

The
Fox
With
the
Rainbow
Tail

By: Mason Arsenault

CHARACTERS

Narrator

Dunn - An arrogant and manipulative hunter hiding another side of himself

Mouse - A naive yet kind mouse who sweats out green slime

Bear - A lonely and sensitive bear fitted with a metal paw

Fox - A cunning and sly fox born with a rainbow-coloured tail

SETTING

A forest nearing the end of winter

The play touches on themes of physical and mental abuse. If you are from Alberta and you or someone you know has been victim to a form of abuse, please consider reaching out to one of the following numbers available 24/7:

Family Violence: 310-1818

Abuse Helpline: 1-855-443-5722

Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-387-5437

Mental Health Helpline: 1-877-303-2642

If you do not reside in Alberta and require help, consult your local healthcare provider or administrative resources for the appropriate information and resources to aid in forms of abuse.

The following script contains
no directions or descriptions
outside of what is suggested
through character dialogue.
It is not meant to have one sole
intent of presentation. It is open to
be perceived however a reader
wishes to see it.
Perhaps as a stage show.
Perhaps as a children's book.
Perhaps as a short film.
Perhaps as an audio reading.
You will find the form you
take the most comfort in
envisioning this world through.
For art is only
as unique as the minds
that interpret it.

Narrator

This is a story of animals three
From a forest not far from Sapphire sea
The animals three, familiar they seem
Each of them something right out of a dream
The first of the three, a mouse bright and tiny
And covered in something light green and slimy
The second he be, a fox quick and sly
With a tail that's coloured an usual dye
The final of three, the biggest is he
A bear with a paw that makes everyone flee
These are our animals and this the prelude
Now let's enter the forest to set up the mood

It was a cold winter day in the forest now white
And the sun on the snow was visibly bright
The leaves on the trees had all but few fell
The air of the forest a crisp and clean smell
The river run-through had frozen to ice
The animal's thirst pay a horrible price
With conditions so harsh and food growing low,
The animals attune to the season of snow
The fowl of the forest had left to migrate
For North in the winter was something they hate
The serpents as well went under the ground
Waiting for Spring till they can be found
Some must instead endure the harsh cold,
Into warm shelters, they now must take hold
With young mouths to feed and they themselves too,
They emerge in the open for something to chew
This time of day, when animals roam,
When hunters come in from out of their homes
Who is this here while the sun starts to dim?
Well, let's quiet on down and listen to him

Dunn

Good to meet you, I'm a hunter named Dunn
That you could tell from my bow and my gun
I'm from a family of hunters, all will agree
The greatest of men to come before me
They were part of a club called "The Hunters of Here"
To be part of that would be something to cheer
I've never been hunting; not then and not yet
Today that will change I'd be willing to bet
To be in the club, a small sort of chore,
Seizing three animals to open the door
The first of the three should take the most ease
A little grey mouse is a feasible breeze
The second of them, a little more tough
A massive brown bear could end up quite rough
The final of three is the one that's most hard
A sly orange fox, almost always on guard
If I bring them all in before the new spring,
I'll be made a true hunter and my name will ring
But the condition they felt they had to insist,
The animals be perfect, right down to their wrist
Not a blemish or feature or tooth out of place
Anything less would be a hunting disgrace
But I am not worried, not one single bit,
I'll take them all down with my gun and my wit
Hurry I should for down comes the sun
By this time tomorrow, Dunn will have won!

Narrator

Dunn took a small step in the fresh winter snow
And into the forest with a gun of ammo
What Dunn said was true, he'd never been hunting
As a boy, he'd play soccer and practice his punting
His father had told him in a frivolous sneer
"You need to be hunting! It's the season for deer!"
Dunn never forgot what his father had said
And vowed he'd grow up to kill animals dead

Dunn tried to move fast, but quiet as well
Animals listening would surely not dwell
The sound of a crunch soft and slow in the snow
As his feet hit the ground and forward he'd go
Suddenly Dunn stood perfectly still
His face turning red from cold winter chill
Dunn heard a sound, a sharp sort of squeak
Sounding as though it came near the creek
Dunn smiled wide, knowing that was not bees
The squeak of a mouse in this forest of trees
Dunn peered in the scope of his long slender gun
To find the small mouse whose time was now done
He looked for a mouse that was gray and was small
And no doubt the cause of the shrill-sounding call
He peered and he peered; his eyes were not blinking
“Where is the mouse?” was all he was thinking
Dunn suddenly stopped as his grin fell aback
He saw a small figure who was eating a snack
The sound Dunn had heard was a mouse indeed
But Dunn never saw a mouse of this breed
The mouse had been covered in a layer of slime
The color was green and bright like a lime
From his head to his tail, a soft slippery ooze
Dunn now unsure if he was having a snooze
The mouse of green slime stood eating a berry
While Dunn stood upset, not feeling much merry

Dunn

How can it be so? A mouse of green slime?
A sight quite like this should be some crime!
This isn't a mouse, this is some kind of joke
Perhaps a new trick made of mirrors and smoke?
I can't bring this to the Hunters of Here
The guide that they gave me, he doesn't adhere
A mouse must be grey or white and some brown
But a mouse of green slime is something to frown

I needed a mouse, not this one for sure
He is not right and much too obscure

Narrator

Dunn was not pleased by the mouse of green slime
But the sun would not stay for very much time
Dunn stood puzzled as he thought and he thought

Dunn

What if I changed him into something he ought?
I can make him a mouse that's gray and is true
Scrub out the slime to find the real shrew
Get rid of the green and make him all clean
And bring him to the club, all nice and pristine
Yes, that is a change that I will now make
Should it not work, he'll be food for a snake
I must think of a reason and think it up quick
Convince the small mouse with some kind of trick

Hello Mr. Mouse. You enjoying your berry?
That should be plenty for a stomach to carry
I was out for a walk and saw your green slime
And wondered how you came to be covered in grime?

Mouse

Hello Mr Man. There's a story to tell
Come in a tad closer so need I not yell
I was born with a gland that only makes slime
Instead of some sweat, I slime all the time
Do not feel sad for my current condition
I've grown to love my lime-green emission!
It helps me climb trees, all the way to the top
I stick to the tree, unafraid I will drop
If a predator is near and looking to feed,
I can stick them to slime and leave before freed
The slime too is heated and keeps me all warm
Perfect for cold winter days or a storm

The other mice find me to be different and odd
A mouse like me has never entered their squad
They try to be kind and act with great care
But sometimes I see how often they stare
But that is a matter which I will not worry
For I love who I am in this forest of flurry

Dunn

Such positive thought and appearance unique
To come from a creature that's seen as so meek!
I've had an idea that I just must insist
An occasion I'd hate for you to have missed
A few days from now, I am throwing a party
The games will be plenty, the food will be hearty
Chocolate and pie and cupcakes galore
You're just the guest my friends would adore

Mouse

That sounds quite lovely, my new human chum!
To your party, I'd be most honoured to come

Dunn

I'm so pleased to hear that, my small slimy friend
There is only one problem we first must attend
The place of the party is strict we be clean
And not leave behind even one bean
I'm afraid that with your physical state
Slime on the carpet will get us much hate
I'm afraid if you wish not to be snubbed,
I insist your slime will have to be scrubbed
I know that my friends would love to meet you
You'll let them all down not seeing this through

Narrator

Mouse didn't know that this was deception
There was to be no dinner reception
Mouse wasn't sure what he should then do
Go to the party or stay himself true?
It had been such a while since he was admired
And so he chose to agree to what was required

Mouse

Alright Mr. Man, you may scrub off my slime
So that I will look ready for your party in time

Narrator

Dunn smiled to himself, pleased as can be
The smile of a trick that Mouse didn't see
He grabbed the small mouse sealed in green goo
And a bottle of water he brought with him too
He opened it up and poured it all down
All onto Mouse, whose mouth turned to frown
Slime slid off Mouse and onto the ground
Hitting the snow without making a sound
Mouse had grey fur that hid underneath
Cold from the water, he chattered his teeth

Dunn

One more thing now and you'll be complete
A little something else to keep your fur neat

Narrator

Dunn pulled from his pocket an oval container
Deodorant serving as a sweating detainer
Dunn thought if it worked for someone's armpit
Then on a mouse, it should be a perfect fine fit
Dunn opened it up and sprayed it on thick
Despite Mouse now feeling nauseously sick
Dunn sprayed until the container was gone
Feeling quite proud of his tricky slick con

He sat down the Mouse on the cold winter snow
Mouse still not knowing the hunter's great faux
Mouse felt all cold and miserable too
This version of him was not at all true

Dunn

Now Mr. Mouse, don't you feel swell?
To be a real mouse away from your cell?

Narrator

Mouse did not feel as though he had won
But he couldn't let down what his new friend had done

Mouse

Thank you my friend, I'm feeling all good
I now look more like any mouse would
Since I'm no longer covered in green,
Can I come to the party now that I'm clean?

Dunn

Of course, little one! Of course, you still can!
Let me share with you what will be the plan.
A few days from now, meet me here at this tree
Three days from now at quarter past three
I'll wander the forest for others to take
And together we'll share a big slice of cake!

Narrator

The hunter peered up at the sky turned to night
And decided to leave and come back at first light
He wished the mouse well and made his way back
Away from the mouse and his half-eaten snack
The mouse stood in thought for what was a while
He looked more like a mouse, why couldn't he smile?
After all, he had looked as the hunter had wanted
But all Dunn had did was make him feel daunted
Mouse tried to set his worries aside

Still unaware that the hunter had lied
Mouse turned away and went home for the night
As he still tried to say what Dunn did was right

Night turned to day as it always had done
Back to the forest was none other than Dunn
He returned with his bow and the gun in his hand
To find a fox and a bear in this forested land
The mouse from before he felt sure was his
Hunting, he thought, wasn't much of a quiz

Dunn

I knew that the mouse would be easy to find
But now for the two who won't be so kind
The fox will be quick, cunning, and sneaky
And the bear will be strong, stunning, and freaky
There isn't much time, I must move ahead
If I am to find them in time before bed
I'll find an orange fox, I do not know when
First I must find his tunnelled down den
And to find a brown bear, I must be so brave
I'll head in the forest and find a bear's cave

Narrator

Dunn packed up his gear and headed within
The time he had left began to grow thin
His steps were still careful but with a great pace
In case he might need to put up a chase
Deeper and deeper in the forest Dunn went
Searching was much of how his day spent
He crossed over the branches from trees that had fallen
And withered old plants in need of some pollen
The sounds of the forest had mostly fell silent
Silence would go if he'd need to get violent

The seconds to minutes; the minutes to hours
All Dunn had found were withered old flowers

As he started to feel that the day was a fail,
Dunn came to a halt and began to grow pale
Something in snow that meant you-know-who
A track of bear claws and the imprints were new
Dunn felt afraid of what he might find
But went on ahead, keeping fear off his mind
He snuck and he crept, not making a sound
As he followed the tracks left into the ground
He came to a stop at a bush with no leaves
He took a deep breath and rolled up his sleeves
Just around the stick bush was surely the bear
He peered through the sticks and saw some brown hair
Dunn gripped the gun tightly and peered right above
His hand on the trigger, his hand in a glove
His instincts were right; it was all he could see
A mass of brown fur he wanted to flee
The bear, it turns out, was looking away
One chance for Dunn to make him his prey
Dunn had to be careful but had to act quick
If this was to be his club-winning pick
Before Dunn could shoot and take the bear down,
He heard a strange sound from the bear big and brown
At first, Dunn had thought this was simply a prank
For what in the forest could make such a clank?
Dunn peered to the ground and what did he see?
The bear's number of paws had been only three!
For where a fourth paw should clearly have been
Was a metal prosthetic built with some tin
Dunn backed down again for a moment to think
The bear's metal paw throwing him all out of sync

Dunn

I cannot believe this, I feel I'm in awe
One bear in the world to bare such a flaw
The club would not like his iron prosthetic
A metal-clawed bear is not natural aesthetic

A bear without paw is against the club rule
If I showed up with him, I'd look like a fool
A bear without paw is no bear at all
A fake paw on a bear is a sorrowful haul
But time's running out, I won't find a spare
I'll just need to settle with a burdensome bear
I need to think hard and I need to think quick
A well-thought-out plan should do just the trick

Narrator

Dunn sat and he thought for a minute or two
He thought up a plan for the bear to look new
Dunn had to move fast in case the bear went
He ran to his truck for clothes he'd been sent
He ran and he ran until he felt queasy
His breath sounded like it was getting quite wheezy
He reached the truck tired and started to sift
For something he got as a novelty gift
He found it and breathed a sigh of relief
And drove the truck back to make the time brief
Dunn returned to the spot and the bear was still there
The sound of the truck gave the bear a good scare
Dunn jumped out the truck and walked to him slow
So the bear wouldn't think that Dunn was his foe

Dunn

Hello Mr Bear, I am sorry to scare
I promise I'm here as I simply do care
I wandered these woods and your paw caught my eye
A missing brown paw made me feel I could cry

Narrator

The bear scanned the man and saw how he sweat
And thought of no reason why he was a threat

Bear

Hello Mr. Man. Why yes, that is me
My metal-based claw makes animals flee
I was born in a zoo without my fourth paw
Humans described it as a rare kind of flaw
For most of my life, I could never walk right
Standing up straight was always a fight
Then one day a man who helps amputees
Built me a paw to walk with more ease
It has helped me so much, it has helped me alot
It has helped live longer than others had thought
Only one week ago, the zoo set me free
No longer the money to take care of me
Since then, I've lived here all out on my own
With no other bears having yet to be shown
I think they are scared of my paw made of metal
With no other friends, it's lonely to settle

Dunn

Oh my new friend with brown coloured hair
Of course, it's your paw that gave them a scare
It's big and metallic and could cause some harm
It's different and different is cause for alarm
If your paws were the same, the bears would be out
But a paw quite like that only sends out some doubt
But lucky for you, I brought you a gift!
I'm hoping it mends that terrible rift

Narrator

Dunn walked to his truck and opened the door
And grabbed an old gift he'd still never wore
The gift was all hairy and out poked some claws
A pair of some slippers that looked like bear paws
Dunn snickered and sneered with childish glee
He'd give the bear one and give it for free
He'd put it on tight and make sure it stayed on
So the club wouldn't notice the paw was a con

Dunn took the faux paw and showed the brown bear
And tried to convince him it was something to wear

Dunn

This is the newest in paw-based outfitting!
Compared to real life, the resemblance is spitting
We'll take off the metal and slip on this one
It works just the same as to help you to run
You'll feel like a bear and like all the rest
One day in this and you will feel blessed

Narrator

Bear looked at the slipper, unsure if to take
It just wasn't him and deep down felt fake
But Bear also thought of feeling alone
And agreed to try the paw that was sewn
Dunn unstrapped the metal and tossed it aside
And put on the slipper, hoping it would abide
The paw on the bear had looked pretty great
But was too soft and flimsy to hold all his weight
With every small step, his legs wouldn't lock
And he'd fall to the ground, unable to walk
Although it appeared like any bear's paw,
It gave no support and was the plan's only flaw
But Dunn was not ready to then call it quit
He then remained cool and relied on his wit

Dunn

The new slippered paw will take some adjust
In a day you'll be walking, that you can trust!
I know just the thing to help you rejoice
Something I hope you'll make the right choice
I'm having a party just a few blocks away
Plenty snacks and some games to last the whole day!
If you could come too, that would fill me with glee
There are plenty of guests and we all eat for free

It's in a couple of days, wait until then
Before you decide on your old paw again
Remember how lonely that one made you feel?
The slippered one makes you look all the more real
And my friends at the party will love it as well
Everyone there will tell you you're swell
So keep it on now and keep it on tight
Or look like a bear that isn't quite right

Narrator

Bear knew deep down that this wasn't for him
His chances of walking were suddenly slim
But if he needed this paw to not be alone,
Perhaps it was better if he chose not to moan

Bear

Alright Mr. Man, I'll give it a try
As for your party, I'd love to drop by
Thank you for being a truly good friend
And fixing my paw so it would not offend

Dunn

No problem dear Bear, no trouble at all
Few days in that and no longer you'll fall
And as for the party, here's what you should do
Meet with the others who are going there too
Two days from now at quarter past three
Down near the river, there's an oak tree
A mouse will join us and a fox I hope too
But tonight has grown late, I'll bid you adieu

Narrator

Dunn wished the Bear night and returned to his truck
As he grinned to himself over his good fortune luck
He met a slime mouse and cleaned off his grime
His condition for Hunters appeared to be prime

And now he had Bear who fell in his trap
The old paw, he thought, he'd turn into scrap
He'd come back tomorrow at the first break of dawn
But he was done for tonight as he let out a yawn
As he sat in his truck, getting ready to leave,
Dunn could not help but feel a moment of grieve
He looked over to Bear who still lay in the dirt
And thought about how this poor Bear he'd hurt
Dunn shook out those thoughts, he had to commit
He'd come too far now to just up and quit
He turned on his truck and drove to his home
Leaving Bear on the ground, unable to roam
Bear peered to the slipper and again tried to stand
But fell once again, to the ground he did land
Bear held onto hope he'd now meet some bears
It was this to which Bear felt he still really cares
He thought of the oak tree that Dunn had told him
And decided he'd go there, despite the bad limb
He reached his front feet and pushed his hind paws
As he gripped to the ground using all his real claws
He dragged himself slowly with no sense of glee,
While someone else arrived to the river's oak tree

In the middle of night while everyone slept,
Fox had come out and through the forest she crept
In this forest of creatures for man to outmatch,
Fox was the one who was hardest to catch
Her mind was quite sharp and so was her speed
The most cunning of all, the forest agreed
With her crafty reflex and her night vision too,
She'd only need seconds to leave someone's view
Like Mouse and Bear, she was more than she seems
She was born with a tail right out of some dreams
Where most fox tails were orange and white,
Her tail was coloured more lively and bright
Fox's tail had been coloured much like a rainbow
A long, dazzling tail that stood out in the snow

She was proud of her tail and would often display
But knew with the snow, it would give her away
Fox knew the best time to go out for a bite
Was when it was dark and she'd stay out of sight
It was here that she found the food she thought nice
And that was to be an arrangement of mice
Fox would stay low but keep on her feet
She knew it was mean, but she had to eat
Fox listened quite carefully for any slight sound
Of anything walking on the cold winter ground
At first, there was nothing but then a slight pitter
Which Fox knew to be the walk of a critter
She waited just when the steps were most clear
And when the critter would be at the most near
She leaped off the ground and onto her prey
Scanning her paws to see her catch of the day
It had been a grey mouse, her hunt was no fail
She picked up her dinner and held on his tail
Before Fox could place him inside of her jaws,
She had realized something that gave her a pause
For the mouse she had caught she felt that she knew
But this mouse, she thought, was missing some goo

Fox

Forgive me dear mouse, I need you to chime
Are you the small mouse who gives off the green slime?
I feel that is you, that fact I am sure
And if it be you, your life is secure
You don't seem yourself, it is rather strange
What happened to you to cause such a change?

Narrator

Fox put the mouse down to let him explain
In a moment of truce from Fox's food chain

Mouse

Thank you for sparing, yes that is me
I met a man here right by this near tree
He told me of how my slime wasn't good
And made me look as a mouse like me should
He washed me all up and then used some stuff
That makes making slime to be ever so tough
He did this to me so that I not feel rejected
When I come to his party where I am expected
I feel some discomfort like I'm no longer me
But I trust in him that this is how I should be

Narrator

Fox felt disturbed by what she just heard
What Mouse had just said was truly absurd

Fox

I'm afraid what he told you is something quite wrong
For it is your slime that makes you ever so strong
I can't say for sure where his nonsense comes from
But he sounds like a human who's awfully dumb
You don't need to change to be someone's friend
You should just be yourself and not have to pretend

Mouse

I don't feel I know just what I should do
I'm expected to join him with this greyish hue
But I feel overcome with so much regret
Will my slime still come back whenever I sweat?

Narrator

Before Fox could try and settle his hurt,
She heard a great noise that made her alert
The noise sounded big and came from behind
She quickly turned over so she would not be blind
What she had saw then she thought was quite odd
It was brown Bear still wearing his slipper facade

Mouse became scared and started to brace
But Fox remained calm and stood in her place
Bear caught his breath and looked all around
Hoping there'd be other bears to be found
When he didn't see one, he let out a sigh
And stifled some tears as he started to cry
Mouse had eased up, even only a tad
He'd never seen a bear that acted so sad
Fox approached Bear, seeing how he was grim
And she felt that perhaps she recognized him

Fox

Pardon me Mr. Bear, I believe I know you
Are you the bear who's fourth paw never grew?
You're missing the one that was made out of metal
Why is this the new one you chose to now settle

Bear

Ms. Fox, I don't know what I should do
I was wrong to think that one time I knew
I'm new to the forest and wanted a friend
So a man gave me this so better I'd blend
But I don't think this paw is working as planned
For I can no longer walk and no longer stand
It took me so long to push myself here
Only to get here and see nothing to cheer
I hoped to meet bears with this paw on my leg
But none have shown up and there's no point to beg
I suppose I'm just cursed to stay all alone
To drag through the forest and do on my own

Fox

Why Mr. Bear, there's no reason to ache
I'm afraid there's been some kind of mistake
The bears of the forest aren't leaving you out
For in winter, the bears do not stay about

Bears keep to their caves when the weather gets cold
It's called hibernation or so I've been told
They'll return to the forest once it becomes spring
I'm sorry you weren't told that this was a thing
The bears are so kind and once they're aware,
They'll welcome you in and give you much care

Bear

That sounds so lovely; too good to be true!
They won't mind that my fourth paw never grew?

Fox

Being born as you were doesn't mean you are bad,
For when others will meet you they ought to feel glad
What makes us all different doesn't tear us apart
For what all that matters is what's in your heart
Even if someone has a paw made of skin
Or whether you came with a paw made of tin

Narrator

Bear felt he could cry a new type of tears
He felt now he'd settled all of his fears
Bear was so happy, so happy indeed
Just one thing now he felt that he'd need

Bear

I'm so beyond pleased to hear all of this
Would you help me now with something I miss?
I need my old paw; it truly worked best
To have it again would make me feel blessed
To toss it aside was such a mistake
I must get it back before it might break
The man that I met had took it with him
Once sun in the sky became far too dim
He promised to return to this here oak tree
For a party he's throwing and invited me

Mouse

The man had asked you to his party as well?
And said that this tree was where you should dwell?
He told me that too and told me to change
Saying my slime was something too strange

Narrator

Fox started to wonder, something didn't seem right
For why was this human in this forest of white?
Fox had an idea, but she had to be sure
To test if his actions were truly so pure

Fox

Mr. Mouse, Mr. Bear, I have something to settle
Did this man have a tube that was long and was metal?

Mouse

Why yes, I remember that was something he had
Does that long metal tube mean something that's bad?

Narrator

Fox knew right away why the man had been here
But couldn't tell them, for she would not cause fear
For all of the years Fox never been caught,
She'd seen many others captured and shot
It was then that Fox knew she'd come to their aid,
And protect the new friends that she had just made
The man would return for the mouse and the bear
But she had an idea that would rescue the pair

Fox

I'll speak to this man and get your paw back
And make him to say sorry for giving you flak
Don't worry no more, I know what to do
And just what to say to help both of you
This man is in need of a morale reminder
And maybe to others he'll start to think kinder

Narrator

With Fox's promise and a plan now in sight,
The animals agreed and called it a night
The forest now quiet, not as much as a peep
All the woods creatures were deep in their sleep
As a new day arrived, the sun starting to rise,
So returned Dunn with his eyes on the prize
He was pleased the hunt wasn't much of a brawl
But the last creature left would be hardest of all
What he would do now, he didn't quite know
Just the time he had left was growing quite low
He sat and he pondered and let out a yawn
A battle that surely would be brain over brawn

Dunn

I collared the two without using my gun
Just one orange fox and then I'll be done
If only my father could be here to see
A hunter was just what he wanted for me
Wherever he is, I hope he feels pride
Knowing all of my life that he was my guide
The little green mouse was easy to beat
It's a shame to say bye to someone so neat
And that bear was enough to give me a scare
But that scare went away when I saw his great care
Those animals are certainly something unique
And now thanks to me, their futures look bleak

Narrator

Dunn felt as though his win was in sight
But he wondered too if this was alright
The moment had passed, he slapped his own face
He was far too close now to quit this tight race

Dunn

I can't quit this now, I'll do what needs done
I'll finish this fox and Dunn will have won

They're only some animals, no need to feel bad
For this time tomorrow, I'll be just like my dad

Narrator

With his focus back on and the gun in his hand,
Dunn stepped from his truck onto snow-covered land
He closed his truck door and took in a deep breath
For today an orange fox would soon see its death
As Dunn still thought how the fox would be tricky,
His feet stuck to snow as though it been sticky
For Dunn had been stunned, he saw a surprise,
At the edge of the woods were bright yellow eyes
The eyes were attached to a mound of orange fur
And the fur he had seen caused Dunn a great stir
At the edge of the woods was a creature he'd kill
Ms Fox had come forward and sat perfectly still
She focussed on Dunn, keeping calm and collected,
As Dunn thought his hunt went quicker than expected

Dunn

I can't believe this, is my vision a lie?
A chance to take down a creature so sly?
That looks like a fox, that fact I feel sure
She's out in the open, no need to try lure
I must take this chance, a chance I can't scoff
Shoot her down now before she runs off

Narrator

Dunn lifted his gun, quick but with care
Fox had kept still and continued to stare
He stood nice and firm, holding tight to his gun
Getting ready in case the fox tried to run
But something about this didn't seem to be right
For why was this fox not trying to fight?
She just sat there, unmoving, with no sense of fear
She was no harder to take than any old deer
Dunn waited a moment, seeing what it would do

And under his breath, he let out a “shoo”
Fox did not see Dunn as being a threat
Dunn was now nervous and started to sweat
The atmosphere grew to feel all the more tense
Could he kill something that had no defense?
Dunn tried to take breaths as his body did shake
This unflinching fox was making Dunn break
As Fox had now watched Dunn grow to be pale,
She stood up and showed him her colorful tail
Dunn was surprised by what he did see
And from the tense moment, he now had felt free
He let out a sigh, knowing this fox was not right
But also of peace, knowing no bullets took flight

Dunn

What is it with me? Why couldn't I shoot?
My dad wanted this since I was still mute
Get a hold of yourself! This can't happen again
For this is embarrassing among hunting men
This is something I'll have to get over later
For now there's a problem currently greater
It would not have mattered if I shot this fox dead
Her tail is not orange, not even just red!
How much they would laugh if I showed up with her
And her tail covered all in mixed colours of fur
Much like with mouse and that big old brown bear,
I'll think up a plan to give her orange hair
I'll have to be careful, foxes are clever
And convincing her could take me forever

Narrator

Dunn thought up a plan that Fox wouldn't scoff
He thought it up quick before she'd run off
Dunn started towards where Fox still did sit
He wondered to himself why did she not split?
Foxes knew better and were smarter than that
And a fox would run off in five seconds flat

Dunn shook out those thoughts, keeping on focus
He'd not be outwitted by Fox's shrewd hocus

Dunn

Hello Ms Fox, what a nice winter day!
Perfect for families to come out and sleigh
I was out for a walk and your tail caught my gaze
And I had to come over and hail your tail praise
Those colors are quite the sight to be seen
A tail quite like that would make anyone keen
I had an idea which I hope you'll say yes
I'm throwing a party at a nearby address
There'll be games and music and plenty of food
All of the things which put a fox in good mood
Only one problem to bring up I'm afraid
It has to do with your tail's bright-coloured shade
My father is allergic to colors quite bright
And your tail might just give him too much of a fright
If you don't wish my father to fall weak and faint,
Then we'll cover your tail in some orange paint
If your tail is all orange, I think he'll be fine
The orange on your body doesn't cast much a shine
So please coat your tail to help my old father
Or else you will be quite the great bother

Narrator

Dunn grinned to himself, feeling though he had won
But Fox was not sold by the lie Dunn had spun

Fox

It's an honor to receive such an offer so kind
But I'm afraid you've put me in much of a bind
If my tail is as much as an issue you say,
It's better if away from the party I stay
I would not want to cause your father such pain
So I will say no and save both of you strain

Dunn

No Ms. Fox, I insist that you come
To not would be a decision quite dumb
The food will be plenty, your stomach will fill
And the games we will play will give you a thrill
A chance I am offering to only a few
And it's one simple thing I'm asking of you
Make your tail proper and you can still go
To not go will fill you with so much sad woe

Fox

Your persistence is noted, but again I refuse
Changing my tail is something I'd never amuse
This tail is a piece of what makes me unique
And giving that up sounds like something quite bleak
So thank you again for your offer with care
But I will not join you in your catered affair

Narrator

Dunn started to sweat, success looking slim
Fox was smart enough to see right through him
If Dunn was to get the fox that stood here,
He'd need to start using his fox-killing gear
But Dunn was unsure if he could shoot with his gun
So he'd give Fox a chance to get out and run

Dunn

Listen dear Fox, I've been lying to you
I am a hunter, I suspect that you knew
I'm not sure to why you've decided to stay
When you knew very well I'd make you my prey
I'll assume this has been some kind of mistake
And give you one chance I think you should take
Run off in the woods like any fox would
And maybe your chances of living look good
But if you decide to stay here instead,
Then I'll use my gun and you will be dead

Narrator

Dunn raised up his gun, not intending to shoot
Just enough to scare Fox and off she would scoot
But Fox was not scared of the gun-wielding man
It was time to trick him with her brightly laid plan

Fox

Cleverish hunter, forgive my reaction
I see now a man of murderous action
Thank you for making me clear of that now
I'll be sure to run off and honor your vow
I thought you a hunter at the first glance I took
You don't appear the way a hunter should look
But a hunter you claim and now it is clear
So I will give chase and run far from here

Narrator

As Fox turned from Dunn, getting ready to go,
Dunn thought of something he needed to know

Dunn

Hold it right there, don't leave just quite yet
Something you said I simply don't get
You say I don't look like I go and hunt?
What did you mean? And speak frankly and blunt

Fox

Your attire is the thing which I refer to
It is wrong from your shirt right down to your shoe
I've lived in these woods ever since I was born
I've seen many hunters and what they have worn
The outfit you wear is entirely wrong
Resemblance to hunters is not very strong
You're not just a hunter when you carry a gun
The clothes a man wears are what help make him one

Narrator

Dunn pondered a moment if this was a trick
As he once thought his clothes were all the right pick
But Dunn had to impress the Hunters of Here
And knew the wrong clothes would make them all sneer

Dunn

Okay little Fox, since you seem so sure,
What are the clothes that I most procure?

Fox

Well, firstly, your hat is the wrong kind of color
The one that you wear is colored much duller
The hat should be pink, as bright as can be,
With big yellow dots, at least more than three
Your coat must be blue and fur that is fake
A disguise if you find you must hide in a lake
Your shirt should have swirls that are red and are white
Helps attract animals in the day and the night
Your pants are too long and your legs too concealed
Small purple shorts are what you wear in your field
Your shoes are too short and make too much noise
Orange shoes of a clown will give you more poise
And one final touch of the hunters I've seen
Is they dye all their teeth a bright colored green
I'm unsure how this was something you missed,
But they are all changes which I would insist

Narrator

Dunn was puzzled by what Fox had just said
Wondering if lies were what Fox spread instead

Dunn

Blue coat, purple shorts, and a green colored tooth?
How do I know that you've told me the truth?

Fox

My appearance may suggest to you I am sly
But you surely must know I've no reason to lie
I am telling you of the hunters I know
And what made all of them the worthiest foe
If you do not think I know what I see,
Then you're free to indeed disagree
But if you want to impress all of the rest,
Dressing like that is what I think will work best

Narrator

Dunn pondered the claim that Fox had just swore
Admitting it's something not to ignore
If he was to be what a hunter was truly,
Then he wouldn't wear clothes they see as unruly

Dunn

Thank you dear Fox for sharing this fact
My doubts about you I humbly retract
I must be off now, there's no time to waste!
I must change my clothes or else be disgraced

Narrator

Dunn left the small fox and ran back to his truck
In pleased disbelief over his fortunate luck
Dunn drove off in hopes of getting the clothes
Before all the stores would empty and close
As Fox watched Dunn drive as fast as a hare,
Mouse joined her too and so did brown Bear

Fox

Don't worry my friends, all will be well
It's time that the man come out of his shell
No questions right now, it's time that we wait
The man will be back at quite a fast rate

Narrator

Time had pressed on, day shifting to night
The sun nearly down, the land far less bright
As most of the forest grew ready to sleep,
The trio stayed still, at the edge they did keep
Everything was quiet, there was hardly a sound
Until a faint hummer of a truck forest-bound
It started out silent, but grew much more big
Much louder than that of a breaking tree twig
As Fox hours earlier to the animals she swore,
It was Dunn who'd come back to the forest once more
Dunn pulled up his truck as the trio did stare
Awaiting to see what Dunn had to share
Dunn stepped out his truck and onto the ground
His large orange shoes making quite the loud sound
For indeed Dunn had done, with very few questions,
Purchased all of the clothes at Fox's suggestions
His hat, yellow dots that was all colored in pink
His pants colored purple and the leg length did shrink
His coat was all furry and colored dark blue
His shirt was all white, red lines swirling through
And the one final touch Dunn didn't omit
Were green colored teeth, causing green colored spit
To Mouse and to Bear, it was quite a big shock
But to Fox, she had no reason to balk
Dunn carried with him a large burlap bag
So big and so heavy, the bag had to drag
Dunn walked to the trio with a serious face
A face that suggested there might end up a chase
They didn't feel sure whether Dunn was all mad
That his reason to visit was something quite bad
Mouse and Bear, growing nervous, wanted to run
But Fox remained calm for this was not done
Dunn reached in the bag to pull something out
Mouse and Bear still concerned, their safety in doubt
As the tension now reached a very great height,
Dunn threw to the ground a memorable sight

Bear

Why this is most welcomed, this came as a shock
It's my old metal paw which helped me to walk!
Oh thank you for bringing my paw back to me!
You do not know how you've filled me with glee

Dunn

Mr. Bear, I am sorry I took this from you
That was most certainly a wrong thing to do
I'll make this all right and take back the fake
You'll need your walk back when the bears all awake

Narrator

Dunn took the slipper from the leg with no paw
And slipped on the one with the metal-made claw
Dunn helped Bear back up to give it a try
Why, Bear was so happy he started to cry

Bear

What a glorious night! Look how I walk!
Not stuck to the ground like some kind of rock
I'm back to myself and I'm happy indeed
My old paw is back on, I feel I've been freed

Narrator

Unable to contain all his good cheer,
Bear ran all around for the forest to hear
As Bear ran about and one deed made right,
Dunn leaned down to Mouse for easy eyesight

Dunn

I am sorry for all the slime I made fade
For I see now how much your slime was an aid
I treated your slime as some kind of grime
I'll have you back to yourself in no time

Narrator

Dunn went to his bag made from burlap
Pulled out some water; sealed with a cap
Instead of the water washing off his green goo,
Washing off deodorant is what it would do
Dunn poured on the water with Mouse's consent
It all came right off, doing as it was meant
The deodorant washed off with simplest ease
Dunn brought Mouse a towel so he would not freeze

Mouse

Thank you my friend for getting rid of that stuff
The time with it on was getting quite tough
But I cannot sweat for it is still much too cold
And the cold could last weeks or so I am told

Dunn

Don't worry dear Mouse, I know just what to do
In a matter of minutes, you'll feel good as new

Narrator

With the deodorant gone and Mouse no more wet,
Now all was needed was something to help sweat
Dunn went to his truck and pulled from the back seat
A portable heater that helps give off some heat
Dunn set it on down and turned it on high
The heat was enough to make the ground dry
Mouse much adored how it made him feel warm
Soon Mouse started returning back to norm
Mouse was all slimy from his head to his tail
His color all green like a coarse leaf of kale
Dunn turned off the heater and gave a slight grin
Mouse feeling better than he ever had been

Mouse

That horrible dryness has all been reversed!
I'm so thankful and pleased that I could just burst!

Oh thank you so much, you're a good man indeed
You've returned everything to me I would need

Narrator

Excited, unable to contain all his glee,
Mouse used his new slime to climb up a near tree
Just as Mouse said, he had stuck right away
And felt no more fear he'd end up as prey
With Mouse and with Bear once more as they ought,
Dunn took a seat for a moment of thought

Fox

Watching how much you made those two glad,
Perhaps not all humans are really so bad
Most humans come here for one thing to do
The first time I saw you I felt sure I knew
You are not someone who is up for this task
And for many years now, you were wearing a mask
Forgive me if asking comes off as too blunt,
But how did you come to feel you must hunt?

Dunn

I grew up wanting to be a player for soccer
To play on offence or at the goal as a blocker
I watched and I played everyday after school
Until my father said that I looked like a fool
My dad was a hunter, what he wanted for me
The only future that he was able to see
He'd taken my ball and gave me a gun
"Get out and hunt or you're not my son"
He yelled and he hit to be more like him
A life for a child that's terribly grim
Hearing him tell me without taking pause
It made me forget whoever I was
After a while, I gave in to his way
Agreed I would be a hunter one day
All that I wanted was for him to approve

Which meant my young self I had to remove
But once I came here and it was all real,
I found a career that had little appeal
I thought if I changed them, be more like the rest,
Then I would change too and see hunting as blessed

Fox

You've been hurt a long time, to yourself you were blind
So what was it that made you end up changing your mind?

Dunn

I bought all the clothes you said I should get
I thought wearing them would make me feel set
I put them all on and drove my truck down
To "The Hunters of Here", not far from town
I wandered inside, expecting much praise
What I got instead only gave me much haze
The room was all silent for a moment or two
Then erupted much laughter at what they did view
They laughed and they mocked at how I had dressed
Not one in the room felt the slightest impressed
They calmed down and called me a hunting disgrace
And said my admission would never take place
If my father were here, he'd show disappoint
And not waste a moment from me to disjoint
I thought I would leave feeling only much grief
The feeling I left with was sense of relief
For once in my life, in this silly outfit,
I felt I reclaimed my sense of childhood wit
What I thought would end up my tenuous fear
My life finally felt as though it were clear
Maybe I'm not one who carries a gun
Maybe somewhere else lives the real Dunn
I have to give up trying to be like my dad
Hunting and violence can turn someone bad
I have to look forward, find out who I am
Find a version of me that isn't some sham

I threw out my gun and my hunting gear too
I'm on my way now to something that's new
If my future will ever be something more bright,
I had to come back and make everything right
Give Bear back his paw and Mouse back his slime
Return them both back to their animal prime
Just one final thing and my time here will end
To shake a fox paw and thank a new friend

Narrator

Dunn gave a soft grin and held out his hand
A sign of respect on this snowy white land
Fox felt impressed that her plan worked so well
She challenged a man to come out of his shell
She returned the handshake and grinned just the same
Bringing a close to their slick, winter game
Dunn started to stand, getting ready to leave
But Fox hid one more surprise up her sleeve

Fox

Hold on just a moment, don't leave quite just yet
You'll want to hear this I'd be willing to bet
We are having a gathering at this oak tree
And so far the guest list includes only three
Bear will be coming and Mouse is as well
The food and the group will be rather swell
And perhaps if it isn't too much of a fuss,
We wondered perhaps if you too might join us

Narrator

Dunn peered at Fox, feeling slightly confused

Dunn

All that I've done, I'd be better excused

Fox

You've learned your lesson and deserve a new chance
So join us tomorrow and perhaps we might dance
There's just one concern we have to address
Something that causes all the animals stress
To come to our party, you must come as you
We all want to see you as you are most true
Friends are much better when they come as themselves
They remind us to be the best parts of ourselves
Don't change your best self to be all our friend
For a friendship like that is one that should end
Be all that you are in your most unique way
And that way you'll have the very best day
That's how you must act to join in the queue
Do you think that is something with which you could do?

Narrator

Dunn felt a faint tear hang from his eye
Here he was welcomed; a reason to cry

Dunn

Why yes Ms. Fox, I would most love to go
I will come as myself and not as your foe

Narrator

Dunn did indeed join the three in their party
A friendship that finally made him feel hearty
After that day, the four remained friends
For long since they all made their amends
It became a tradition every winter to come
And Dunn would show off all his trophies to them
As the years passed, the animals had to go
But Dunn still returned during the season of snow
To honour his friends who helped to make me
Happier than I ever thought I could be

THE END