberries... or maybe dumb... dumb waiters?

EMILY

-- A dumbwaiter...? Of course! They're like these mini elevators. The kitchen -- they have to bring food from somewhere.

She huddles with Tinny and Josh.

EMILY

Here's what we're going to do...

INT. MAIN CAVE - EATING AREA - DAY

The children enter, tired and defeated after another day of hard work -- except for Emily. She bounces in like a beach ball, full of energy. She glances towards the swinging door leading into the kitchen -- a wicked smirk crosses her face.

Makiko and Corinne glare at her, suspicious and nervous. They slide into seats across the table from Emily and Josh.

MAKIKO

(frightened)

Whatever you're up to, forget it.

EMILY

Makiko, we gotta try something.

MAKIKO

It's the *kitsune*.

Emily shakes her head. Doesn't get it.

MAKIKO

In my culture, there are legends of foxes impersonating people going back thousands of years. To teach us a lesson about humility and stuff. They're tricksters. They use magic.

EMILY

Nothing magical about these stinky, mangy old rodents.

CORINNE

We want out of here, absolutely, but you've seen what happens.

EMILY

Look, you guys, I get it. But I can't just accept this. Sometimes you just gotta fight back while you can. Don't you want to go home?

Emily grabs their shoulders. The girls begin to come around.

CORINNE

I could take a shower.

MAKIKO

And I could take a selfie.

Emily extends a fist. Beat. Then, Makiko and Corinne bump it.

A MINUTE LATER

Emily, Josh and the girls are all in position. Emily, on the far side of the room by the kitchen entrance, signals to Corinne, who doubles over in a coughing fit --

MAKIKO

Come quick! She's choking!

Guard Foxes -- including Shrimpy -- rush over, incompetently attempt to give Corinne the Heimlich maneuver -- which basically involves putting their feet into her back and jumping up and down.

EMILY

(whispers to Josh)  
Operation Dumbwaiter is a go.

Josh bends his fork, hooks it onto Shrimpy's vest. It snags. The vest tears from the fox's body, sending metal parts scattering across the floor. All eyes are on him.

Multiple distractions at the same time -- everything's all higgledy-piggledy.

Now here comes Hunchback waving his arms:

HUNCHBACK  
 Seriously, what the fox?

As Josh scoops up the metal parts and tucks them in his pockets --

Emily darts for the kitchen door. But a fox blocks her path. She doubles back, zig-zagging out the main door into --

INT. CAVE - PATHWAYS - DAY

Emily scampers along the deserted, dark rock path. The fog clears and the path turns to solid dirt. She pauses, out of breath. In the distance she can hear the Guard Foxes:

SHRIMPY (O.S.)  
 Called me "Shrimpy." I'll show her.  
 I am not made of shrimp!

Emily soldiers on. Wood structures support pathways and staircases. She glances over her shoulder, realizes she's leaving footprints. She stops, takes a breath and smiles.

EMILY  
 Good, follow me, you rotten foxes!

She runs around another bend and through a mining path, the Guard Foxes hot on her proverbial tail.

She ducks behind a mining cart, shaking with fear. She breathes heavily. Covers her mouth as the Guard Foxes pass.

After they're gone, she darts into --

ANOTHER MINING TUNNEL

-- where she trips on a cart wheel and tumbles. She regains her footing, rolls the cart back in place and keeps going.

INT. VIEWING CAVERN - DAY

Emily races in, pauses, backpedals. A sign at the top of the staircase gets her attention. It reads: 'Emily & Josh.'

EMILY  
 What the -- ?

There's a light at the top of the staircase.

It's some kind of window, and through it we see --

INT. EMILY'S HOUSE - FOYER - DAY

-- Verna places a shawl around her shoulders. She checks it in a mirror... a two-way mirror with Emily on the other side.

EMILY

I'm home! Mom!

But Verna doesn't hear her.

EMILY

I'm back. Mom! I'm back... the foxes... they kidnapped...

She slumps under the window, exhausted but relieved.

EMILY

They made me dig in a mine.

She rubs her sore right arm.

VERNA

Emily, let's go.

Emily peers through the two-way mirror. Verna appears to be speaking to someone who is upstairs.

EMILY

Mom, I'm right here!

Verna adjusts her shawl.

FOX EMILY (O.S.)

Coming, Mom.

Fox Emily struts down the stairs.

VERNA

I love that you've been ready for school on time lately!

EMILY

Mom...!

VERNA

(to Fox Emily)

I don't know who you are, but what have you done with my daughter?

EMILY

It's not me, it's a fox! How can  
you not see -- ?

Fox Emily walks to the front door.

FOX EMILY

Have a good day, Mom.

VERNA

You too, Emily. I love you.

Emily steps back. Only then does she see it --

A MASSIVE CORRIDOR OF MIRRORS

-- each bearing the names of different children.

EMILY

(horrified)

Makiko was right.

Shrimpy throws a bag down over her head. Darkness.

INT. CAVE - MACHINE ROOM - DAY

Clarence -- in flashy sequined threads; his new disco  
steampunk look -- supervises as another young fox is  
transformed into the spitting image of a boy, DEVON (13).

Guard Foxes lead them both away.

Shrimpy enters with Emily, removes the bag from her head. Now  
it's just Emily, Clarence, and Shrimpy in the room.

CLARENCE

This one again?

EMILY

(sarcastic)

Nice outfit.

CLARENCE

What? It's foxy!

Emily groans, face-palms.

CLARENCE

I'll have you know, I read it in a  
book. My mind is calculating, like  
a, uh... a... a calculator. See,  
you have to dress the part. That's

(MORE)

CLARENCE (CONT'D)  
 what humans do. So to dominate the  
 dominators, I have to lead by --

-- Emily doesn't have time for his ramblings, interrupts --

EMILY  
 So you spy on us. On top of  
 everything else, you're stalkers?

CLARENCE  
 You have no idea what you're...  
 it's legend stuff, whooo! Way too  
 complicated for your human mind.

EMILY  
 Kitsune -- yeah, yeah, yeah.

CLARENCE  
 (surprised)  
 How did you -- never mind. Okay,  
 fine. Since you know... back in the  
 day, we had magic. We were the  
 tricksters. And we used our power  
 to bring down the vain and --

EMILY  
 I'm so interested. Skip to the part  
 about us going home.

CLARENCE  
 Oh, Emily. I couldn't do that to  
 your parents. They're so happy now.

Emily's scowl fades to concern.

CLARENCE  
 See, kiddo, they finally have the  
 daughter they've always wanted.  
 Instead of a bratty slacker who  
 compensates for feelings of  
 inadequacy with her sharp tongue.

EMILY

Cut to the quick.

Emotions exploding, with a roar, **Emily flings herself against  
 Clarence** -- WHACK! He stumbles back and falls head first into  
 the tub.

The hose automatically squirts him with blue goo.



Clarence tries to clamber out, but slips. The blue goo is both slippery and sticky, making coordinated movements difficult.

Shrimpy races over, but he too skitters on spilled goo, and face-plants right into the machinery, knocking himself out.

Emily's eyes widen. Idea! She cranks the machine to MAXIMUM SUCTION, jams her spoon in it, breaking it off.

The hose clamps onto Clarence's belly and holds him in place while sucking the blue goo off of him.

Emily directs the hose into a nearby tub and fills it with blue goo -- then she --

**EMILY**

**Cannonball!**

Cannonballs right into the goo. SPLAT!

CLARENCE

I'm gonna gnaw your bones! You're  
breakfast, lunch and -- um... uh...  
uh..... dinner, for sure!

Emily jumps out of the tub and sucks the goo off of herself.

She now appears exactly like Clarence.

Clarence struggles to remove the hose, but the harder he tries, the more it holds him in place. It's stuck.

EMILY/CLARENCE

Later, sucker!

She charges out of the machine room.

INT. CAVE - EATING AREA - DAY

FOX TROOPS, six dozen of them, chow down. Emily/Clarence saunters in. Everyone snaps to military attention.

EMILY/CLARENCE

At ease.

Everyone relaxes. A devilish look on Emily/Clarence's face.

EMILY/CLARENCE

Atten-shun!

The Foxes spring up again. Emily/Clarence chortles.

EMILY/CLARENCE

At ease.

Wary Foxes begin to sit, nervous now --

EMILY/CLARENCE

Atten..... wait for it!

All the Foxes freeze in halfway-upright positions.

EMILY/CLARENCE

..... shun!

They all bolt upright. And grumble. Emily/Clarence guffaws.

EMILY/CLARENCE

Atten-shun! At ease! Atten-shun! At ease! Atten-shun! At ease!

Surly Fox Troops yo-yo up and down. Emily/Clarence howls with delight.

EMILY/CLARENCE

Uh, sorry. Sorry! I must be letting power go to my head. I'm a pretty cruddy leader, you gotta admit. Question authority, foxes! Even, and especially, mine! In fact, from now on, I want you to address me as "Doodyhead." Is that CLEAR?

FOX TROOPS

Yessir, Doodyhead, sir!

Emily/Clarence skips daintily towards the kitchen, leaving a plethora of baffled Fox Troops in her wake.

The real Clarence, breathless, bursts into the room. Part of the hose hangs off his belly. It's been torn to shreds.

CLARENCE

Get her!

Guard Foxes appear confused. Who is the real Clarence?

CLARENCE

NOW!

FOX TROOPS

Yessir, Doodyhead, sir!

They fall all over each other in pursuit --

INT. KITCHEN AREA - DAY

Emily/Clarence races past FOX COOKS, hunting for the dumbwaiter. Auntie Fox enters from the opposite side of the kitchen. Emily/Clarence halts in front of Auntie Fox. They stare at each other. Emily/Clarence shrinks back a bit.

AUNTIE FOX

Who are you?

EMILY/CLARENCE

Uh... I am the big cheese around here. The alpha fox in char --

AUNTIE FOX

Tell me your name or I will summon the guards at once.

Busted. Auntie Fox holds Emily/Clarence's gaze firmly.

EMILY/CLARENCE

(sighs, eying the floor)  
Emily Sterling.

A commotion outside the kitchen.

CLARENCE (O.S.)

Find her!

Auntie Fox grabs Emily/Clarence by the arm.

EMILY/CLARENCE

No!

Auntie Fox opens a cupboard and shoves her inside.

AUNTIE FOX

Keep still.

Auntie Fox shuts the door. Darkness. Emily hears feet shuffling and running in different directions.

CLARENCE (O.S.)

Which way'd she go?

AUNTIE FOX (O.S.)

She went that way.

Emily peeks through a slit in the cupboard.

CLARENCE

(to Fox Troops)  
Ya hair-brained numbskulls! Go, go, get her! She can't outfox us!

FOX TROOPS  
Yessir, Doodyhead, sir!

CLARENCE  
Stop saying that!!!

Clarence and the Fox Troops storm back the way they came.

Auntie Fox opens the cupboard. Emily climbs out.

AUNTIE FOX  
Change of plans, sweetie.  
(off Emily's look)  
You're escaping to get help to  
rescue your brother, right?

Caught, Emily/Clarence nods.

AUNTIE FOX  
Now you're going to help me help  
all of us.

EMILY/CLARENCE  
And risk something happening and  
not coming back to save Josh? No.

AUNTIE FOX  
No?! We're doomed... every fox and  
human, including your brother and  
your parents, could very well die  
tomorrow night unless you help me.

This gets Emily/Clarence's attention.

AUNTIE FOX  
Is your dad still on the town  
council?

Emily nods.

AUNTIE FOX  
Tell your dad, and only your dad,  
to meet me at the watering hole in  
the woods tomorrow evening. He'll  
know the place.

EMILY  
But -- but how --

Fox Cooks peek in, concerned.

EMILY/CLARENCE  
Whaddya lookin' at?! Back to work!

Fox Cooks obey. Auntie Fox nods to Emily, pulls her into --

INT. STORAGE CLOSET - DAY

Auntie Fox takes a knee, dropping below the closet door's window. She stares eye to eye with Emily/Clarence.

AUNTIE FOX

No weapons. No Sheriff Derringer!  
Tell your dad to be there.

EMILY/CLARENCE

No.

AUNTIE FOX

No?!

EMILY/CLARENCE

You're a fox. How do I know it's  
not a sly trap to get my dad down  
here to work the mines?

Auntie Fox exhales.

EMILY/CLARENCE

I need assurances you know my dad.

Auntie Fox licks her lips, ala Jules. Emily's eyes flare.

AUNTIE FOX

You tell ol' Platypus Lips that I  
expect him to be there sunset  
tomorrow.

Emily does the math, starts to ask the obvious follow-up. But Auntie Fox shakes her head and hurries her along.

EMILY/CLARENCE

Be careful, Emily. You'll look like  
a fox until the goo wears off.

Auntie Fox points out the door window to the dumbwaiter.

EMILY/CLARENCE

Thank you. You're a good person.  
Not like a fox.

AUNTIE FOX

Watch the value judgments. They don't  
define who you're referring to, Emily  
-- they define who you are.

As Emily/Clarence ponders the incontrovertible truth of this, Auntie Fox gives her a big hug, cherishing this moment.

AUNTIE FOX

Now go. Like the wind!

Emily/Clarence sprints at breakneck pace to the dumbwaiter, pulls it open and hops inside. Auntie Fox closes it up and whistles innocently just as a suspicious Fox Cook looks in.

INT. UNDERGROUND CAVERN - LOADING DOCK - DAY

The dumbwaiter opens up. Emily/Clarence jumps out to see the fox loading dock in a vast endless cave.

Bats flock past, scaring the heck out of poor Emily/Clarence.

But after a few moments, it's all over.

Peace descends. Trickling water and mechanical clanking. Emily looks... there... an underground river!

AN ENORMOUS, 200-FOOT-TALL MECHANICAL RAMP

Raises and lowers empty containers into and out of the waterway -- like a flume ride at an amusement park.

Guard Foxes appear in the distance in hot pursuit.

Emily/Clarence gulps, jumps in a container. She white-knuckles it as her container rises up and out of the cavern --

EXT. WOODS - DAY

-- exploding out into a waterfall in a massive blast of mist.

WHOOSH! The river -- now above ground -- swiftly carries Emily/Clarence's container through Class 5 rapids.

She hits a rock and goes flying, splashing down alongside a 10-foot-high concrete pipe, half-buried in the ground and overgrown. Sign: "CHISWICK STORM DRAIN SYSTEM - CONDUIT 6."

Sopping wet, Emily/Clarence beelines into the pipe.

INT. EMILY & JOSH'S CELL - DAY

Josh has all the parts he swiped laid out before him. Tinny appears at the bars. He whistles.

JOSH

You did it! Get in here, quick.

Tinny clambers through, dragging a soldering iron with difficulty. He chirps.

EXT. CHISWICK TOWN ROAD - DAY

Emily/Clarence peers up into the town from the same storm drain the foxes were in earlier. She's trapped.

Despondent, she leans against the grate -- only to discover it gives way utterly. She climbs out into the street.

And realizes EVERYONE IS STARING AT HER.

NEIGHBORHOOD LADY

A fox!

EMILY/CLARENCE

Where?

NEWSBOY

Die, wretched beast!

Boink! He beans her with a newspaper. She falls to a knee, sees her face REFLECTED in puddle water...

EMILY/CLARENCE

Ow! Crud! I'm the fox!

Emily/Clarence runs through the panicked crowd.

NEWSBOY

Call the Sheriff!

EXT. CHISWICK STREET - DAY

A retro Citroën-style police vehicle is parked curbside with Sheriff behind the wheel.

INT. SHERIFF'S VEHICLE - DAY

Sheriff gulps down the last morsels from a sardine can. He tosses the can out the window. He waits on his car phone.

SHERIFF DERRINGER

(sings)

Soon, soon, the Goo-ulator will  
turn on. Soon, Soon, the foxes  
they'll be gone.

With an enormous belch, he checks his smile in the rearview mirror. He plucks a piece of mustard-yellow schmutz from an eyebrow, examines and then eats it.

FREDERIC

Appears in the back seat, startling Sheriff!

SHERIFF DERRINGER

Now -- now listen, you --

Abruptly, the RADIO crackles to life -- and Frederic is gone.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)

Sheriff Derringer, come in, over.

Sheriff answers the radio. It's a bulky, metal microphone with round volume controls and green/red blinking lights.

SHERIFF DERRINGER

Uh... yeah. Go for Sheriff, over.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)

Tony, we got us a fox alert off Chiswick Town Road. More than a dozen confirmed sightings, sir.

Sheriff bolts upright, flips on a dashboard monitor labelled "FOX ALERT." The screen begins beeping like crazy.

SHERIFF DERRINGER

On my way!

Sheriff hangs up the radio, watches the Fox Alert. It's like GPS: It zeroes in on a red blip that's shaped like a fox. The Fox Alert speaks in an electronic voice:

FOX ALERT (V.O.)

Estimated time to intercept: three minutes, fifteen seconds.

Sheriff straightens his fox fur hat and revs the engine.

SHERIFF DERRINGER

(mutters)

It's all for you. You'll see.

EXT. TOWN STREETS - DAY

Sirens BLARE as the Sheriff's car storms through the center of town, swerving in and out of traffic.



People scatter as Emily/Clarence runs past. Sheriff's car is in hot pursuit as she dashes between buildings.

Emily/Clarence spots a store sign: "FOXIE GOOEY GUMMIES."

INT. FOXIE GOOEY GUMMIES SHOP - DAY

A factory-style candy shop with a theme --

-- gummies shaped like foxes, in murky, dark colors.

The different shapes and colors of candies move slowly down a conveyor belt where a machine individually wraps each one.

SIX HUNTER WORKERS wearing fox hats similar to Sheriff's, only with Foxie Gooley Gummies logos.

ROTUND WORKER surreptitiously bites the head off a fox gummy, then replaces it just in time for it to get wrapped.

Emily/Clarence bursts in.

The workers stare gape-jawed at the sight of a real fox in the shop.

As one, they all whip out hunting rifles.

EMILY/CLARENCE

Gulp.

Emily/Clarence launches over the counter as -- BLAM! -- buckshot destroys the display case behind her. Candies fly.

EMILY/CLARENCE

You guys are insane!

HUNTER WORKER

(raving and drooling)

Fox! Get the fox!

The Hunter Workers give chase.

EMILY/CLARENCE

(hollers)

I'm not a fox -- I'm a kid... who looks like a fox... ohh!

-- KABOOM! Sheriff Derringer, standing in the doorway, fires and misses Emily/Clarence by an inch. Emily/Clarence hurries across the conveyor belt. Candies fly every which way.

She scoops up a few and eats them as she runs. A Foxie Gooley HUNTER CHEF points at her.

HUNTER CHEF  
Crazy, hungry fox is eating Foxie  
Goey Gummy Foxes!

Another blast. Emily/Clarence jumps, crashing into the candy-wrapping machine. It grabs hold of Emily/Clarence with a clawed arm and wraps her in a candy wrapper.

She quickly tears through the wrapper, keeps running.

Shoving workers aside, the Sheriff runs on the top of the metal conveyor belt, taking the lead in the chase.

Emily/Clarence hits the back door like a bolt of lightning --

EXT. CHISWICK TOWN ROAD - DAY

-- she scampers around a building, stops to catch her breath. Frustrated, she sees the same storm drain half a block away.

A SHOT rings out -- nearby trash can EXPLODES. Emily/Clarence dives behind a dumpster.

Footsteps close in. A second passes, but it's a lifetime.

Quiet descends. Emily/Clarence chances a look out --

SHERIFF DERRINGER

Leans against the dumpster, tying his shoe. Emily/Clarence jumps back into hiding with a muted gasp.

Lanagan joins up with the Sheriff, and they move on. Emily/Clarence hightails it in the opposite direction.

INT. EMILY & JOSH'S CELL - DAY

Josh solders together his device. It's a mechanized pole with a claw-hook. Tinny studies it with curiosity.

Josh presses the button. It makes an arcing, scooping motion. Wagging his eyebrows, he moves to the wall -- the same section Emily dug out, now patched up with dirt and rocks.

Josh places the device against the wall, and SWOOSH -- it bites out a big pile of dirt.

JOSH  
I'm coming for ya, sis.

Before he can continue digging, Meathead peers in the cell. He catches a reflection from the contraption Josh is holding.

The door swings open. Josh tries to hide the device, and the hole, with his body. Tinny dives under Josh's bedding. Meathead yanks the contraption from his hands.

JOSH  
(quickly)  
It's for you. A gift.

MEATHEAD  
Huh?

JOSH  
For your arm.

Meathead holds the contraption to his stump -- it actually could fit. Josh smiles and helps him put it on. It's not perfect, but it comes alive like a mechanical arm.

Meathead smiles. He removes a part from his vest, tosses it on the floor and uses the metallic arm to pick it up.

MEATHEAD  
I did it!

JOSH  
You sure did.

Another Guard Fox approaches. Meathead looks sheepish. He removes the arm, tucks it into his vest, then turns to go...

JOSH  
Wait. Do you think... I...

Meathead waits.

JOSH  
I want to go home.

Meathead, saddened, nods.

MEATHEAD  
Me, too.

A moment passes between them, before Meathead shuts the cell door. Tinny scrambles out, pats despondent Josh on the back.

JOSH  
I'm useless.

Tinny whirs and clicks at him.

JOSH

She's out there -- might be hurt or worse -- and I'm stuck here. Might never see her again.

Josh's voice cracks. Sniffles. Tinny rattles again.

JOSH

No. I wasn't all that nice to her. Like, ever.

Tinny snuggles up to him, clicks a few times.

JOSH

Really? You will?

Quick clatter from Tinny.

JOSH

Thank you. Thank you! Come back as soon as you find out anything!

With that, Tinny vanishes through the bars.

Then Josh realizes: the soldering iron is still there, sticking out from under the pillow. LIGHTBULB MOMENT.

JOSH

Wait, Tinny! One more thing...

INT. EMILY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Emily/Clarence bursts in.

EMILY/CLARENCE

I'm home!

She races into --

KITCHEN

-- stops dead. Jules stands at the stove stir-frying. Emily/Clarence just stands there and watches him. Tears brim in her eyes because she's so happy. Finally, Emily/Clarence runs up and hugs her father from behind.

EMILY/CLARENCE

Dad, it's me! I only look like a --

JULES

-- A fox!!!!

JULES BEANS FOX EMILY/CLARENCE WITH A WOK.

EMILY/CLARENCE

(dazed)

Unhh. Dad, Dad!

Jules is confused; he can hear Emily.

JULES

Emily! Don't come in here!

EMILY/CLARENCE

No, Dad! It's me -- Emily!

Jules hurls pots, silverware, a Crock-Pot, you name it, at Emily/Clarence. Verna, with Fox Emily in tow, races in --

FOX EMILY

(sotto, to self)

Dad??? Um--um--um...

VERNA

A fox!

JULES

I know! Get it out of the kitchen!

Verna picks up a rolling pin.

JULES

Call nine-one-one-one-one.

Verna dials an old, landline-style phone with a satellite dish attached. Cornered, Emily/Clarence has no choice but to jump out of the kitchen window.

EXT. EMILY'S HOUSE - DAY

Emily/Clarence presses against the siding.

EMILY/CLARENCE

Crud crud crud!

A sudden punch of sound: SIRENS, from every direction. In a panic, Emily/Clarence flees as Sheriff's car nears.

INT. EMILY'S HOUSE - DAY

Verna, Jules, Fox Emily and Fox Josh watch Emily/Clarence run down the street. Jules is clearly rattled.

JULES

A fox. In our home!

Fox Emily flashes eyes of panic at Fox Josh. Equally baffled, he shrugs. Whatever's going on, it ain't good.

EXT. CHISWICK - TOWN SQUARE - NIGHT

Sheriff and Deputy Lanagan coordinate a handful of HUNTERS, a dozen DEPUTIES, and scores of CONCERNED CITIZENS.

SHERIFF DERRINGER

Men, we need to find that fox and shoot it dead. Deader than dead. Extremely not-alive, pushing-up-daisies, gone-to-meet-his-maker, extinct-ex-fox dead. *Capisce?*

His Hunters nod eagerly -- except for one who looks befuddled. She slowly raises her hand -- but Deputy Lanagan AHEMS, and she quickly reels it back in.

SHERIFF DERRINGER

We'll defend our community and our freedom. Destroy all foxes.

Hooting and hollering from the Hunters.

SHERIFF DERRINGER

In light of these latest fox incursions, I feel I have no choice but to exercise my emergency powers. I'm ordering an override of the council's edict. We're firing up the Goo-ulator... tonight!

Everyone CHEERS!

DEPUTY LANAGAN

But, sir, the mandatory pre-launch safety testing... stress tests... structural --

SHERIFF DERRINGER

Your concern is noted, Deputy.

Deputy Lanagan squirms. This is not good. Looking on from the storm drain: a very worried Tinny.

EXT. EMILY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Emily/Clarence sneaks back home. Scared, peeking around corners, she slinks up to the dining room window, gazing at --

-- one big happy family (Verna, Jules, Fox Emily, Fox Josh) eating supper at the dinner table.

INT. EMILY'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

The table is laden with steaming pots.

VERNA

Your favorite: mashed potatoes with peas and carrots and gravy.

FOX JOSH

Thank you, Mom! Emily and I will do the dishes later.

Jules and Verna exchange a giddy look.

EXT. EMILY'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Tears stream down Emily/Clarence's face.

EMILY/CLARENCE

I hate them! I hate foxes! Why can't they just all go away?

She cries hysterically.

EMILY/CLARENCE

My parents prefer a mangy rodent over me. I don't deserve a home.

DEPUTY LANAGAN (O.S.)

Who said that?

Emily/Clarence freezes. She hides behind a garbage can.

DEPUTY LANAGAN (O.S.)

I know you're here somewhere.

Emily/Clarence shakes. Terrified.

The barrel of Lanagan's rifle comes into Emily/Clarence's line of sight. She shrinks, but she's got nowhere to go.

Lanagan's rifle grows larger. Lanagan's boots come to a stop. This is it. She closes her eyes tight --

EMILY/CLARENCE

Just go ahead. Get it over with.

Lanagan points his rifle at Emily/Clarence. No way he can miss. His finger curls around the trigger.

LANAGAN'S POV

The frightened animal cowers in front of him. Looks so pathetic with its patchy fur and pale skin...

His finger tightens on the trigger. But he can't.

DEPUTY LANAGAN

I'll let the Sheriff deal with you.

He grabs her by the scruff of the neck --

INT. CHISWICK JAIL - NIGHT

-- and deposits her in a cell and locks the door.

EMILY/CLARENCE

Wait! You don't understand...

Deputy Lanagan strides away.

EMILY/CLARENCE

(to herself)

... I'm not a fox.

She curls up on the bench in the cell, bemoaning her failure.

FADE TO BLACK:

An AUDIO BARRAGE of horrific noises: Snippets of Emily, then Josh -- CLANG! A door opens. The FOOTFALL of heavy boots.

SHERIFF DERRINGER (O.S.)

Foxy-fox-fox. I've got a gunny gun-gun and I'm gonna shooty shoot-shoot you!

FADE TO:

EXTREMELY CLOSE ON Emily's eyes. They FLASH OPEN. She'd fallen asleep. The FOOTFALLS become louder and louder as Sheriff comes closer and closer. Tears well.

SHERIFF DERRINGER (O.S.)

You vermin have been a boil on my buttocks for too long. Day of reckoning is upon you.



EMILY

I know it doesn't look that way,  
but I'm not a fox! I swear!

SHERIFF DERRINGER

Appears at the cell, brandishing his rifle, and sees:

-- Emily Sterling, in human form, on the cold cell floor.

SHERIFF DERRINGER

What in the...?  
(scratches his head)  
You're... not a fox.

Sheriff bursts out laughing. Lowers his weapon.

SHERIFF DERRINGER

Oh, Lanagan got me good, he did!  
(to Emily)  
Sorry, Miss Sterling. My Deputy was  
pullin' my leg. Said he had a fox  
in custody!

Emily looks at her hands: they're indeed human hands instead  
of fox paws. The blue goo has worn off!

EMILY

Fox. Right. Well, do I look like a  
fox? Y-You should go on and protect  
us from those evil foxes.

Sheriff Derringer unlocks the cell.

SHERIFF DERRINGER

Right you are. So sorry about this,  
ma'am. Oh, and, Miss Sterling --  
there's good guys and there's bad  
guys out there. Sometimes it's hard  
to tell who's who. Remember that.

Emily holds his look and nods.

EXT. EMILY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Emily rushes up. Glances at the trellis. Gets an idea. She  
climbs it. Teeters from fear. Finds her footing.

INT. EMILY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Fox Emily, her back facing the window, doesn't see Emily  
slink in. Fox Emily crouches in a corner, her head down.

Emily puts up her fists, ready for a fight.

EMILY

You're on my turf, and you're going down, fox!

Fox Emily doesn't turn around.

EMILY

Put 'em up, you smelly...

FOX EMILY

Put up what?

EMILY

Your hands, your fists... your paws! It's Emily vs. Evil Emily!

That's when Emily hears... a muffled CRY from Fox Emily.

EMILY

Hey. I didn't even hit you yet.

Emily lowers her fists. Fox Emily turns... teary-eyed.

FOX EMILY

I... I wanna go home.

Emily softens just a bit.

EMILY

You are home -- my home! It's what you wanted, right?

Fox Emily points to the bed.

FOX EMILY

It's too soft... and floofy.

EMILY

"Floofy"?

FOX EMILY

I can't sleep. I need my moss bed. The air is always the exact same temperature. How can you stand it? No fresh air? No open fields?

Emily puts her hands on her hips.

EMILY

Beats a musty, old fox cave.

FOX EMILY  
 (fondly remembering)  
 Fox dens are warm and cozy. They  
 don't smell like porcelain dolls...  
 (she grabs her shirt)  
 ...and fabric softener.

It hits Emily --

EMILY  
 You don't like it here.

Fox Emily shakes her head.

FOX EMILY  
 I wanna go home. I miss my dad.

EMILY  
 I'd happily show you the way to the  
 cave. And good riddance.

FOX EMILY  
 No, I want my old fox den. Where we  
 used to live before the hunters.

EMILY  
 Sorry?

FOX EMILY  
 Hundreds of them. Driving us from  
 our homes so they could rip up the  
 land with their metal contraptions.

EMILY  
 The... goo machines?

FOX EMILY  
 Our dens -- gone.

EXT. WOODS - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Hunters and Sheriff's Deputies, their rifles at the ready,  
 march ominously into the woods.

All under the watchful eyes of THREE Amalgamated Consolidated  
 Corp. FATCATS. The Fatcats wear fancy bronze watches and  
 monocles, which take up almost the whole face. Titans of  
 industry, they sit in a black tank (it resembles a luxury  
 stagecoach but with monster truck tires, gears, and antennae).

FOX EMILY (V.O.)  
 We once lived in cozy dens. Our  
 coats were full and shiny. But we  
 (MORE)

FOX EMILY (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
 were driven underground. So we shed  
 our coats. We had to live in  
 depressing caves. We thought we  
 were safe. Now they want to take  
 even those away from us.

Sheriff tips his hat to the Fatcats, who nod back. Loaded for  
 bear, he marches in...

BACK TO SCENE

EMILY  
 Who does?

FOX EMILY  
 Once that big new machine turns on,  
 it's curtains for us. It'll flood  
 us out. And when my dad found  
 out...

INT. WOODS - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Clarence, in a spy outfit (all black clothes), uses  
 binoculars to view the early construction of the Goo-ulator.

FOX EMILY  
 ... about the Goo-ulator, well, he  
 decided to stand and fight. He sent  
 all of us fox kids to safety, right  
 under the humans' noses.

INT. EMILY'S BEDROOM - DAY (BACK TO PRESENT)

Fox Emily, sullen:

FOX EMILY  
 They're gonna fight back, you see.  
 Try to stop it. And when they do,  
 then they're gonna come bring all  
 of us home.

Fox Emily bawls. Guiltily, Emily tosses her a tissue box.

EMILY  
 All you wanted was a home. That's  
 all I want too.

Emily digests the gravitas of this. Just then, she hears a  
*click click rattle*. Tinny clatters on the window sill.

EMILY

Tinny! How the heck --

TINNY

Hi, Emmy! The foxes are on their way. The hunters will turn on the Goo-ulator tonight. [click click]

EMILY

Wait. What? How did you...?

TINNY

Your brother! Worked some crazy tech magic. [click click]

EMILY

Hold up, why are you here? Where's Josh?

TINNY

Locked up back in his cell. [click]

Emily deflates --

EMILY

I promised I'd... I failed, yet again.

-- then spots a jar of fish food on her desk. And smiles widely.

EMILY

I need you to get messages to Clarence and Josh -- can you do that?!

TINNY

Well, I... [click] Seriously?

INT. EMILY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Jules and Verna cuddle by a fire. Two Emilys race in.

JULES

What in blue blazes...?

VERNA

Oh my...

JULES

Josh! Did you create a robot duplicate of your sister?! And if so, well done!

EMILY

What? No!

VERNA

What is going on?

Hearing Verna's raised voice, Fox Josh storms in and gasps.

FOX JOSH

(to Fox Emily)

What did you do?!

VERNA

WHAT IS GOING ON?!

LATER

Everyone is eerily quiet. Verna and Jules are shocked.

VERNA

... Foxes.

JULES

... Children.

EMILY

We don't have time to wait until  
you can wrap your head around this.  
There's a war coming, and we're the  
only ones who can stop it.

Verna bursts into tears.

VERNA

How could I not have seen? What  
kind of mother am I?

Jules puts an arm around her.

JULES

Don't blame yourself. I was here  
too. I didn't notice. I... I'm  
terrible. I'm shaking. I --

Two fingers in Emily's mouth produce an ear-splitting  
WHISTLE. She has everyone's attention.

EMILY

Mom, Dad. Chill! Sheesh.

Emily shakes her head, "the things I put up with."

EMILY

Dad, you need to get going. Auntie Fox is waiting.

JULES

About that. Why, umm, should I trust --

EMILY

She said to call you "ol' Platypus Lips."

Jules' jaw drops. He looks at his wife and then gazes at the framed photo of him and his sister on the mantel.

JULES

But -- but how?

He's up, grabbing his coat and a crank torch out of a drawer.

JULES

Watering hole. Watering hole.

He rushes towards the door.

VERNA

Honey, wait -- be careful!

JULES

If I'm not back in three hours...

Beat. He can't think of anything, so with a shrug, he blows a kiss to Verna, and bolts.

EMILY

Mom, I need you to call the town council together. Right now!

VERNA

I can do that.

EMILY

And, Mom? No Sheriff, okay?

VERNA

But... yes, got it.

She also scrams. Emily, Fox Emily, and Fox Josh are left.

EMILY

If you ever want to go home to your fox dens again, come with me.

EXT. CHISWICK - NIGHT

Lots of commotion for a sleepy town like Chiswick. The Sheriff and his army of Hunters -- all outfitted with yellow hunting vests and rifles -- march through the center of town.

SHERIFF DERRINGER  
To the Goo-ulator! To the Goo-ulator!

More Hunters join him as he goes.

SHERIFF DERRINGER  
Now, men, soon after we turn on the Goo-ulator, the foxes will be flushed out. It'll be like shooting fox in a barrel.

Emily, Fox Josh and Fox Emily watch this tableau from across the street. They exchange nods, race ahead of the Hunters.

INT. CLARENCE'S CAVE - NIGHT

Clarence, hair up in curlers and in a bathrobe, looks perturbed at the chattering little tin can before him.

CLARENCE  
Tonight??? But we won't be ready until tomorrow!

TINNY  
[click] 'Fraid so.

With a GRUNT of irritation, Clarence punches the red ALARM BUTTON on the wall communication box. WHOOP! Into speaker:

CLARENCE  
Alert! Alert! All fox troops, assemble right away in the, um... the room with the... ohhh...

TINNY  
Machine room?

CLARENCE  
Yes! That thing!

EXT. WOODS - WATERING HOLE - NIGHT

Jules, clutching his flashlight, stumbles through the woods.



JULES

Right? No, left. Maybe... Right.  
Definitely right. Or a left.

WHUNK! He runs face-first into a tree.

JULES

Ouch! That tree must be new.

He touches the swelling goose egg on his forehead. Ow!

JULES

Haven't been here since...

AUNTIE FOX (O.S.)

... we were kids.

JULES

Who said that?

He wildly swings his torch around in the darkness.

JULES

A... Aurora?

AUNTIE FOX (O.S.)

Yes. It's me. Hold the torch on  
yourself.

Jules does as he's told.

AUNTIE FOX (O.S.)

Still lookin' good, Platypus Lips.

Jules bursts into tears.

JULES

Aurora. It's really you.

AUNTIE FOX (O.S.)

Yeah, about that. So I'm gonna step  
out. Promise me you won't be too  
freaked?

Jules nods.

AUNTIE FOX

Emerges from a copse.

JULES

Swoons, passes out. He CRASHES DOWN, mouth full of leaves.

AUNTIE FOX

Ah, heck.

INT. TOWN HALL - COUNCIL CHAMBERS - NIGHT

Verna stands before a gathering, sleepy-eyed TOWN COUNCIL. They're dishevelled, in PJs and robes.

VERNA

Come in. Everybody. Hurry up. We don't have much time. What I have to tell you may sound incredible.

Everyone hangs on her every word.

VERNA

But it's all true... and it will rock your world...

INT. CAVE - MACHINE ROOM - NIGHT

Clarence, now in a General's uniform, surveys the army of 200 Foxes assembled in front of him.

CLARENCE

Foxes! We just got word *Sheriff Brutus McJudas himself* is about to fire up the Goo-ulator.

All of the Foxes -- including Hunchback -- mutter, scared and uncertain. Clarence brandishes a long, sharpened stick.

CLARENCE

If they turn on that machine, all this will be gone.

Shuddering and murmuring among the Foxes.

CLARENCE

We can't let that happen. Our survival is at stake. The only way we survive is to take the fight to the enemy. It's us or, um... them!

Foxes nod. Clarence points to the blue goo in the tubs.

CLARENCE

Ready your weapons. Tonight, we take back what's ours!

The Foxes cheer and applaud.

CLARENCE  
Or fail miserably!

Cheering dies out quickly. Hunchback shakes his head -- TMI.  
Clarence sighs.

MONTAGE

- WHIR! CHAR! VROOM! The goo tubs churn.
- Clarence watches over the proceedings as all of the Foxes huddle in the machine room.
- The Guard Foxes bring in one child at a time.
- Makiko gets slathered in blue goo; then it's suction time. One of the Foxes jumps into the goo and emerges as Makiko. Guard Foxes lead the real Makiko away.
- Next up, Corinne. Then, Devon. It's a well-oiled machine.
- The fox army turns themselves into Chiswick children.

EXT. CHISWICK - NIGHT

Emily, Fox Emily and Fox Josh race in and out of houses.

Each time they exit, they have a fox kid or two in tow.  
They're alerting all of the fox children.

EXT. WOODS - WATERING HOLE - NIGHT

Jules stares at Aurora/Auntie Fox.

AUNTIE FOX  
We had a deal. We didn't bother  
Chiswick -- the Sheriff stayed away  
from us. But he broke the deal.  
Years of peace down the drain.

JULES  
What? But you attacked us first!  
You -- you torched the bookshop!

AUNTIE FOX  
Does that really sound like  
something foxes would do? We're  
scared to death of fire. Tell me,  
who benefitted from that -- foxes?

Jules looks confused.

AUNTIE FOX

Or the goo company? Soon after  
that, Chiswick seized our woods;  
and then came the goo derricks.

JULES

(realizing)

The council signed off on that.  
The Sheriff called the foxes  
criminals... an inhuman menace!

Jules, shaking his head with regret.

AUNTIE FOX

So I went to the woods -- to see if  
I could help. I felt drawn to them,  
you know?

EXT. WOODS - FOX DEN - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Clarence places a single rose stem on the gravestone of his  
late wife Rose. He hears a rustling... it's Aurora -- as a  
human -- wielding a flashlight. He freaks, slips, and they  
tumble together down a hill, into a cave, hitting a wall.

AUNTIE FOX (V.O.)

"A final goodbye before our dens  
were destroyed forever." That's  
what Clarence later said he was  
doing that night. I startled him,  
and we fell together into a cave...

SMASH TO BLACK.

LATER

Clarence and Aurora, their bodies slopped in blue goo, come  
to. He looks like her. And she looks like him.

AUNTIE FOX (V.O.)

When we woke, we were covered in  
this... this glop. I had paws, and  
fur! And Clarence, well, he looked  
just like me -- the human me.

JULES (V.O.)

Whoa.

INT. CAVE - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Auntie Fox carries Clarence/Aurora into the caves. She is  
quickly surrounded by frightened, shivering foxes.

AUNTIE FOX (V.O.)

I took him home... to his new home,  
that is. I admit, I was terrified --  
a human surrounded by foxes, can  
you imagine?! But they greeted me  
like an old friend. They cared  
about me, and over time, I educated  
them. For the first time ever  
really, I had a purpose.

INT. IMPROVISED UNDERGROUND LAB - DAY (FLASHBACK)

With Auntie Fox looking over his shoulder in a supervisory  
role, Clarence, in a spiffy red lab coat and thick black  
goggles, boils the goo, and pours it into a beaker.

AUNTIE FOX (V.O.)

Clarence became my star pupil. I  
helped him purify the goo into the  
tablets. Bit of a knucklehead...  
hasn't quite grasped the concept of  
fashion sense... but he means well.  
Anyway, I kept taking goo pills...  
and I became Auntie Fox.

EXT. WOODS - WATERING HOLE - NIGHT

Auntie Fox stands before Jules. He stares at the ground for a  
long beat. Lifts his head. Coldly:

JULES

You picked foxes over your family.

AUNTIE FOX

Aw, Jules -- it wasn't like that. I  
wasn't smart like you. I never  
never fit in. They needed me --

JULES

I needed you.

A moment between them.

She opens her arms... and awkwardly, they hug.

AUNTIE FOX

If we can prevent the massacre  
that's about to happen, then you  
can tape together every single pair  
of shoes I have. Currently that's  
none, by the way. Come on, Lips!

EXT. CHISWICK - NIGHT

The Hunters march to the Goo-ulator at the edge of the woods.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Foxes hide in holes and behind trees while a division of what appears to be Chiswick children march forward.

EXT. CHISWICK SKY - NIGHT

Verna pilots a steampunk blimp. Propellers move it forward. Rooftop turrets spit steam. Town council seated behind her.

She holds a megaphone-looking contraption with a crank handle to her mouth. It amplifies everything she says over a P.A.:

VERNA

Chiswickians! Our kids are in the  
caves that are about to be flooded!  
We can't let them turn on that  
machine!

Down below, ADULTS race out of their homes.

EXT. CHISWICK TOWN ROAD - NIGHT

Emily spearheads a posse of dozens of fox children, racing to catch up with the Hunters. She spots a --

BACKHOE

-- next to the Foxie Gooley Gummies Shop. A big, hulking vehicle festooned with levers and steam valves and whatnot. The driver's compartment is a good ten feet off the ground.

EMILY

(light bulb moment)  
Oooh.

INT. CAVE - NIGHT

Eerily quiet. All of the foxes are gone. The only sound is the WHIMPER of a child cowering in his or her cell.

INT. EMILY & JOSH'S CELL - NIGHT

Josh paces as Tinny peeks in.

JOSH

Tinny! What's going on?

TINNY

I have a message and a special  
delivery from Emily. [click]  
(his "Emily" voice)  
"I'll never quit on you, Josh."

For the delivery, Tinny does a handstand. An object falls from inside his can body...

JOSH'S UNIVERSAL KEY

Josh wells up, suppresses a tear, then quickly adjusts the fob's settings, and immediately unlocks his cell door.

JOSH

Everyone! We're going home!

EXT. CELL BLOCK - NIGHT

Josh frees KIDS in adjacent cells, when --

-- an arched shadow painstakingly crawls across the dirt floor. Josh hears a snarl, sees a dangling saliva rope.

It's Hunchback, who lunges for Josh.

HUNCHBACK

Why you no-good, lousy...

Josh freaks and drops the universal key, accidentally heel-kicking it into the abyss.

JOSH

No!

Intermittent light from bare bulbs illuminates the caught kids: trembling hands. Quivering lips. Frightened eyes.

Hunchback softens, un-snarls his lips.

HUNCHBACK

Go... it isn't safe here! Hurry!

Josh's eyes instinctively go to the dozen-odd kids still locked away in their cells. Hunchback dangles his key chain.

HUNCHBACK

I'll free them. Go, go!

Josh leads the kids away. But he stops. Turns back. Extends his knuckle. Hunchback fist bumps.

JOSH  
You're all right, Hunchie.

HUNCHBACK  
You too... Brattie.

Josh smiles.

JOSH  
Now... follow me, kiddos!

EXT. CHISWICK - NIGHT

The Hunters have reached that massive contraption...

THE GOO-ULATOR

Sheriff leads the charge; next to him, huffing and puffing, is Deputy Lanagan, his hat brim still bearing three holes.

Sheriff unlocks the gate that protects the Goo-ulator, and he climbs the ladder up to the control platform. Speaking into a spluttering little amplification device:

SHERIFF DERRINGER  
Men! Ready your armament! As soon  
as I press this here button...

He points to a big red ACTIVATE button under a safety cover.

SHERIFF DERRINGER  
... we're playing Whack-A-Fox.  
Remember, shoot first, ask NO  
questions later. Everyone ready?

Sheriff reaches for the red button -- shaking off the vision of the ENORMOUS ROOSTER off in the distance, arms folded and clucking in disapproval.

FOX DEVON (O.S.)  
Dad?

SHERIFF DERRINGER  
What was that?

DEPUTY LANAGAN  
Devon?

Fox Devon peeks out from the treeline.



DEPUTY LANAGAN

Devon!

Behind him, many of the town children -- really the foxes in disguise -- peek out from behind the trees. Quaking.

SHERIFF DERRINGER

What the -- ?

Sheriff's finger moves away from the ACTIVATE button.

DEPUTY LANAGAN

Everybody, lower your dang weapons!

The Hunters do as they're told.

DEPUTY LANAGAN

It's okay, Devon. Come on out, son.

The town kids retreat into the woods. Frustrated, Sheriff Derringer slides down the ladder to the ground.

SHERIFF DERRINGER

Wait! Don't go in there!

DEPUTY LANAGAN

There are foxes in those woods.

But the town kids are gone in a swirl of leaves. The Hunters double down, racing after the kids. They cross the treeline.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

A full moon, caught in the trees, illuminates goo-drilling contraptions as far as the eye can see.

Hunters spot the kids, partly hidden behind trees, when --

CLARENCE

Wearing aviator goggles, brandishing a pickax and garbage-can-lid shield, rappels down a tree.

CLARENCE

Give 'em what for!

Meathead pops up from under a hill of leaves.

MEATHEAD

What for?

CLARENCE

Huh? No, no. It's an expression. It means "Attack!"

WHAM! BOOM! CRACK! Foxes -- until now hidden in holes in the ground and behind trees -- pop up everywhere, pelting the Hunters with acorns hurled from homemade slingshots.

Some leap on the Hunters and wrestle them to the ground.

Sheriff struggles to aim his rifle.

SHERIFF DERRINGER

Shoot them all to smithereens!

Deputy Lanagan eyes his (fox) son disappearing behind a tree.

DEPUTY LANAGAN

Don't shoot! There are children here! Don't you dare fire!

He goes down as a Fox jumps on his back.

It's utter mayhem. A gush of chaos.

But help is on the way in the form of --

EXT. TOWN OF CHISWICK - NIGHT

-- Emily pilots the backhoe filled with fox children. Crammed in and on top of the tractor, sitting on the boom.

It's a bit precarious, especially since the controls here are a little different than Rumble-Stiltskin. She reaches the crest of a hill and descends. But, unlike in the arcade game, she loses control, careening wildly toward a house.

FOX JOSH

Emily! House!

Emily cranks the gigantic steering wheel with all her might, turning into the skid. And while they do SCRAAAAAAAAAAPE off a few inches of the house, they don't crash. No prob.

EMILY

(sweating)

I got this.

Fox Josh exhales in relief. They race towards a little army of adults making their way to the battlefield.

FOX EMILY

Sorry! I'm 12! Sorry!

The adults scatter in all directions. The backhoe plows on towards the woods.

A HUNDRED FEET ABOVE THEM: THE BLIMP

Verna, at the controls, double-takes:

VERNA

Emily???

Emily looks up and waves at her mother.

EMILY

Hi, Mom! I'm driving heavy machinery!

And away she goes as Verna blanches.

VERNA

I am the world's worst mother.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

The Hunters are going down left and right in a hail of acorns, leaving them covered in bruises and pain. Many run off. But some of them manage to shoot back at the Foxes.

CLARENCE

Give 'em heck, foxes!

The fox children jump into the fray. Utter confusion. No one is able to tell who's human and who's a fox -- but the kids resort to all manner of trickery to defeat the adults:

Two fox kids give one Hunter a WEDGIE from a tree branch...

HUNTER

Owww! You no-good, little...!

A LITTLE BOY toddler, lying in a leaf pile, sobbing, is retrieved by a DEPUTY...

DEPUTY

Aw, you okay, little boy?

The Little Boy springs up, revealing a mouth full of razor-sharp FOX TEETH, and he sics on the Deputy's nose --

DEPUTY

Agh! Get off! Get him off!

TWO KID FOXES sneak up on Hunters and drop GARTER SNAKES down their pants. The Hunters SHRIEK like babies and zig-zag crazily away.

Clarence and Meathead round up HUMAN PRISONERS into an enormous, hand-made net --

CLARENCE  
Don't worry. You'll like cave  
living as much as we do. It does  
wonders for the hair.

Clarence ties the net. Meathead, smiling proudly, snips the rope with his mechanical arm.

CLARENCE  
They're on the ropes, foxes! This  
is our... um... oh, damn.

Clarence flusters, unable to come up with the right word.

MEATHEAD  
Moment?

CLARENCE  
YES!

SHERIFF DERRINGER

Shrimpy swings down from the trees, jamming his rifle barrel with fruity foxie gummies.

SHRIMPY  
Do try the boysenberry.

Sheriff throws his rifle to the ground in frustration.

SHERIFF DERRINGER  
Open season, men!

The Hunters try to follow their orders, but have a hard time aiming their weapons; such is the confusion all around.

Sheriff races back to the Goo-ulator --

SHERIFF DERRINGER  
Time to end this.

-- climbs the metal ladder to the --

EXT. GOO-ULATOR PLATFORM - DAY

-- reaches out to the push the button.

EXT. WOODS - BATTLEFIELD - DAY

POP! POP! POP! GLOWWORMS tunnel out of the ground. Thousands of them. They're everywhere!

EXT. GOO-ULATOR PLATFORM - DAY

Sheriff's mouth hangs open as he stares at the cornucopia of colors now enveloping the Goo-ulator.

Goggles crawls up to Sheriff's eye level.

GOGGLES

I am Goggles. Chief of the glowworms. Well, not really chief, but... long story. So anyway. Um, we've, like, brought some friends.

BZZ! BZZ! BZZ! The fireflies swarm in. Millions of them.

They envelop the Sheriff, who YELPS and tries to swat them away. They push him to the edge of the platform.

GOGGLES

So, like, you probably don't even know that we exist. But we're, like, totally the collateral damage in your war with the foxes. Much though we try to be chill and all and be, like, Switzerland, we're, like, not really cool with it.

Sheriff fights to the button. Before he can press it --

-- THE BLIMP, coming in super-low --

VERNA

Stands on a rope swing, dangling beneath it --

VERNA

Hold her steady, Chambers!

Up in the cockpit, Councilman Rodney Chambers pilots the blimp, shoots her a thumbs-up --

-- Verna swings out wide -- POW! -- DECKS the Sheriff with a mighty right hook! He topples backwards, over the railing and off the platform as Glowworms jump to safety.

EXT. WOODS - BATTLEFIELD - DAY

OUCH! The Sheriff crashes down to the ground 15 feet below.

Jules and Auntie Fox arrive and GASP.

It's an all-out war.

The humans and the Foxes are a big battling pile.

Hunters help their wounded brethren off the battlefield... while Foxes do the same. A dark moment indeed.

AUNTIE FOX

We... We're too late.

But then... WHAM! Emily pilots the backhoe through the middle of it all. The kids aboard WAR-WHOOP, shake their fists.

Trees fall. Brush flies through the air. Branches rain down on people.

EMILY

Sorry! 12! Sorry!

Hunters, Foxes, fox children scatter in different directions.

SHERIFF DERRINGER

What the? You -- this is a restricted area!

(to his men)

Get those brats outta here!

Hunters and Deputies turn to the backhoe. Emily grabs the lever, swings the boom arm wide, wiping out a pile of Hunters. With a scoop of fresh earth, she half-buries them.

FOX EMILY

Nice, Emily!

EMILY

Thanks, Emily!

But now COMMANDO DEPUTY, in fatigues and headband, runs at them, buck knife between his teeth --

FOX JOSH

Emily, look out!

She sees him in time and scoops Commando up in the backhoe's claw. He yelps as she hoists him as high as the mechanical arm will go -- depositing him 40 feet up a tree, stranding him on a branch beside a bird nest. BIRDS SQUAWK and PECK at him. He drops his knife, desperately tries to fend them off.

But what Emily does not see: Sheriff Derringer has been clambering up the side of the backhoe.

FOX EMILY

Emily!

Emily spins in her seat. The Sheriff aims a pistol at her.

SHERIFF DERRINGER

Let go of the controls.

Emily gulps and does as she's told.

SHERIFF DERRINGER

Miss Sterling. Kindly explain what's going on here and why you're fighting with the foxes.

Just then: Clarence clambers up the other side of the backhoe, jabbing his pointed stick at the Sheriff.

CLARENCE

I'd like to know that too!

A stand-off, with Emily in the middle.

Silence descends on the battlefield.

All eyes turn to Sheriff, Emily, Clarence -- and the kids. SO MANY KIDS -- some carbon copies of each other.

Deputy Lanagan stares at Fox Devon hiding behind a tree...

DEPUTY LANAGAN

Devon?

And at another Fox Devon sitting on the backhoe.

DEPUTY LANAGAN

Devon?

But before anybody can answer... YELLS OF JOY, HOLLERS, YELPS from deep within the woods. Emerging from a thicket: Josh -- leading all of the captured kids. Tinny on his shoulder.

JOSH

Bam! Mr. Escapey-scapeman in the house. No lock too tough for me, when I have my universal key!

Josh winks at Emily, mouths "thank you."

CLARENCE

What? No! Oh, come on!

Deputy Lanagan sees a third Devon.

DEPUTY LANAGAN

Devon?!?

Lanagan slaps his face like mad, trying to wake himself up.

SHERIFF DERRINGER

Seriously! What is going on here?

Gesturing for calm from Sheriff and Clarence, Emily climbs out on top of the backhoe.

EMILY

(sotto, to self)

Ten, nine, eight...

(after she gets to "one")

Everybody, please lower your weapons. I can explain everything.

As Chambers lands the blimp in the middle of it all, Verna jumps down, coils the rope over her shoulder. The Town Council scrambles out.

Meanwhile, the rest of the Chiswick adults arrive on the battleground. Makiko hugs her PARENTS.

MAKIKO

Mom! Dad!

They stare at their daughter -- and her fox copies.

EMILY

Yes! There are three Makikos.  
*Kitsune!*

Makiko smiles at Emily. Everyone quiets, stares at Emily.

EMILY

Two of them took blue goo to look like her. They're really foxes.

CLARENCE

(face-palms)

Don't tell them! If they -- see what you did? Now -- ugggh!

EMILY

They did it to survive. Because we didn't give them a choice.

Clarence perks up, surprised.



SHERIFF DERRINGER  
 I've heard enough, young lady.  
 (whips out handcuffs)  
 Theft is a crime punishable by --

JULES  
Let. My. Daughter. Speak.

Stunned at the impertinence, Sheriff can't even react. Emily, Josh, and Verna volley prideful looks: Go, Dad!

EMILY  
 Parents, look at your children --  
 all of 'em. Can't tell the  
 difference, can you?

The Parents are confused. No, they can't.

EMILY  
 Because we're NOT. We all want the  
 same thing. We all want a home, a  
 family, people who love us.

Jules and Auntie Fox hang back beyond tree cover. Clarence mists up. Shrimpy hands him a Kleenex. Honk!

EMILY  
 Over there... that's my little  
 brother Josh. He's wicked smart.  
 Give him some scrap metal, and he  
 can build a rocket ship with it.

Josh blushes.

EMILY  
 I've always... well, I guess I  
 was... I was afraid my parents  
 liked him better than me.

Verna studies her toes.

EMILY  
 I got angry. At him. At the world.

Jules and Aurora trade knowing looks.

EMILY  
 Then all this happened, and you  
 know what I realized? Josh and I  
 actually make a great team. We have  
 different strengths, but we're both  
 awesome.

Emily looks hard at the gathered crowd.

EMILY

Maybe all of us need to walk a few steps in each other's shoes... or paws.

(to the Hunters)

How would you like it if foxes hunted your kids with rifles? Or destroyed your homes?

The Hunters shuffle uncomfortably.

CLARENCE

Yeah! Go, big mouth!

EMILY

Zip it, Clarence! Nothing excuses what you did. How would you like it if we kidnapped your kids and forced them to work for us, huh?

Auntie Fox stares at Clarence pointedly. He sighs.

CLARENCE

You're... you're right. I'm sorry.

EMILY

(to Clarence)

No more kidnapping.

(to the Hunters)

No more ruining our town in the name of money with that dumb eyesore!

(finally, to both sides)

No more fighting.

SHERIFF DERRINGER

You can't be ser -- this is insane! Them foxes are a menace!

JULES

Mm. See, Sheriff, thing is, it seems you, erm, well, you openly defied the council. Manipulated us. Played us for chumps.

SHERIFF DERRINGER

Now, Councilman, I can explain --

Deputy Lanagan approaches Sheriff with cuffs.

DEPUTY LANAGAN

Sheriff Derringer. You are under arrest for violating Penal Code 1406B -- subverting a town

(MORE)

DEPUTY LANAGAN (CONT'D)  
 ordinance under false pretenses and  
 for using department resources for  
 your own personal gain. Oh yeah --  
 and for ruining my hat.

Sheriff sighs, holds out his wrists -- but just before  
 Lanagan can slap the cuffs, he bolts, storming towards the  
 Goo-ulator. He scrambles up the platform, hits the button --

EMILY

No!!!

The massive machine CHUGGING and THRUMMING.

INT. FOX CAVERNS - CELL BLOCK - NIGHT

CHEMICAL RUN-OFF blasts in! Up to his waist, Hunchback is  
 still unlocking cells, releasing the last of the crying kids.

HUNCHBACK

Follow me!

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Hunchback and the kids race to the surface just ahead of a  
 massive crest of filthy water. They explode into the sky, as  
 if on a whale's spout, and all crash down, more or less okay.

LITTLE GIRL

Th - Thank you. You're a nice fox.

She HUGS him, hard. Hunchback melts. Chokes back a tear.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

BOOM! Run-off spouts erupt from the ground, creating a tidal  
 wave. All the townspeople, Glowworms, and Foxes scatter.

CLARENCE

Run away!

Jules, Verna, Emily, and Josh help each other clamber up a  
 tall oak tree.

VERNA

Thank the... we're safe, all of us.

EMILY

No! We gotta shut that thing down!

JOSH

But -- but how?

THE GOO-ULATOR PLATFORM

Is now an island in a sea of roily water,.

THE GOO-ULATOR

Itself vibrates to pieces...

SHERIFF DERRINGER

Sick glee in his eyes, takes in the town-wide destruction.

SHERIFF DERRINGER

See, Frederic? See?

THE TREE

Emily's eyes narrow. Only one chance. She grabs the rope coil off from her mom and climbs like mad.

VERNA

Emmy, no! What are you doing?

JULES

Honey, get down!

She climbs the tree, reaches the top, then edges out carefully along a long, horizontal branch. Makes the mistake of looking down -- GULP!

At the end of the branch, she ties off the rope. The other end, with the wooden seat, she twirls over her head like a lasso and THROWS IT --

WHUNK! It hits the side of the Goo-ulator and bounces off. Crap. But then -- it gets caught in the machine's massive, churning gears. HORRIBLE GRINDING NOISE as the seat jams up the machine and the rope line goes taut.

JOSH

Eyes flare as he realizes what she's doing --

JOSH

Yeah! Go, Emmy!

Emily breaks off a smaller tree branch and cracks it partly in half, in "V" shape. Puts it over the rope and --

EMILY

ZIP-LIIIIINE!!!!

Whoosh! Emily sails across the distance to the --

GOO-ULATOR PLATFORM

-- barely making it. She grits teeth, finds her feet, and --

SHERIFF DERRINGER

You little brat!

EMILY

Consider yourself foxed.

-- with one massive shoulder tackle, she knocks him over the railing. SPLOOSH! He is carried away in a torrent of water.

Emily SHUTS DOWN the infernal machine as it shakes apart.

She GULPS, falls, splashing into the water below -- swimming like mad. She reaches for a tree branch, but... misses.

She's going to drown -- but a hand reaches for her. No, not a hand... a paw! It's Clarence! He pulls her to shore.

The Goo-ulator comes crashing down in heavy metal chunks.

Finally, the flooding abates. Heads pop up from cover; Foxes climb down from trees.

EMILY

Thank you --

CLARENCE

No, thank you. I'm so sorry.

EMILY

You're still mean and stinky.

CLARENCE

I know.

People cry and APPLAUD. Josh, Verna and Jules return.

VERNA

I'm so proud. So, so proud.

Fox Emily and Fox Josh, now with foxtails, run to Clarence.

FOX EMILY / FOX JOSH

Dad!

Clarence -- yes, their father -- gives them a big hug. The Sterlings watch with amazement. Verna and Jules hug Emily.

VERNA

I toldja you were special.

JOSH

(choking up)

You're amazing.

They all hug. Tears run.

INT. EMILY'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - DAY

Verna and Jules carry in a seemingly endless procession of steaming dishes. Everyone passes the food around.

Emily, Josh, Clarence, Fox Emily, and Fox Josh sit around the table. Clarence looks dashing in a 3-piece suit with cravat. Tinny, on top of the table, clicks and pops happily.

JULES

The sheriff's going away for a long time. And the council has declared the Amalgamated Consolidated Corporation persona non grata in Chiswick.

Clarence BURSTS INTO TEARS.

EMILY

Clarence?

CLARENCE

I am so sorry...

EMILY

You took action to help your people. Maybe... we can all forgive each other, okay?

Clarence weepily hugs Emily. Blows his nose into a napkin -- HOOONK! DING-DONG. Doorbell. Jules gets up. Seconds later, he returns with AURORA STERLING (40s). Recognizable as Auntie Fox, but now decidedly human. And hippie-chic.

JOSH

Aunt Aurora? Whoa!!

AURORA

I just figured... well, I'd like to see my niece and nephew face to face... as it were.

Aurora winks at Emily, who smiles. Josh runs over, hugs her as well.

JULES

Sis, I, uh... I just want you to know... you are part of our family, too. Don't ever forget that.

AURORA

Mists up. So does Jules. And just then: he smacks his lips. Aurora shoots him a look. He covers his mouth. Everyone falls about laughing...

EXT. CHISWICK TOWN ROAD - DAY

Emily, carrying a book bag, and Josh walk in lockstep. Tinny flies overhead, hovering on a new pair of BUTTERBUG wings.

TINNY

Whooh! These wings rock, Emily!  
[click click]

A school bus chugs past. Makiko and Corinne (her face sans makeup) stick their heads out the window, smile, and wave.

MAKIKO

See you in homeroom, Emmy!

Emily and Josh smile, wave back, and then notice --

THE FOXES

-- who are busy digging countless new dens that stretch back into the forest as far as the eye can see.

The derricks and Goo-ulator are gone. Foxes and people -- working together -- plant trees. Clarence supervises, in a spiffy, 'Bedazzled' hard hat and designer shades.

EMILY

Lookin' foxy, Clarence!

Clarence curtsies happily. Emily glimpses Fox Emily and Fox Josh; they wave to each other. Josh clocks his head.

JOSH

Did you do that science project?

Emily gestures to Tinny. Josh buries a smirk.

JOSH

Not bad. I could do better though.

She shoots him an arch look, pretends to punch him. Josh jumps back, slips on mud. Lands on his butt.

But instead of getting angry -- they both break out laughing. Emily helps Josh up. They head off to school, laughing as they go. Tinny chirps. Emily smiles.

Off in the distance, an enormous rooster COCK-A-DOODLE-DOOS.

FADE TO BLACK.