

BIRDIE

Characters

BIRDIE- A fledgling, deeply insecure of her inability to fly.

MR. FOXX- A fox, feared by most animals within the forest, wise beyond his years in his own sarcastic and fox-like way .

MISS COZIE- A lamb, but mostly a wolf in sheep's clothing in all ways but literal. Don't let her innocence deceive you– she feeds on insecurity more than she feeds on grass.

OTHER CREATURES/BIRDS (Ensemble)- (*optional*) Simply other inhabitants of the forest.

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BIRDIE sits on a rock in centre stage, looking dejectedly up at the nest she fell out of that practically mocks her from a tree nearby. She lets out an audible sigh, burying her face in her hands. OTHER CREATURES mill about the space, completely unaware of BIRDIE's inner turmoil. MISS COZIE mozies her way over to BIRDIE, a smirk on her face.

MISS COZIE: (*smugly, yet innocently*) Ah, Birdie! How... faannncccyyyyy it is to see *you* on the G-R-O-U-N-D! Your home is a... hm, a little above here, no?

MISS COZIE motions to the nest as BIRDIE sucks in a breath, clucking the jab instantly.

BIRDIE: Yeah... uhm, just a bit...

MISS COZIE: You do know it's unwise for a fledgling such as yourself to linger down on the forest floor for too long, right? There are tigers, wolves, bears, FOXES! And-

BIRDIE cuts MISS COZIE off

BIRDIE: (*forcing the annoyance out of her tone*) YES! Yes, yes I know.

It's unclear whether MISS COZIE notices BIRDIE's annoyance- or simply chooses not to care.

MISS COZIE: Then it might be best, wee little Birdie, if you flutter... or in your case, *climb* back up to your nest before something *else* catches you before you get there, no?

MISS COZIE, always one to amuse herself, laughs and practically skips away.

BIRDIE: (*finally letting anger get the best of her*) Yeah... *rrreeeaaaalllllll* funny, coming from the one who wears a coat ALL. YEAR. AROUND... (*mumbling*) Stupid grass-eater.

BIRDIE sighs again, all the fight leaving behind grief.

BIRDIE: Who am I kidding...? Climbing back home would get me further than flapping these useless things ever would.

It's getting dark, and the forest is almost empty and relatively quiet. BIRDIE wallows in her own self pity, clearly bothered by MISS COZIE's words, when a rustle from off-stage startles her. BIRDIE jumps, standing up and backing away.

BIRDIE: (*frightened*) Who's there? Come out!

BIRDIE picks up a comically small and non-intimidating stick and throws it as far as a small bird could manage.

BIRDIE: I'm not scared of you!

MR. FOXX comes prowling out of the wings, intimidating and hungry, stepping on the previously thrown stick and snapping it clean in two. The remaining animals in the forest throw one glance his way before running away in fear. He pauses, staring at BIRDIE in mild confusion.

MR. FOXX: (*Confused and amused*) What are you doing down here at this hour, kid?

BIRDIE just stares at him, scared out of her mind. MR. FOXX snaps in her face a few times.

MR. FOXX: Hellloooo? Uhm, you mute or something? (*mumbling*) No wonder you fell from the nest, must not be a bright one, huh?

BIRDIE: (*defensive at the jab*) No! No, I didn't fall I-

MR. FOXX: And she speaks! I thought you had hit your head on the way down or something, because normally you birds *never* stop talking!

They stare at each other for a moment, neither quite sure what to say.

MR. FOXX: You... lost or something?

BIRDIE: No...

MR. FOXX: Then why else are you down here? You know there are—

BIRDIE: Tigers, wolves, bears and foxes. I've heard.

MR. FOXX: *(clicking his tongue)* Then why linger down here? Isn't your mother expecting you back up at your nest by now?

BIRDIE: I can't fly, alright? I never have been able to, and I never will.

BIRDIE sits back down on the rock, humiliated. MR. FOXX all of a sudden realizes the situation, and he sits down next to her, understanding and something close to grief on his face.

MR. FOXX: You know, when I was your age I always got myself caught in snares.

BIRDIE: How could such a sure-footed fox such as yourself end up in a snare?

MR. FOXX chuckles.

MR. FOXX: I wasn't such a sure-footed fox when I was a kit, that's for sure. I was known for it, too— all my siblings would leave me behind. I was never quick enough to outrun the foxhounds or crafty enough to chew my way out of a trap. Lots of close calls back then.

BIRDIE: That just seems so... unlike you now.

MR. FOXX: You're right, it's unlike me *now* to step into a snare or be caught by a dog- but it wasn't *always* that way.

They sit in comfortable silence for a moment, MR. FOXX allowing BIRDIE to absorb his words.

BIRDIE: So how'd you do it?

MR. FOXX: Do what?

BIRDIE: How did you... y'know, learn to get out of snares and hide from dogs?

MR. FOXX considers what to say for a moment.

MR. FOXX: I had hope.

BIRDIE: Hope?

MR. FOXX: Yes, hope.

BIRDIE: (*confused*) How does hope get you out of a snare, Mr. Foxx?

MR. FOXX chuckles.

MR. FOXX: Hope itself didn't wear down the snare or lead the dogs off my scent, but without it, I don't believe I would've ever tried to escape those snares and the dogs in the first place.

BIRDIE: But you would die if you stayed in those snares and allowed yourself to be caught by those dogs. How was that not motivation enough?

MR. FOXX: Sometimes, when everything seems too difficult or hopeless to achieve, we simply... give up. Even if the cost of doing so is high. *(He turns to look at her)* Much like the situation you find yourself in, kid.

BIRDIE considers this for a moment.

BIRDIE:... No amount of hope will get these wings to work, Mr. Foxx.

MR. FOXX stands, preparing to leave to go hunt.

MR. FOXX: You may find, if you truly have hope and meet it halfway, that the sky won't seem so far out of reach for you anymore.

BIRDIE: But what if I fall?

MR. FOXX: You might, kid, but you will never know how to outrun a dog or escape a snare unless you get caught by one.

MR. FOXX disappears back into the forest, leaving BIRDIE alone on the rock. BIRDIE looks down at her wings, and then looks out at the audience, newfound hope and determination on her face.

END.