The city of Oaky Oaks was covered in a clear night sky, the light of the streets obsolete. Yet, from the view of a young vulpine, her world couldn't look more bleak.

Foxy Loxy sat alone in her backyard holding her prized bat, her only form of refuge from the sea of confusion and disbelief that had surrounded her since around noon. When that wimp Chicken Little was carried off by a crowd of townsfolk, not as the joke pariah, but as the town hero, the kid who won Oaky Oaks the pendant.

A title that should have been hers.

The rules of good sportsmanship dictated that she shouldn't have felt this way, and there was some kind of admiration that Little had the guts to swing despite everything going against him. Nevertheless, the only thing keeping her teeth from grinding with stress at the ordeal were her braces. The kind of twisted luck that little looser had that day shouldn't have been possible. He shouldn't have even attempted, it was a simple task of just taking the walk and letting her do all the work. But instead, he had to go and swing. Every possibility said that runt was gonna get out and loose the game, and yet every vision Foxy had brought her back to the crowds rushing through her to get to that undergrown nugget.

“Just luck…” Foxy brushed the dust from her overalls as she stood up, “Nothing but luck.” That was all it had to be; the town would forget about it soon enough. More likely the little runt would do something stupid and go right back to being the town punching bag. The young vixen laughed at the thought of Little walking through town, his head held high and sheltered from the sun by the town's acorn trees. Then the smack of another acorn to the head, and the whole thing would start all over again.

Driven by her rebounding confidence, Foxy pulled herself into her batter's position, eying the stars in the sky like they were ejected from a pitching machine. “Been a rough year for our little town.” She whispered. “Dumb ol'Chicken Little turned out an embarrassment through and through. But at least we have one good egg in this town, the ever-popular Foxy Loxy.” Her tail shot up as the illusioned crowd cheered her name. The stars seemed to glow brighter, her mind now picturing them as photographers and journalists ready to record the moment where Foxy would redeem the town and keep the pennant in hand.

She swerved to the left.

“Ooohhh, just enough in the strike zone, but too close for comfort.”

Another ball shot at her, no reaction as the fake umpire caught it.

“Looks like Foxy's toying with them. What’s the hero of the game gonna do folks?!”

The flashing just kept coming, threatening to take her focus away from her mental game. Never realizing the flashes were no longer imaginary. The ball was visualized, but it was moving in slow motion, a weak fastball where the pitcher meant a splitter. Foxy reared back, ready to smash the ball over the fence and reclaim her honor. Paying no attention as a single bright light shone on her.

\*Smack\*

Foxy's whole world was covered in a momentary shade of blue and green, with an intense pressure slamming right between the eyes. The bat jolted from her hands, imagination rippling back to reality, only for that to waved too as her head began to drumroll.

“Beaned…batter…” Foxy swerved in place, trying to keep herself from falling full-stop into the dirt. “That’s…a walk…” Her whole world turned black and a deep sleep overtook her. Her last thought before regaining consciousness was concern with how cold the ground seemed. Almost like she had landed on solid metal.

As the colors of world began to blur and waver back into focus, two thoughts became apparent to Foxy; the first was that she was inside her house as she noticed lights were on and the second was that her parents had returned from their trip to the parent's meet up at the school as she was lying on the couch, wrapped up in at least two layers of blankets. There was a small flicking sensation on the forehead every second or so, no doubt from whatever had smacked her, and every one had an extra pressure against them. Looking to the lamp on the end table, one of her trophies wired up by her father, she confirmed the violet mark of her mother's lipstick. Part of her wanted to tear her arm from the blanket and rub it out, but it didn't take a genius to know she'd just make the bruise worse.

She didn't have time to anyways, a tight grip pressed through her cloth cocoon, raising her into the air and squeezing her against a medium apron stretched over a more-than-medium frame. “Ohh my sweet Loxy! You're okay! I mean I didn't doubt it, got a head as thick as mind and the will of your dad, but oh thank goodness!”

The rapid pace of her mother's ramblings sent a small shock through the mark on Foxy's head. “Mom, easy. Easy!”

“Oh, sorry dear. It's just that when your father and I came back and saw you on the ground like that, awful bump on…Vulpa! Foxy woke up! Anyways, we didn't know what to think.” Foxy's mother set her back on the couch, turning her knotted tail to the doorway of the kitchen. “Vulpa! Get in here and comfort our daughter!”

“In a minute Vixy dear! Trying to figure this thing out.” The nasally voice held no attempt at hiding it's annoyance, causing Vixy's tail to slap at the rug. But it was Foxy who left the couch, shaking off her bubble and peeked round the stone-painted corner. Her father, one Vulpa Venison, was standing at the phone, looking like he was about to shove the received right down his penicl mouth. “Now Buck, I want to believe, despite your son, that you are a sensible chicken. Now if you're not telling me something, I will go straight to the mayor with this. As personal assistant to the secretary, I have a moral obligation to report any miscreant-style behavior. Especially from repeat offenders.”

Foxy gave an approving nod to her father's lisping outbursts, even if he was too engrossed in them to notice her. But as he continued his tirade, the skin underneath his fur tinting red, Foxy's joy stopped cold. Beside her father, leaning against the wall, was a large slab of metal decorated with all sorts of blinking lights.

“Yes Buck, I have it right here. Six sides like a stop sign, strike any particular memories for you? What do mean? I found it right outside my house, my daughter out cold next to it.” Vulpa picked up the offending object and shook it at the phone, face now far redder than his fur. Against the light of the kitchen, there was a small dent in the plating. On instinct, Foxy felt the bruise on her forehead. A perfect match no doubt. “I will not say one more word to you. Come see it for yourself, and if you dare look me in the eyes and claim ignorance…” Braced fangs clenched tightly, the father wishing to choose his words carefully. “…just get over here.” With that the paternal fox tossed the phone back into place and set a paw to his head as if to relieve a headache. “Social skills like his…no wonder his son's a joke.”

Foxy Loxy had paid little attention to her father's grumblings; she was too fixated on the terrible object still aloft in his other paw. Even when Vixy took her daughter back in her arms, though not too far this time, her eyes were knitting and purling over every detail of that six sides terror.

“Vulpa dear, I don't think we should have that thing in the house.”

“Don’t worry honey, we’re only keeping it until Buck comes over and explains himself.” Vulpa set the panel back against the wall, marching to the old-fashioned stove where a small pot was steaming up. “As if he even can.”

“Why give him a chance? We should just call the police on his brat. Pulling such a nasty prank on my little Foxy Loxy.” Vixy took another kiss to her daughter's forehead, the painted prodding of the bruise snapping Foxy from her trance. But rather than fight it, Foxy accepted her mother's doting, taking hold of her arms.

“I’ll give Little this; he may be more loon than chicken but that boy has some technical skill. I almost thought the darn thing was genuine. Blinking lights, writing in a language I can't even begin to identify…”

“But that’s no excuse…”

“Of course not. Now don't worry kiddo, the bump doesn't look too serious for your old man to deal with. Little hot chocolate and maybe an early bedtime should make it better.” Mother's hugs and kisses, hot chocolate, the humiliation or more of the chickens, already the cold fear within the young vixen was melting away. Looks like the day wasn't going to be a total slap to her psyche after all. But despite it all, she still couldn't look away from that piece of…she couldn't even think it as a joke. The sooner it was gone, the better.

\*DING-DONG\*

The trio all turned to the living room. “Well, someone's got quick feet. He better hope his mouth can match.” Vulpa turned off the stove, adjusted his shirt and snorted. “Honey, you can handle the chocolate, I want to give Buck a few words father to father before anything else.”

“Dad, I can get my own hot chocolate.” But Foxy's words fell on deaf ears as her father turned and made his way out of the kitchen, mother sneaking in beside him.

“Nonsense dear, I know he said that bump isn't much, but you just woke up. I don't want you over working yourself so quickly. Just sit at the table and let Mama get you your sweeties.”

Foxy rolled her eyes, but it was with a smile and a nod. Once mother was in protective mode, there was no stopping her. And besides, it was only out of love. So Loxy did as she was told and started for the table, but made sure to take a little extra time passing the portal to the living room. No way was she going to miss just a few words of whatever dictionary-fed insult her father had for Buck. Just one of those things she loved to hear, but would have certainly died of embarrassment if he didn't have the sense to keep it at home.

When Foxy was at the doorway's center, she leaned just far enough that the opening hallway was just peeking round the couch. She could make out her dad's tail, the fat orange worm wriggling with manufactured fury. Thanks to a cared for hinge, the only sign that the door had been opened was the night seeping into the house. Foxy held her paws to her mouth ready to hold back the laughter that was sure to follow the coming barrage.

But it never came.

Vulpa's tail, rigid as a lampost, was the first sign that something was amiss. Then came the shot.

It wasn't like a gun shot. It reminded Foxy more of when she had got ahold of some sheet metal and warped it to frighten Little. But seeing her father's body launched backwards was more important than the sound.

Once more, Foxy Loxy went stiff with fear, but now she found it was far more logical. A frightened gasp from the side told her she didn't imagine what was happening.

Her second of worry up, Foxy's eye darted about the room for something to use. No way was she going to stand by while her father was in danger after all; and with her bat left beside the couch, she wasn’t going to. The young vixen rushed to her oaken possession and, with a near-feral yip, charged to the front door.

She cared little for the appearance of the attacker, only looking enough so she could swing at the legs to knock them down and crack em between the eyes. Unsportsmanlike, but such a concept meant nothing in fights for survival.

After sending the attacker out the door with a good swing, Loxy turned to where her dad had froze up; which was the best word as he seemed to be not knocked out but encased in some sort of blue glow. He was still breathing and his eyes were darting in all directions, but that was it.

“Mom! Call the cops! And a doctor…or some kind of scientist!”

“Trying sweetie! But the line is dead as—” This time, it was Vixy who let out a noise of unintelligible fear. After locking the front door back up, Foxy made her way towards the kitchen, where the warbled sounds of pans smashed together were resonating.

Foxy found her mother, iron skillet in hand, surrounded by two assailants with another on the floor writhing in pain, a pot stuck over their head that no doubt held the hot chocolate meant for her. She charged into the fray once more, her mother exhibiting the same.

Though with her list for war tapered by the first successful encounter, Roxy’s mind took more time examining the downright odd appearance of the attackers. Much of their bodies we’re covered what could best be described as space outfits from those old cold-war comics she used to read with dad, black with blue and purple highlights, varying shades of blue and green for their fur, matching antennae and the massive incisors almost half Foxy's size. The only real tie to any earthly creature seemed to be the large swath of their suit behind them, which had to be some form of squirrel's tail. The ones left standing were also holding long spears with acorn shapes at the top.

All of this examination, though quick, caught Loxy off her guard as the being she lunged at hopped over her swing and gave a swift counterattack right on her forehead bull’s-eye.

And that was how Foxy Loxy blacked out for the second time that night.

*…Goooooone is the looooosers!*

*Cause I am*

*the champion!*

*OF THE WORLD!!!!!*

Chicken Little’s adolescent ballad tore through the night. With a spoon for a mike, the chick had spent the past while celebrating his grand victory; blankets strewn about the room being used as skid rugs.

Once his voice repaired itself after that final screech, Little gazed into his silvery reflection.

He was smiling, for the first time in over a year, he was well and truly smiling. The long nightmare was over; no longer was he that crazy kid who imagined the sky was falling, the loon who got smacked by an acorn, the laughingstock of the whole town. Now he was Chicken Little: the hero of Oaky Oaks, whom by his incredible luck – not luck – skill and determination, won his town the pennant. Everyone was gonna be looking at him with a lot more respect, hell with any respect whatsoever.

And his dad, that was the smile Chicken Little had the greatest pleasure of seeing.

Little gazed over the nightline of the city, breathing in the fresh air as if it was pure soda. There were a few cars about and lights on, mostly from parents and kids getting back from the little meeting the town council was having regarding the baseball team’s success. Of course, he had his own private party with his friends, so he hadn’t gone. It was just enough to know that everything was about to change for him.

Soon enough, he looked up to the clear night sky. He couldn’t recall which star it was he had wished on, but it had to be somewhere in that vast expanse.

“Hey.” He whispered with clasped hands, “Thanks for the chance.” And it was a chance, a chance he wasn’t going to waste. The weights were off his head and ankles, the path ahead was brightly lit, and somewhere out there, Little just knew his mom was watching him and smiling just the –

A soft clunk brought Little out of his mind just in time to watch a small brown shape fall from above. Another one was coming right at him. With his catching hand still in play, Little caught the object and grimaced at it. A small acorn. Little’s grimace turned into a scowl when he looked to the ground and saw one Foxy Loxy standing there with her dungaree pockets bulging. She tried to speak, but she wasn’t allowed a coherent word before Little slammed his window shut and closed the blinds.

“I guess some things won’t change.” Of course Foxy had to show up and try to annoy him. Probably just couldn’t handle he came out on top for once. With one raspberry countering the constant plinking at his pane, Little turned off his lamp and got into bed. His dad would be home soon and surely he’d put a stop to the vixen’s shenanigans if she didn’t cut it out.

The ruse seemed to work, but only until a rapid pounding echoed from the front door, joined alongside the chime of the doorbell. Try as he might, covering his head from his pillow to his blanket, he just couldn’t block it out. Much as Little wanted to let Loxy keep trying, all the excitement of today had been threatening to give him a headache and fate would let her be the one to crack him in. Plus, there was the fact she was no longer top of the roost in town. Little had no reason to be afraid of that bully and perhaps now it would finally sink in that things had changed.

Careful to give no indication he was doing so, Little came down the steps to the door where Loxy was continuing to play Harassment 13 in Green. As the chick opened the door, he kept his stance straight and his face firm like in those magazines his friends had shown him. He was ready to incinerate his would-be nemesis with the mother of all putdowns, to give her every form of the word without showing the bird and bury her with regret for even thinking she could come and ruin the best night of his life.

So he was surprised to find himself pulled into a lung-crushing hug from his head down to his feet. As Little struggled to escape the unwelcome grasp, it finally occurred to him that Loxy was weeping. Her eyes were red and strained, covered by loose locks and her tail was disheveled and twitching. At first, Little believed it to just be her wounded pride or some kind of ruse, but then he saw the swollen red lump in the middle of her forehead.

“Little…I know I’ve been terrible to ya.” Her voice was just as broken as the rest of her, whatever sorrows she was feeling even making her southern accent more pronounced. “I’ve been a bully and making fun, but ah need help!”

The chicken listened to the fox’s story, all the while keeping one hand on the door in case he needed to shut it. He had no reason to believe a word of her story, even before she came to the part about the blue squirrel-like beings. But too many things kept Little from turning his back, the two in particular being the tragic state Loxy was in and the fact his dad had left saying he got a call from Vulpa.

Though every instinct warned of danger, curiosity and genuine concern won over, and soon enough Little was following Foxy down the starlit road into town.

But they weren’t completely quashed.

“If this really is a problem why not get Goosey to help, or anyone in town?”

“You think I’m dumb enough to try shouting about aliens from the sky? After your little fiasco?” Little could smell the vitriol in that statement, his reluctance in this whole mess validated.

“Look Foxy, if this is some kind of trick---"

“Will you just hush up and come on?”

From then on, the strange duo kept a chilled silence as they rushed through the town alleys and bystreets until they found themselves at the baseball diamond. The lot was empty, not a light shone from the field’s lamps, and more and more Chicken Little was ready to turn around and leave Foxy in the quivering mess she was pretending to be in. But the sight of gate otherwise blocking the entrance knocked down and smoking kept him beside his bully, who was grasping his arm even tighter than before.

“I saw them carry Mom and Dad in there. I don’t know what they could be doing to them. I ain’t going in alone.”

Little waved his free hand over the cracked oak and quickly pulled back for fear of burns. But still, he turned to the blubbering vixen with a disbelieving frown. “Last chance Foxy. If this is all some elaborate prank…” Little hushed his mouth as Loxy balled her own free hand and reared back, mouth quivering in anger. The chicken had no question that Foxy would have surely punched him, but instead she just stopped. Her tail scrapped the ground in front of her before she used it as a cushion for her knees. Her hand slid away from Little’s, both covering her face as she broke down into another fit of sobbing. Never before had the proud vixen looked so pitiful to her past victim. Each cry and tear smacked against Little’s heart, and his feet kept in place as he could only watch the child cry. Guilt shadowed the chicken as he took a step back towards Loxy, but nothing more. He just couldn’t be so heartless, such a display couldn’t possibly have been false, but it was a disturbing mirror to his own past life.

If he wanted things to change, he couldn’t just sit and watch them. He had to help it along.

The concrete/dust mixture dug into his knees as he knelt beside Loxy, who had run out of sobs and had devolved into whimpering. “Look, I’ll see what I can find. But things really are bad, you’re gonna have to get some help. It’s not easy speaking up, believe me, I know.” The vixen uncurled a little as the chicken spoke. “Just say it was my idea if you have to.”

Loxy nodded and grasped at her sides, trying to breathe deep. “Okay. Alright, just…give me a minute. Gotta calm down.”

“No prob. We’ll get your parents back.” With a final pat on the back, Little passed the broken gates into the darkness of the diamond.

At first glance, all was as it seemed outside; dark, abandoned and alone. There was only the faintest smell of popcorn and wieners in the old wooden structure and the scoreboard at the far end of the field was still showing the numbers from that spectacular game. Off in the distance, the last of the cars had left the school. Chicken Little snorted and would have returned to Loxy had he not spied a small piece of paper on the catcher’s mound. The first thought was that it was just some piece of litter floating about, but he could see it’s clean and folded condition from the stands.

Curiosity once more taking hold, Little jumped down to the field and walked over to the paper. It was a letter, no postmark or address, nothing but his name written in a blocky font not dissimilar from a license plate. “Loxy, I am not in the mood for games.” He muttered as he tore open the envelope. Inside, there was a sheet, but this one was illegible, written in a language that could only be described as…

…alien.

Little didn’t have much time to consider the meaning of these twisted, scratchy letters as a long shadow crawled over him. Far too long to be Foxy Loxy, that was for sure. Little turned around and found himself almost breaking his back looking over the blue-furred figure standing behind him. It was a one-to-one match with Foxy’s story; antenna, long fangs, squirrel body covered in a sci-fi suit and a staff in her hands.

Now though for awhile the town had thought otherwise, Chicken Little was far from stupid. So when he laid eyes on the alien creature, his first thought and and quickly obeyed instinct was to dash as fast as his little chicken legs could muster, making sure to kick up as much dust as he could.

But it was no use, for the chicken found himself wrapped in a purple glow and unable to move. Struggle though he might, all it managed to do was send the uncomfortable sleeping tingle through his body. His still frame was dragged through the dirt could, which dissipated under the sudden light of the nightlamps. As if the switch was multipurpose, the stands were filled to bursting with similarly dressed creatures, all in varying shades of blue, green and purple.

“Sister Scratazons!” A feminine voice boomed over the loudspeakers. “We are pleased to be given this ceremony, in honor of both our arrival to this fine planet and the beginning of a prosperous agreement with it’s inhabitants! And what joy is it to have our control over this planet begin in a town that produces such high-quality acorns.” Various noises from average cheers to high decibel squeaks and bleeps came from the otherworldly audience. “Standing on the pitching mound, we have the scrawny little chicken whose overblown screeches and panic inducing ways prevented our invasion over one Earth year ago.

Amidst the boos and jeering beeps, Chicken Little’s mind was set into overdrive.

*One year ago?*

*There was no way.*

*They couldn’t be the same ones.*

“And over on the other side, swinging the bat, we have the dear child who has agreed to aid us in our grand design and as such has earned the title of Honorary Sister, Miss Foxy Loxy!”

Amongst the backdrop of a soft blue spotlight, the familiar frame of Foxy Loxy, decked out in all of her sports gear tapped a silver bat against the plate. Her fur shined in the light in such a way that it was clear it had been made of the same color. As close to the box as could be, her parents cheered for their daughter, Vixy’s fur tinted lime green.

Though Little could not scream, his face twisted into anger was all that needed to be shown. “I ain’t sorry about this Little! There’s only room for one star in this town, but there’s plenty of space for a nut like you.”

The Scratazon keeping Little in place chuckled behind him before the field around him turned from purple to grey. On their own, the chicken’s body began to scrunch up, arms and legs folding in as tightly as they could and his head squeezed down into his neck. It was like he was trying to roll.

And with that thought, the pieces all connected in Little’s mind. Only two words came to mind before he was launched towards that traitorous, vicious, lying weasel of a fox.

“Oh snap.”

Epilogue

Chicken Little struggled under the weights that had been shackled onto him; a whole forest’s worth of papers and books both shoved into his backpack and stuffed into his arms to the point where he could hardly see in front of him. But even if he couldn’t see, he could hear it, the smug giggling and rapid tapping of Foxy Loxy’s new wardrobe as she hurried through the halls. “Come on Little, you got another long night of homework ahead of you.” Little grunted in reply for fear he would say something quite unpleasant to say in school company.

Ahead of the struggling fowl was the self-proclaimed queen of Oaky Oaks, showing off her techno-patterned dungarees emblazoned with the acorn insignia of her sisters. It had been a slow burn, but the Scratazons had soon taken over Oaky Oak after that fateful night a year ago. Foxy had been quick to play devil’s advocate, claiming the aliens she had befriended were peaceful and only wanted to sample the town’s acorns. But soon enough, they had taken control of the press and the mayoral office, with Foxy’s father sitting in the big chair and happy to help the creatures that had raised his kid’s reputation reach the star level it was always meant to be.

Though Foxy’s new fur coloration was a topic of conversation and light teasing, the new bat-staff which she now used as bragging cane quickly taught her would-be peers to keep their traps shut. It was aanother symbol of her status as an important…no…the most important person in town, save her family and her sisters.

As for Little’s position, it was her favorite part of the whole thing. The Scratazons were way too clever to be found out by the town and what was the runt to say? He knew all too well what would happen if he tried to speak up about these alien ‘invaders.’ And once the press was under control, Foxy had given him an ultimatum: Do all she commanded and be under her beck and call as runts like him were meant to be and she wouldn’t let her sisters turn him into the town pariah again. But as Little passed through the halls, his paper-blinkered view of the students standing aside for Foxy, he could make the argument that this was far worse than anything he suffered under his ‘crazy’ phase.

The pair walked out into a shady grove filled with oak trees, each one fully grown and with at least five citizens a tree picking acorns under the close watch of Scratazon guards.

“Yoohoo! Foxy dearie!” A small hovercraft floated down from the sky, Foxy’s mom Vixy waving from the driver’s seat. Foxy rolled her eyes, even with Scratazon DNA in their system, her family were still so embarrassing in public. But there was an easy remedy for that.

Stopping at the top of the steps, Foxy slide to the side and held her bat out in front of the visually impaired Little. The poor chicken was helpless as he tripped over and down the star into the dirt, his papers flipping about in the wind. The Scratazon guards watching giggled at this display of ineptitude and so did a few of the workers.

With hands on her hips and a braceface sneer, Foxy shook her head. “Little, how do you expect to be worth anything to the baseball team when you’re tripping over your own shadow?”

“More like your shadow Loxy.”

From the way Foxy and her mother gasped, one would think the chicken had just shouted all thirteen bad words at once. With her nose pointed to the leaf-covered sky, she hurried away to the hovercraft. “Just for that, you can walk back to your home. And I expect to see all my assignments done before school all the same.”

“But some of these aren’t due until next month!”

Foxy shouted as the hovercraft shot over the treeline, “Then you better get on em then!” The alien vixen laughed at her own joke as she laid back in her seat, enjoying the view above the city she and her family pretty much owned. “What a little twerp.”

“He sure is dear. Oh, newspaper just came in.” Foxy took the paper from her mother’s hand with excitement. Right as she had hoped, the front page was covered by a photograpgh of her standing tall at the plate, swinging and hitting the homerun that activated the slaughter rule and gave Oaky Oaks the pennant. Of course in that photo, she was using her old wooden bat. “I think it’s just lovely you try to give the other team a sporting chance dear. Not that it helped.”

“Not one bit mom.” Foxy flipped through the rest of the newspaper, though not finding much as gratifying as that picture. News on the movie based on her ‘heroic befriending’ of the Scratazons was still running slow and, though the comics were funny, she could always just make Little give another show if she was bored.

“You know dear, with the money our sisters have been giving us as a little ‘finder’s fee’ we might as well just buy the whole town. Maybe a few others as well. You know, some of the papers are calling our sisters…what was it…’evil, overpowering brutes?’”

“Oh yeah? Well, shouldn’t believe everything you read.”