

"PATCHES"

By

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FADE IN:

EXT. ROYAL TOWNSHIP - SPRING - DAY

A small, agricultural-town. Road-sign reads "WELCOME TO ROYAL TOWNSHIP: POPULATION 2,051".

Several farms ring the town a few miles out.

EXT. FRANK'S FARM - DAY

A mowed, grass-field extends out fifty-feet from the back-porch of a farmer's house. In the center is a sizable bed of purple petunias within a foot-tall, wire garden-fence. The flowers are immaculately cultivated.

A LARGE-RABBIT (male, age 30 in human-years & white colored) and a SMALLER RABBIT (male, 30 human-years & grey colored) are inside this fence near the flowers. The smaller rabbit TEARS OFF a petunia-petal and SWALLOWS it.

SMALLER RABBIT

Wow! These are delicious! Almost as good as advertised.

LARGE RABBIT

Now that's a rare state-of-affairs for certain! Is that your first-petal Barlow?

SMALLER RABBIT/BARLOW

Yup. None of the rabbits who come out here seem to want me tagging along and I'm certainly not crazy enough to do it by myself.

(short pause)

Just crazy enough with you tho I guess.

LARGE RABBIT

(amused)

I'm flattered.

Barlow grins.

BARLOW

It really is a great honor isn't it?

(pause, serious)

But Samuel, why **have** we come here?

(MORE)

BARLOW (CONT'D)

Now that my curiosity's been satisfied I remember you saying once that you didn't even like these flowers much.

LARGE RABBIT/SAMUEL

I don't. They're too sweet for me and I prefer the hay closer to our warren.

BARLOW

Well that must work out quite um -- well for you as a general thing but then I hope this isn't supposed to be some kind of favor for me because honestly until now I thought I was doing a favor for you.

Samuel LAUGHS.

SAMUEL

Don't worry Barlow. It is in fact a favor for me! I'm not going to eat any petals myself, but I did want to bring some back home for my --

BARLOW

Oh that's right of course! Am I a dope or what?! Congratulations again by the way!

SAMUEL

Why thank you! I must say that --

A large shadow rises above Samuel and Barlow from behind. The two rabbits freeze as A SINISTER VOICE (female, adult) speaks.

SINISTER VOICE (O.S.)

Apologies for interrupting little bunnies -- but I couldn't help wanting to tear both of you into even smaller pieces!

The rabbits turn their heads back to look. Barlow's face transforms to sheer terror.

EXT. ROYAL TOWNSHIP - DOWNTOWN - DAY

Royal Township's main-square includes a general store, city hall, hardware store, bank, animal-feed store, a church and veterinarian's office.

EXT. ROYAL TOWNSHIP - HARDWARE STORE - DAY

The store's front-awning states "HAROLD'S HARDWARE".

INT. HARDWARE STORE - DAY

A HAY-FARMER (male, 38) is alone in the painting-aisle. He wears a flannel-shirt and has a set of metallic Army dog-tags around his neck on a chain.

The farmer browses rows of paint cans on the shelf.

HAY FARMER  
 (to himself)  
 Eggshell? Ivory? Where's the -- um,  
 white paint... oh here we go.

He grabs two cans of paint.

FRONT OF STORE

The farmer moves toward the front-counter right as a bell above the store-entrance RINGS and a MALE CUSTOMER (mid 50's) steps indoors.

HAY FARMER (CONT'D)  
 (under his breath)  
 Whoa.

The farmer walks backward into the paint-aisle again and out of sight.

The new customer nods to the STORE OWNER (male, adult) behind the counter.

MALE CUSTOMER  
 Hey Harold.

STORE OWNER/HAROLD  
 Uh, hi Frank.

MALE CUSTOMER/FRANK  
 Stopped in for more garden-fencing  
 to keep those dumb-rabbits outta my  
 wife's flowers.

HAROLD  
 Then you've come to the right  
 place.

FRANK

Well I guess the **only** place tends to be the right place most of the time. I...

Frank catches a glimpse of the hay-farmer in the paint-aisle.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Oh hey there!

Frank steps into the aisle.

PAINT AISLE

Frank approaches the farmer.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Robert! I thought I saw you down here!

HAY FARMER/ROBERT

(matter-of-fact)

Afternoon Frank. Yeah, I was just -  
- uh, how's the wife doing?

FRANK

Terrible Robert! She's doing terrible! I was actually just telling Harold at the counter that -- Robert, those rabbits of yours are chewing up all my wife's petunias again!

ROBERT

That's too bad.

Robert sets his paint-cans on the floor.

FRANK

Too bad?! More of a travesty is what it is! I mean, this very morning my cat Misty killed one of the varmints right in the act! She practically tore the thing's head clean off. Now I'm gonna clean my shotgun out again and it'll be rabbit season in my yard till further notice!

ROBERT

Alright.

FRANK  
 (confused)  
 Alright?

ROBERT  
 Those rabbits aren't my pets Frank.  
 If they're on your property you're  
 within your rights to shoot them.

FRANK  
 I know Robert I know but just hear  
 me out a minute! I -- I mean, the  
 wife and I would really appreciate  
 if you could get rid of that whole  
 rabbit-warren behind your hay  
 field. In fact I know a couple guys  
 I could get you their number --  
 they'd be able to flood the whole  
 thing out in one afternoon! Not too  
 expensive either!

ROBERT  
 I'm not really interested in --

FRANK  
 It's not just the flowers I'm  
 worried about! What if they get a  
 taste for my potatoes or carrots?  
 You know those are my livelihood!

ROBERT  
 Rabbits go after carrots in the  
 cartoons Frank -- and they're  
 definitely not going to dig for  
 your potatoes.

FRANK  
 What's wrong with my potatoes?!  
 McDonald's themselves said they'd  
 consider --

ROBERT  
 (annoyed)  
 There's nothing wrong with your  
 potatoes! That's not what I...

Robert SIGHS.

ROBERT (CONT'D)  
 Look, I don't want to kill the  
 rabbits alright?  
 (MORE)

ROBERT (CONT'D)

My daughter likes seeing them, my dog likes chasing them and since I leave a little hay out near em they don't tend to cause many problems. However if you're worried you could always replace the fence with all those holes and missing-boards between our farms. You know fencing on that side is your responsibil --

Frank waves a hand.

FRANK

(less combative)

Yeah yeah I hear ya. I'm just waiting for the price of lumber to come down a couple-bucks first. You know how it is.

(short pause)

Well I better let you get back to your painting. Gotta get home soon anyway since the wife's been sick.

ROBERT

(genuine)

Oh? I'm sorry to hear that. Please give her my best.

EXT. ROYAL TOWNSHIP - HARDWARE STORE - MOMENTS LATER

Robert gets into his two-seat pickup parked in the store's front lot. The passenger-window's half rolled-down and the paint cans are in the truck-bed.

INT. ROBERT'S TRUCK - DAY

Robert SHUTS the truck-door. A large and excited SHEEP-DOG (male, 35 human-years) in the passenger-seat squirms around and BARKS. The dog's eyes aren't obscured much by its fur.

ROBERT

Hey! Did ya miss me boy?!

The dog BARKS again in the affirmative. Robert scratches its head.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

You know Dawson, next time I'm in there I'll have to ask Harold if he does hardware home-delivery.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - LATER

Robert stands on the side of a dirt-road near a row of three mail-boxes and flips through his mail. His truck's parked a few feet ahead.

A WOMAN (early 50's) walks up to him.

WOMAN

Anything good today?

Robert smiles.

ROBERT

If bills and catalogs count as good then I guess plenty! Hi Anna! I'm sorry to hear you've been under the weather.

WOMAN/ANNA

(confused)

Under the weather?

(pause, realization)

Ah! I guess I did have a little cold bout a week ago but I'm well over that now. Thank you for checking on me though!

ROBERT

Uh, no problem at all. I'm also sorry about the rabbits.

ANNA

Oh, don't worry too much about that! Frank was a little put out this morning but you know how he can be about his flowers! In fact I think he's at City Hall now to sign-up for Royal Township's annual Garden-Contest. I guess the winner of *Best Flowers* will get some kind of write-up in Hiram-County Magazine!

ROBERT

Huh! Best of luck with that then!

ANNA

It's not really my thing so much but I'm sure my husband would be very happy to win! I'll tell Frank you wished him well.



ROBERT

Don't put yourself to any trouble  
Anna! I'll probably mention it to  
him myself one of these times. Have  
a great day!

ANNA

Thanks Robert! You too!

EXT. ROBERT'S HAY FARM - DAY

A large entrance-hole to a rabbit warren is dug into a grass-field by a hay-bale. Several WORRIED RABBITS near the hole look around.

INT. RABBIT WARREN - LIVING BURROW - DAY

The living-quarters of a rabbit-family inside the underground warren on Robert's hay-farm.

A MOTHER-RABBIT (25 human-years, tan colored) rests by her four hairless, NEWBORN BUNNIES. She nuzzles the head of a NEWBORN DWARF-BUNNY (male) that's about half the others' size.

A deep, MALE VOICE comes from outside the burrow's entrance-hole.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)

Abigail?

The mother-rabbit looks up in extreme surprise.

MOTHER RABBIT/ABIGAIL

Uh, yes?! I'm here!

A very large, regal male-rabbit (45 human-years, white colored) and a dignified FEMALE RABBIT (35 human-years, white colored) enter Abigail's burrow.

Abigail rises to her feet and bows to these rabbits.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

King Cotton-Rod?! Queen Cotton-Rod?! I'm sorry! I wasn't expecting -- either of you.

MALE VOICE/KING COTTON-ROD

No need for apologies or formalities Abigail. Unfortunately this isn't a social visit.

ABIGAIL

If you need my husband he's out getting hay at the --

KING COTTON-ROD

This will be painful enough to hear Abigail, so I won't belabor it.

(short pause)

Your husband and the rabbit Barlow were beyond the left-gate on the sun's early-path when they came upon The Great Evil that stalks those parts. Barlow managed to escape with some injury and he informed us that Samuel -- was killed by the feline beast.

ABIGAIL

What?! Oh no!

KING COTTON-ROD

I'm sorry to have to tell you this, especially on what should be a shining-sun for your new family.

ABIGAIL

But what were they doing past the left-gate?! Samuel never goes there!

KING COTTON-ROD

I'm told Barlow is not in full control of his senses this moment so several answers must wait a time.

ABIGAIL

Then maybe he's wrong about my husband being murdered by that cat!

KING COTTON-ROD

No Abigail. I'm afraid on that point there can be no doubt. My wife will stay several-suns here with you to help your family get started on the right paw. I'm truly sorry for your loss.

Abigail SNIFFLES.

ABIGAIL

Thank you both.

QUEEN COTTON-ROD  
It's no problem at all dear.

King Cotton-Rod glances at Abigail's newborn bunnies.

KING COTTON-ROD  
On a positive note it seems that  
all of your bunnies --  
(pauses at sight of the dwarf, but  
regains composure before much is  
noticed)  
appear mostly-healthy.

INT. RABBIT WARREN - PUBLIC HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

King Cotton-Rod moves down a hall that passes the entrance-  
holes of other burrows. He meets a MUSCULAR MALE-RABBIT (41  
human-years, grey colored) coming the other way.

The two rabbits stop to speak.

KING COTTON-ROD  
Hello General Hanson.

MUSCULAR MALE-RABBIT/GENERAL HANSON  
Greetings King Cotton-Rod.

KING COTTON-ROD  
How does Barlow fare now?

GENERAL HANSON  
His face is pretty scratched up.  
He's also lost one eye and most of  
an ear. He'll live though.

KING COTTON-ROD  
That's good news at least. How is  
his -- temperament?

GENERAL HANSON  
We've had to restrain him. There's  
Barlow's own run-in with the cat to  
be considered of course and I'm  
told that his account of Samuel's  
death was -- uh, gruesome.  
(short pause)  
There's hope he'll regain  
possession of himself in a sun or  
so however.

KING COTTON-ROD

Alright. Thank you Hanson!  
I would also like you to get the word out -- my previous recommendation that no one pass the left-gate is now my order. We've lost enough rabbits out there already, and as long as we have enough grass and hay to eat where we are I see no reason to risk further lives for a delicacy.

GENERAL HANSON

Yes sir! But may I ask, what was Samuel doing beyond the left-gate in the first place? He never seemed to have much of a sweet-tooth to me.

KING COTTON-ROD

I believe he was collecting flower petals -- to give to his newly-mothered wife.

GENERAL HANSON

(somber)

Oh. Does she know that?

KING COTTON-ROD

Not on this sun.

EXT. ROYAL TOWNSHIP - DAY

Spring turns to summer, then turns to fall, turns to winter and becomes spring again. A year has passed.

EXT. ROBERT'S HAY FARM - ONE YEAR LATER - SPRING - DAY

The structures on Robert's farm include a home, separate hay-barn and doghouse. The barn's half-painted with a fresh-coat of white paint and red trim while the rest is an old, dingy-brown color.

Dawson's doghouse is in back of the farmer's home and enclosed within a chain-link fence about fifteen-feet past it on all sides. The fence-gate is now open.

Behind these structures is a large, half-tilled wheat field and an idle threshing-machine.

Further still out is a sizable grass-meadow (location of the rabbit-warren) with a dozen or so trees and a creek that runs along the back of the property.

ROBERT'S MEADOW

Abigail's dwarf-bunny (now 16 human-years, tan-colored -- but also with many patches of white-fur across his back) sits alone beneath a tree, near a rock about his own size. He lets out a DEJECTED SIGH.

BUNNY-VOICE (O.S.)

Hey Patchy!

DWARF BUNNY

It's Patches, Carwood. Not Patchy.

Two MALE BUNNIES (16 human-years, grey colored) approach Patches.

BUNNY-VOICE/CARWOOD

Oh come on. Be a sport Patchy!  
What's in a name anyway right?!

No response from Patches.

CARWOOD (CONT'D)

I mean, if you didn't wanna be called Patchy why have such a weird fur-pattern huh?

(short pause)

Also, why are you hanging so far out here by your lonesome?

SECOND MALE-BUNNY

He's probably still bummed that DAISY doesn't want to hop-the-farm with him. But if it makes you feel better Patches she probably wouldn't date any other big-loser either!

CARWOOD

That's not very nice Marshall!  
Patchy isn't a big loser! He's more of a tiny loser.

DWARF BUNNY/PATCHES

Ugh! Leave me alone you two!

CARWOOD

I'll do you a favor Patchy and let that remark slide just because you're obviously so heartsick still. You've gotta move on though! You were rejected what, three-suns-ago now? Marshall and I will even help you out.

SECOND MALE-BUNNY/MARSHALL

(confused)

We will?

CARWOOD

Sure! While I can't think of any females in this warren that'd want to dig a burrow with a dopey dwarf-bunny if one does wander in from the wild with like, three legs and no nose or something we'll point her right out in Patchy's direction first!

PATCHES

Just leave me alone.

MARSHALL

Leave you alone or what?! You'll go tattle on us to TEMPE'  
(pronounced tem-pay)  
again?

CARWOOD

Yeah! Tempe' said not to lay a paw on you and so we haven't. That doesn't mean we can't all play a little game though!

PATCHES

I don't want to play with either of you.

CARWOOD

(sarcastic)

Oh ow, my feelings!

(short pause)

But there can't be any harm in a quick-game of *Rabbit-Rabbit-Bunny* right?

Silence from Patches. Marshall maneuvers behind the dwarf-bunny who's attention is fixed on Carwood.

CARWOOD (CONT'D)

What? No?

(pause)

Then I guess -- nip-the-tail it is!

Marshall bites Patches' tail.

PATCHES

Ow!

Patches spins around to face Marshall.

PATCHES (CONT'D)

Stop it Marshall!

MARSHALL

(agreeable)

Alright.

Carwood moves to bite Patches' tail also but before he can a TERRIFIED RABBIT runs up to the group and grinds to a halt.

TERRIFIED RABBIT

The Great Terror is coming! Run for  
your lives!

The terrified-rabbit takes off again in flight.

Carwood looks in the direction the rabbit came from and sees Dawson sprinting toward them in the distance.

CARWOOD

Oh yikes!

Carwood and Marshall both scamper after the terrified rabbit. Patches sees the dog too but doesn't move.

Dawson races past Patches without seeing him and pursues the other rabbits.

SHEEP-DOG/DAWSON

Bark! Bark! Bark!

The terrified rabbit, Carwood and Marshall flee through a line of bushes and escape across the open meadow. Dawson stops his chase.

DAWSON (CONT'D)

Harrumph!

Dawson turns back and now notices Patches still by the tree.

DAWSON (CONT'D)

Bark! Bark! Bark!

Dawson runs over to Patches and stops.

PATCHES

Oh Great Terror! I make no effort to flee! All I ask is that you rip me apart quickly. For while I have no desire left to live I am still nervous of great pain!

DAWSON

Well that's a little dramatic and -  
- uh, oddly-formal. What makes you think I'm going to rip you apart exactly?

PATCHES

Why chase bunnies if not to devour them?

Dawson ponders.

DAWSON

Huh! I guess I don't really know! Chasing rabbits always just seemed like a good idea to me for some reason but now that I've caught one I'm not quite sure what to do about it.

PATCHES

If you're going to eat me please just do it quickly like I asked.

DAWSON

(suspicious)

Is this some kind of reverse-psychology trick you're pulling here? Like, *please eat me* so I don't eat you because you're not the boss of me or something?

(short pause)

Now I won't eat you little rabbit -  
- but it's because I was never going to and not because you pulled fur over my eyes alright?

PATCHES

No. I'm not playing any tricks... but while I'm still only a bunny for eight-more suns being a little rabbit is really my big-problem.



DAWSON

Oh. While I assume *suns* is rabbit-jabber for *days* -- that's what your whole deal is huh?! The other reindeer won't let you join in any reindeer games?

PATCHES

(annoyed)

Reindeer?! Games? What are you talking about?!

DAWSON

It's a metaphor from a Christmas story about --

PATCHES

I'm not a reindeer and I don't even like games so it's not a very good one!

(short pause)

And you accuse **me** of jabbering?!

DAWSON

Metaphors aren't supposed to be an exact uh -- look, it doesn't really matter I guess. But hey, on the bright side perhaps all your peers will be impressed with how you bravely stood-against such a -- grandiose creature as myself! I mean the other -- um, bunnies you were with couldn't seem to get away fast enough.

PATCHES

It isn't really brave when some-bunny wants to get eaten.

DAWSON

Some-bun...? Oh. Cute.

(short pause)

Well you're right about that -- but what is bravery if not facing perceived-danger for a good reason? You just need to add a good to your reason.

PATCHES

Ugh! Even that wouldn't stop those two bunnies from bullying me for long! It might even get worse if they thought I was trying to show them up!

DAWSON

Isn't there anyone at your warren  
who has your backside?

PATCHES

Um -- my mother does... and Tempe'  
too I guess.

DAWSON

Tempe'?

PATCHES

Tempe' Cotton-Rod. The son of King  
Cotton --

DAWSON

What?! You're friends with a  
rabbit-prince?! Why am I even  
wasting time trying to give you  
advice?!

PATCHES

(annoyed)

Tempe's a busy rabbit alright?! He  
probably also just feels sorry for  
me and doesn't want me scampering  
over to him whenever I've got some  
kind of problem!

(short pause)

Anyway Carwood and Marshall would  
get on my tail even more for  
tattling.

DAWSON

Carwood and Marshall are your  
bully-bunnies then?

PATCHES

Yes.

DAWSON

Why is it that they don't want you  
going to Tempe' with your issues?

PATCHES

Uh...

DAWSON

Do you think it's for your benefit?

PATCHES

They wouldn't do anything for my  
benefit.

DAWSON

Then it's really for their benefit right? And what could that benefit be? Maybe so they can keep hassling you without fear of repercussions?

PATCHES

(light goes on)

Huh. You could be right!

DAWSON

It's happened before I suppose.

Patches looks around.

PATCHES

Um, I guess if you really aren't going to eat me I should probably head home. I'm sure word has gotten round the warren by now and my mother is already in mourning. I better go fix that.

DAWSON

Give her my regards.

Patches smiles.

PATCHES

I'll tell her The Great Terror sends his best.

Dawson SNORTS.

DAWSON

Great Terror?

(smiles)

You goofball rabbits. My name's Dawson alright?

PATCHES

Alright Dawson. Thanks for the pep-talk! I'm Patches by the way.

DAWSON

Be seeing you Patches.

PATCHES

See ya!

Patches runs toward his warren.

INT. RABBIT WARREN - LIVING BURROW - MOMENTS LATER

Abigail (now 41 human-years) sits dejected in her living-burrow.

Patches comes in through the front entrance-hole.

PATCHES

Uh, hi Mom.

ABIGAIL

Patches?! You're alive!

Abigail rushes over and nuzzles Patches.

PATCHES

Ah come on Mom! Knock it off!

ABIGAIL

They said The Great Terror got you!

PATCHES

I guess he did -- more or less. But it turns out The Great Terror isn't quite as terrible as rumor suggested.

ABIGAIL

What?! Oh never-mind! I'm just so glad you're alright! Don't you ever scare me like that again you hear?!

PATCHES

My ears are long enough. I won't.

ABIGAIL

Good!

PATCHES

Although if I was eaten you wouldn't have to worry about me crowding your burrow-space anymore.

ABIGAIL

Why are you talking like that?! Now that your sister's pairing off in her own burrow you know I could use the company.

Patches SIGHS.

PATCHES

Yeah I know, but I --

A MALE RABBIT speaks from outside the entrance-hole.

MALE RABBIT (O.S.)  
Um, Mrs. Abigail --

A large, handsome male-rabbit (17 human-years, white colored) enters Abigail's burrow.

MALE RABBIT (CONT'D)  
I just wanted to offer my  
condolen...

The male rabbit notices Patches.

MALE RABBIT (CONT'D)  
Patches?!

PATCHES  
Hi Tempe'! How's things hoppin'?

MALE RABBIT/TEMPE'  
But how did... actually, when  
Carwood said he tried to distract  
the dog to help you escape I should  
have questioned his whole story  
immediately.

Patches smiles.

PATCHES  
(cheerful)  
I guess scampering home as quickly  
as possible **could** have been a  
distraction.

TEMPE'  
Well I'm very glad you're unharmed  
at any rate! What exactly happened  
then with the whole --

PATCHES  
Uh, you wanna hear about it in your  
burrow? I've got something I need  
to talk to you about anyway.

ABIGAIL  
(amused)  
Alright! I can take a hint you two!

INT. RABBIT WARREN - PRIVATE HALLWAY - LATER

A large recess is dug into one side of a warren-hallway that's blocked with numerous wooden-sticks serving as 'jail' bars. Carwood and Marshall are in this prison space while Tempe' faces them from the adjacent hall.

TEMPE'

Now this may come as a shock to both of you, but when I say keep your paws off another -- rabbit, it doesn't mean you're free to go nipping at their tails! But hopefully a sun in the brig will cure you of your literal-ism even if it doesn't make you better bunnies.

Tempe' leaves.

CARWOOD

(to Marshall)

Thanks a lot idiot!

MARSHALL

Me?!

INT. RABBIT WARREN - SICK UNIT HALLWAY - LATER

Tempe', with his mouth full of hay/clover trots down a warren-hallway toward an entrance-hole at the far end with a GUARD RABBIT (male, 25 human-years) stationed in front.

Tempe' makes some UNINTELLIGIBLE MUMBLING.

GUARD RABBIT

Yes sir!

The guard-rabbit moves to one side so Tempe' can pass and then follows behind him through the hole.

INT. RABBIT WARREN - SICK UNIT FOYER - EVENING

A room with a second hole-opening across its width.

Tempe' stops in the foyer's center and drops the hay/clover to the ground.

TEMPE'

(to guard-rabbit)

Thanks Jack. I got it from here.

GUARD RABBIT/JACK

I'm supposed to make sure no one enters the sick-unit.

TEMPE'

Do you think I'm just gonna trot on in if there's no guard here to bunny-sit?

JACK

So -- you're not going into the sick-unit?

TEMPE'

No Jack. I'm not.

JACK

Well, I guess I did make sure then. Later Tempe'.

Tempe' smiles.

TEMPE'

Later jack-rabbit!

JACK

(sarcastic)

Oh wow. I've never heard **that** one before.

Jack leaves through the hole they entered from. A short-silence follows.

JACK (O.S.) (CONT'D)

I've heard it lots before in case that skittered-above your ears there!

Tempe' CHUCKLES.

TEMPE'

(agreeable)

Alright guard-bud, I got ya!

(toward the far-hole,

serious)

Um, Daisy? Are you there? It's Tempe'.

Daisy the bunny (female, 16 human-years) responds from the other side of the hole.

DAISY (O.S.)

(good natured)

Yeah. I heard that part already.

Tempe' smiles a bit.

TEMPE'

I guess you would have huh.  
 (short pause)  
 Are you feeling any better?

Daisy SNEEZES.

DAISY (O.S.)

Not really. My nose keeps running  
 and it's a little hard to breathe  
 sometimes.

TEMPE'

I'm sorry to hear that. Have your  
 parents been allowed to visit yet?

DAISY (O.S.)

Yes. They were here this morning.

TEMPE'

That's good. Oh! I brought hay and  
 clover for you. I know you've got  
 some already but this should be  
 fresher and tastier.

DAISY (O.S.)

Thank you Tempe'.

TEMPE'

You're welcome Daisy. I've gotta  
 scurry now to make it for moon-  
 watch on time but I'll be back  
 next-sun if you're awake then and  
 want company.

(short pause)

And don't worry, you're gonna beat  
 this thing I'm sure!

Daisy SNEEZES again then a short pause.

DAISY (O.S.)

(somber)

I'm -- uh, thanks again.

EXT. ROBERT'S HAY FARM - EVENING

The sun's just set. Patches sits alone on the grass and  
 stares out into the distance.

Tempe' approaches from behind.



TEMPE'

Hi Patches.

PATCHES

Hey. How go the rounds?

TEMPE'

Can't complain -- or at least I won't. Barlow should arrive in a few-hundred thumps to take position so you can head back now if you want.

PATCHES

I'll leave as soon as he gets here then.

TEMPE'

Alright. Very admirable.  
(short pause, distracted)  
Very admirable.

PATCHES

Tempe'?

TEMPE'

(back in moment)  
Oh! Yes?

PATCHES

Do you think there's a chance I'll be assigned to outer-watch?

TEMPE'

I don't know Patches. Probably not. I mean, General Hanson is the fastest rabbit we've got outside of King Cotton-Rod.

PATCHES

Well, I meant after General Hanson retires of course.

TEMPE'

Um, to be honest there's a number of rabbits higher on the *King's List* for that position so I wouldn't really invest too much into it. Anyway, there's nothing wrong with inner-watch! If The Great Evil ever managed to sneak past General Hanson you'd be the warren's last chance of alarm.

PATCHES

I know. Inner-watch just isn't very  
-- prestigious.

TEMPE'

Every job has value Patches.  
Have Carwood and Marshall been  
hassling you again?

PATCHES

No. Some grumbles under their  
breath but they seem fine ignoring  
me mostly.

TEMPE'

Good.

PATCHES

(embarrassed)

I meant more in regards to finding  
a burrow-mate.

TEMPE'

Don't worry about that Patches. I'm  
older than you and I don't even  
have a burrow-mate yet.

PATCHES

Yeah but you're in kingship-  
training! When you have time again  
you'll have your pick of the whole  
warren! That's hardly my problem.

TEMPE'

Your real problem might be  
overthinking everything. But that  
does remind me -- and I better be  
the one to tell you cause you're  
bound to find out regardless.

(pause)

Daisy has the snuffles.

PATCHES

What?! Snuffles?! Are the health-  
elders sure?!

TEMPE'

She's started showing most of the  
symptoms. Sneezing and heavy  
breathing with a head-tilt. She's  
chosen to be sequestered in the  
sick-unit.

PATCHES

How frightening! Having to choose between leaving the farm or being sequestered for ten suns! I feel like shaking even considering it!

TEMPE'

It's a hard decision for sure, but Snuffles is too dangerous and contagious for anything else. At least this way she can talk to friends and family even if she won't see them.

(short pause)

Perhaps you could visit her later?

PATCHES

Daisy's not gonna want to see a bunny she just rejected. And I wouldn't know what to say.

(short pause)

Snuffles isn't always fatal though right?

TEMPE'

Not always -- but the survival-rate is low. The elders think she has around five-suns left, maybe six. I'm sorry I had to tell you and also sorry I must now be off. I'm already late to meet the General.

PATCHES

OK. Good luck with outer-watch Tempe'! You're not uh, nervous are you?

Tempe' CHUCKLES a little nervously.

TEMPE'

Nervous? Me?! Of course not! I mean, I've done outer-watch before -- during the sun.

(short pause)

And even if I **was** just a little nervous this is only a temporary assignment after all. One's got to hit each stop on the route in order to be King some-point right?

Tempe' starts to trot forward.

PATCHES

Tempe'!

Tempe' turns back around.

TEMPE'

Yes?

PATCHES

I think you may be the second-fastest rabbit in our warren already!

Tempe' smiles.

TEMPE'

Who's to say? I'll probably challenge General Hanson to the traditional post-retirement race provided he doesn't stay on the job till I'm the one that dies of old age!

GENERAL HANSON (O.S.)

(shouted ahead in the distance, faint)

I can hear half of what you two dopes are saying all the way out here!

Tempe' LAUGHS.

TEMPE'

(to Patches)

Oops! Now I'm off for real.  
(shouts toward General Hanson)

On my way General!

Tempe' hastens into the distance.

Patches looks back in the direction of the warren. He thinks.

Instead of returning home he sprints away to his left.

MOMENTS LATER

Patches SNIFFS around the fence that surrounds Dawson's doghouse.

PATCHES

Dawson?! Dawson?!

(pause)

Um, Great Terror?

Dawson exits his doghouse, sees Patches and walks over to his own side of the fence.

Dawson YAWNS.

DAWSON

Good evening my small, self-piteous friend. How are things with you this late?

PATCHES

(annoyed)

What?! Self-piteous?!

DAWSON

Alright, perhaps that was a bit inartful. It's just that I've been asleep for about four of the last five minutes. I do hope things have improved for you though.

PATCHES

I guess they have a little.

DAWSON

Excellent! Is this uh, a social visit?

PATCHES

No. I'd like some more advice.

DAWSON

Well then, please do come again tomorrow morn -- er, afternoon and I'd be more than happy to assist if I'm capable.

PATCHES

There's no time to wait! A bunny in my warren is sick!

DAWSON

Sick? Did they try to eat roots?

PATCHES

Roots aren't going to do anything! She has snuffles!

DAWSON

Oh! That is more-serious then.

(short pause)

Give me the night to think on this and I'll hopefully have something for you tomorrow.

(MORE)

DAWSON (CONT'D)

I'm unable to leave this enclosure right now but my master will open the gate in the morning and I should be more useful to you then.

PATCHES

Alright, thanks much! I'll be here early! Guess I'd better get home anyway or my mom will be super-worried again. Good-moon er, goodnight Dawson!

Dawson smiles.

DAWSON

Good-moon and goodnight Patches.

Patches sprints toward his warren.

DAWSON (CONT'D)

(to himself)

Hm. Let me chew on this one for a bit.

(short pause)

Where's my bone?

EXT. ROBERT'S HAY FARM - MORNING

Robert paints some of the dingy-brown left on his barn with the new white-color. He doesn't have his Army-ID tags on.

Dawson sneaks past Robert on the dog's way toward the family-home. Robert doesn't notice.

The hay-farmer wipes sweat from his brow.

MOMENTS LATER

Dawson nears the stairs that lead up to the home's front-porch. He looks back and forth. No one around.

EXT. ROBERT'S HAY FARM - DAY

Robert still paints the barn. ROBERT'S WIFE (mid 30's) approaches him with a glass of lemonade.

ROBERT'S WIFE

Hi honey! Glad to see ya back at the barn!

She hands the drink to Robert.

ROBERT  
Thanks Laura!

Robert takes a GULP.

ROBERT'S WIFE/LAURA  
You probably won't be able to get  
much more done before we need to  
leave for my parents' place tho.

ROBERT  
Yeah. I'm just getting a good  
foundation going for a full-on-  
painting-assault when we get back  
Sunday. Then I'll finally finish  
this whole thing up.

Laura grins.

LAURA  
So no plans to have it three-  
quarters done till next spring  
then?

Robert smiles.

ROBERT  
Nope! Or if it looks like it might  
come to that I at least plan to  
hire some painters first.  
(short pause)  
Oh. You haven't seen my dog-tags  
anywhere have you?

LAURA  
Your ones from Afghanistan?

ROBERT  
Yeah. I thought I put them on that  
nail near the front-door before I  
started but they weren't there last  
time I looked.

LAURA  
You sure you didn't leave them in  
the house somewhere?

ROBERT  
I'm about -- ninety-two percent  
sure.

LAURA

Well I'll do a quick look for them before we go. I'm sure they'll turn up wherever they are.

MOMENTS LATER

Dawson is behind his doghouse near the fence. Patches is on the other side again.

PATCHES

Did you come up with something?!

DAWSON

Morning Patches -- again. Yes, I've got a potential **something** in the works as we speak. I was at my master's house earlier and --

A GIRL'S-VOICE (age 8) comes from the opposite side of the doghouse.

GIRL'S VOICE (O.S.)

Dawson! I got you clean water!

Dawson collapses to the ground. The dog throws his legs up in the air and his tongue rolls out his mouth. Patches stares on in complete surprise and confusion.

Robert's daughter walks behind the doghouse.

GIRL'S VOICE/ROBERT'S  
DAUGHTER (CONT'D)

You here Dawson?  
(she notices Patches  
first)  
Oh look, a bun --

She then sees Dawson sprawled in the grass. The dog's eyes roll into his head.

Robert's daughter SCREAMS, then runs out of the enclosure toward her house.

ROBERT'S DAUGHTER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Daddy!

Dawson gets back to his feet.

PATCHES

What on earth was that?!

DAWSON

You've never heard of playing dead?



PATCHES

No. Why would you ever want to do -  
-

DAWSON

So my family believes I'm sick and brings the veterinarian out here, which will hopefully solve our problem.

PATCHES

The veter-what?

DAWSON

Vet-er-in-arian. A person an animal needs to see sometimes but rarely wishes to visit.

PATCHES

Is that a riddle?

DAWSON

Um --

PATCHES

Cause we **really** don't have time for those.

DAWSON

I guess you're right. She's -- a doctor for animals basically.

PATCHES

(excited)

Oh! That could be the perfect --

ROBERT (O.S.)

I'm sure Dawson's alright honey. If he's sick we'll just leave him at the vet on our way to Grandma's.

Robert comes behind the doghouse with his daughter. He carries a medium-bag of dog food.

Dawson BARKS happily when he sees them and spins in a circle.

Robert gives his daughter a taxed look.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

See? He's fine. Now could you give him his food and close the gate so I can help your mom finish packing the car?

ROBERT'S DAUGHTER

(confused)

Uh, OK.

Robert hands the food-bag to his daughter and leaves. The girl looks at Dawson, who PANTS in excitement.

She FILLS Dawson's large bowl with dry-food up to the very top.

Dawson wanders over to his bowl. Patches follows him around the fence-corner.

Robert's daughter is at the fence-gate. Dawson prances with healthy-enthusiasm.

The girl gives Dawson a suspicious glare as she CLOSES the gate then leaves as well.

PATCHES

What happened to your plan?!

DAWSON

They were going to take me to the veterinarian, which wouldn't have helped your sick friend any. It was really a coin-flip on whether that plan would work from the start.

PATCHES

(bummed)

Oh. Thanks for trying anyway.

DAWSON

Hey, we're not licked yet! Luckily I also devised a back-up plan in case!

Dawson goes into his doghouse and comes out again with Robert's military-ID tags in his mouth by their chain. The dog drops these by the fence.

DAWSON (CONT'D)

Ta Dah! Dog-tags! If you can get these to the veterinarian she may come here to return them.

PATCHES

How will she know they're your tags?

DAWSON

No. These are dog-tags not -- uh, my tags.

(MORE)

DAWSON (CONT'D)

However there's printing that will inform the veterinarian they belong to my master. You rabbits will need to get them to her on your own though. I'd help if I could but I'll be stuck here till my family gets back and there's enough food in my bowl for about -- um, eight days. My master's daughter does tend to get carried-away there tho so it probably won't be near that long but you don't have time to sit around and wait for me.

Dawson noses the tags through the fence-links. Patches bites the chain with his teeth and helps pull it through.

DAWSON (CONT'D)

I used to get invited to the Grandparents' too you know, but track a little bit of mud onto white-carpet one time and --

PATCHES

How do I find the veterinarian?

DAWSON

Oh yes. Um, move west through the left-fence, cross our surly-neighbor's yard, pass the side-road then straight on through the forest and into town. Once you're there ask any friendly-animal you meet and most should be able to direct you to the building you're looking for. It'll probably take two days as the rabbit hops.

Patches GULPS.

PATCHES

The yard of -- The Great Evil?

DAWSON

The what?

PATCHES

The Great Evil.

(shudders)

That cat.

DAWSON

Ah. Our neighbor's dumb-cat Misty.  
You rabbits and your weird names  
for **everything!**

(short pause)

Tho I suppose Great Evil may fit as  
far as she's concerned. Misty's  
shut-inside their house most of the  
time so hopefully you won't need to  
worry about her. Just be careful!  
I'd have directed you along the  
front-road but that way's busier  
and a group of you would likely  
wind-up roadkill before reaching  
town.

PATCHES

Alright then. Thanks for your help!  
I'll have to discuss all this with  
my warren first.

DAWSON

No problem. I'll also try to get  
something worked-out on my end in  
case my family gets back earlier  
than I suspect. Good luck Patches!

Patches makes to leave, then turns back.

PATCHES

Um, Dawson?

DAWSON

Yes?

PATCHES

These tags aren't -- stolen are  
they?

DAWSON

Is it stealing for a rabbit to eat  
another rabbit's grass without  
permission?

PATCHES

Yes.

DAWSON

Is it stealing for a rabbit to eat  
a farmer's grass without  
permission?

PATCHES

No. That's just the way of things.

DAWSON

There you go. But while these tags aren't stolen I'd ask you rabbits to take the best care of them possible. They have meaning for my master and I know he'd appreciate their safe return when you're finished.

PATCHES

I -- we will do that. Goodbye Dawson.

DAWSON

(warm)

Goodbye small-friend.

MOMENTS LATER

Patches pulls the tags into the warren through the entrance-hole near the hay-bale.

INT. RABBIT WARREN - LARGE MEETING-ROOM - LATER

Around forty RABBITS (17 human-years and older) and a few older BUNNIES (16 human-years and younger) are gathered in the warren's large meeting-room. King Cotton-Rod (now 61 human-years) is in the center.

KING COTTON-ROD

So we've heard all the facts of this matter. Now what of them?

TEMPE'

I wish to lead a mission to the veterinarian!

KING COTTON-ROD

I cannot recommend that Tempe'.

TEMPE'

But do you forbid it?

A pause.

KING COTTON-ROD

To risk the lives of multiple rabbits for an uncertain chance of saving one does not seem wise to me.

(short pause)

(MORE)

KING COTTON-ROD (CONT'D)

However the whole warren loves  
Daisy very much and her condition  
is such that -- if you can form a  
small party of volunteers to  
attempt this I won't forbid it.

PATCHES

I wish to go too!

KING COTTON-ROD

Patches, while you have my  
gratitude for reporting this  
information to us there are still  
several-suns left until you are no  
longer a bunny. Also, due to your  
size you may be a hindrance for --

TEMPE'

I'd like Patches to come and don't  
consider him a hindrance. Let's not  
forget he was the one to confront  
The Great Terror in the first  
place.

King Cotton-Rod smiles.

KING COTTON-ROD

I guess there is something in that.

(short pause)

Patches, though you're not  
technically yet a rabbit I declare  
you close enough and that you may  
go. Anyone else?

A long silence until Barlow (now 46 human-years) speaks.  
Barlow's left ear is shredded, his face is scarred and he's  
missing one eye.

BARLOW

(nervous)

Uh -- I volunteer.

KING COTTON-ROD

(kind)

Barlow, my thanks for your  
willingness -- but with Patches  
gone I'll need a rabbit with inner-  
watch experience to remain so I'm  
unwilling to spare you.

BARLOW

(relieved)

Thank you for considering.

CARWOOD

King Cotton-Rod? Permission to speak unhindered?

KING COTTON-ROD

Speak-unhindered Carwood.

CARWOOD

Has it been noted that these tags were given to us by The Great Terror and that The Great Terror is in fact -- The Great Terror? I mean, how do we know they don't have some kind of recipe written on them and this -- veterinarian won't use it to make stew out of us as soon as we find her?

TEMPE'

I've examined the tags myself and while I can't read the printing on them, there certainly isn't enough to be a stew recipe.

CARWOOD

Ah, well alright. Then as it stands myself and Marshall also volunteer!

MARSHALL

We do?!

CARWOOD

We do.

Marshall looks around.

MARSHALL

Uh, then I guess we do.

KING COTTON-ROD

Excellent! I suppose I can't forbid the two of you for your ages either since I've already let one near-rabbit go. Patches, Carwood, Marshall -- speak with your parents then speak with me. Tempe' -- um, speak with me.

(to the whole gathering)

The rest of you will not discuss this matter further for now, especially around Daisy's family.

(short pause)

This junior-council meeting is adjourned!

INT. RABBIT WARREN - PUBLIC HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Carwood and Marshall are alone in a hallway.

MARSHALL

(hushed voice)

Why'd you volunteer us for?!

CARWOOD

Think-a-thump Marshall! If this works out we'll have our pick of any female in the warren. We'll have like -- General Hanson status! Besides, Patchy volunteered and he's the last bunny on the planet that's going to show me up!

INT. RABBIT WARREN - LIVING BURROW - DAY

Patches and Abigail in their living-burrow. Abigail SNIFFLES.

ABIGAIL

We could go to King Cotton-Rod and tell him you changed your mind!

PATCHES

I can't Mom.

ABIGAIL

I'm sure he'd understand given the circumstances.

PATCHES

No. I need to go.

ABIGAIL

Patches, you want to do something nice for another bunny and that's commendable -- but your father went into that terrible yard once to do something nice and it got him killed!

PATCHES

I know.

ABIGAIL

But you don't know the whole story! When --



PATCHES

I do though. It got around the warren and I heard it from -- some-bunny.

ABIGAIL

(sad)

Oh.

(pause)

Then you must realize why you should stay! If I let you go to be murdered by that cat I'd never forgive myself!

PATCHES

If that happened it wouldn't be your fault.

(pause)

And it's not your fault what happened to Dad either.

ABIGAIL

Thank you Patches.

(short pause)

Maybe we could find a replacement-rabbit for you first. That would be helpful to the effort!

PATCHES

I caused this mission to start in the first place and I'm not going to paw-it-off as soon as it looks a little danger... er, complicated.

ABIGAIL

No rabbit here would think any less of you.

PATCHES

I agree. Since no rabbit here **could** think any less of me.

ABIGAIL

I think very highly of you.

PATCHES

Um, thanks. I still plan to leave either with or without your blessing. But I'd be very hurt not to have it.

A pause. Abigail SIGHS.

ABIGAIL

Then I guess you'll have it. I love you Patches.

PATCHES

I love you too Mom.

INT. RABBIT WARREN - KING'S BURROW - DAY

King Cotton-Rod and Tempe' in the King's spacious living-quarters.

KING COTTON-ROD

Have you spoken with your mother yet?

TEMPE'

Yes.

KING COTTON-ROD

Very good. I'd have you then speak with General Hanson as the sun begins to sink and to begin your mission shortly-thereafter. This should give you the best chance of having The Great Evil confined to her living-space.

Tempe' nods.

TEMPE'

Understood.

KING COTTON-ROD

I'm sure the General will have some wise words which you should heed, but please be mindful that we have no intelligence beyond the left-road and much of what we possess to that point may be outdated.

(short pause)

Also while your mission is of noble-cause remember that if it later appears fruitless or too dangerous I'd much rather you all turn back. There'd certainly be no shame in such a course.

Tempe' smiles.

TEMPE'

And have you turned back from anything in your life Father?

KING COTTON-ROD  
That's -- irrelevant to your  
present assignment.

Tempe' LAUGHS.

TEMPE'  
Alright then! Though I must say,  
that in The Wild Times before this  
warren was founded...

KING COTTON-ROD  
Ah, The Wild Times! There's a  
phrase I've not heard in many suns!  
But how do you know of such things  
Tempe'? You were born after we  
arrived at this farm.

Tempe' smiles.

TEMPE'  
I have my own intelligence.  
(short pause)  
I recall one incident in  
particular, involving four badgers  
that --

KING COTTON-ROD  
Ah! So General Hanson's been  
telling tales-off-the-rabbit has  
he? Then I must remind you Tempe',  
while such stories may be highly-  
prized by male bunnies -- an adult  
rabbit, **especially** a king must  
understand the importance of not  
putting the lives of others at  
undue-risk solely in pursuit of  
selfish, personal glory.

TEMPE'  
Don't worry Father, I understand  
that. I only wanted to say how --  
proud I am of you before we left.

King Cotton-Rod nuzzles Tempe'.

KING COTTON-ROD  
I am and will always be -- so proud  
of you!

Tears well in Tempe's eyes.

TEMPE'

Um, guess I better go round up the company then.

Tempe' starts to leave.

KING COTTON-ROD

Tempe'...

Tempe' turns back around.

TEMPE'

Yes?

KING COTTON-ROD

There were only three badgers. We mistook an oddly-shaped tree stump for a fourth.

Tempe' grins.

EXT. ROBERT'S HAY FARM - EVENING

Tempe', Patches, Carwood and Marshall sit in the grass together as the sun begins descent. The ID-tags' chain is around Carwood's neck.

TEMPE'

Alright honorary-rabbits! I'm off to consult General Hanson. Be ready to hop-out on my return!

Tempe' trots off.

CARWOOD

(to Patches)

Now's the perfect time to scamper-home Patchy.

PATCHES

Forget it.

DOWN THE FIELD

Tempe' approaches General Hanson (now 57 human-years), who sits alone.

TEMPE'

My father thought you might have advice for us.

General Hanson stands up.

GENERAL HANSON

He's correct. I would travel beyond the left-fence through the small opening we've labeled 43-C. Then head for the ground-holes near the left-road provided any are still there. Those should be safe enough to pass a moon inside -- or at least safer than stumbling around the far-forest in blackness.

TEMPE'

Your words are well received.

GENERAL HANSON

I'd also advise you to return alive, since I don't wish to train your younger-brother for the kingship. I'm sure you know he tends to act like a dope and I fear my patience would never survive the task.

Tempe' LAUGHS.

TEMPE'

I seem to recall you using the word dope for me a few times too!

GENERAL HANSON

Yes, but you act like one less often. In an amount I can tolerate.

TEMPE'

Wow! That sounds somewhat-near-a-compliment General Hanson! I better move-out quick before you can change your mind there!

GENERAL HANSON

Safe hops.

The rabbits nod to each other then Tempe' leaves.

GENERAL HANSON (CONT'D)

(to himself)

Dope!

(pause)

I'm the dope!

General Hanson looks up at the sky.

GENERAL HANSON (CONT'D)  
 Please let them return safely so it  
 won't be the last compliment I can  
 pay!

The General lowers his head again.

GENERAL HANSON (CONT'D)  
 (to himself)  
 I love you Tempe'.

THE LEFT-FENCE

Tempe', Patches, Carwood and Marshall sit near a rabbit-sized hole at the bottom of the wooden-fence separating Robert's and Frank's farms. Carwood still has the dog-tags.

TEMPE'  
 I'll check things out first. If I'm  
 not back in one-hundred thumps you  
 all quick-tail it back to the  
 warren!

Tempe' squeezes through the hole into Frank's yard.

MARSHALL  
 (to Patches)  
 Isn't this the place where your dad  
 got ripped to shreds?

PATCHES  
 (monotone)  
 Yes.

MARSHALL  
 Killed by a cat, what an  
 embarrassment! The Great Evil  
 better hope she's locked-inside  
 that's all I'll say. Otherwise I  
 will have to take her out!

CARWOOD  
 You'd do no such thing.

MARSHALL  
 Well -- maybe not. But I'd be able  
 to escape from her most expertly!

Tempe' returns through the fence.

TEMPE'  
 Alright, we're all going. Maintain  
 a single-file trot across the yard  
 and keep your heads forward!  
 (MORE)

TEMPE' (CONT'D)  
 Patches, follow me. Carwood, you  
 take the rear. Got it?

PATCHES  
 Yup.

Tempe' goes through the hole again. Patches, Marshall and Carwood each follow suit.

EXT. FRANK'S FARM - MOMENTS LATER

Tempe', Patches, Marshall and Carwood keep a line at a moderate pace through farm-grass. They approach dense-rows of blueberry-bushes to their left.

The rabbits all look straight ahead in the direction they move. Carwood has the ID-chain around his neck and the tags get pulled along the ground behind him.

Marshall glances to the left and sees a scarecrow attached to a pole which towers above the blueberry-bushes. This 'scarecrow' is merely a flannel-shirt and pair of blue-jeans stuffed with straw and a bucket on top that has an angry-face drawn in black-marker.

MARSHALL  
 What's that thing?

TEMPE'  
 (still moving/looking  
 forward)  
 A scarecrow, to keep crows out of  
 the farmer's crops.

MARSHALL  
 Looks pretty dopey to me.

TEMPE'  
 It's called a **scarecrow** Marshall,  
 not a scare-rabbit.

MARSHALL  
 Crows must be pretty dumb then huh?

TEMPE'  
 (annoyed)  
 You don't see any around do you?!  
 Also, didn't I tell you to keep  
 your head forward?!

MARSHALL  
 Yeah yeah alright. Sorry.

MOMENTS LATER

The rabbit-procession reaches Frank's (now) even more impressive petunia-bed surrounded by two separate rows of garden-fence on their right.

MARSHALL (CONT'D)

Oh wow! These must be those flowers that were the cluck-of-the-warren! They do look delicious!

TEMPE'

We're not here for a buffet. Keep moving.

MARSHALL

(cheerful)

Come on Tempe'! This whole thing's a walk in the park! Tra-la-la-la-la-la-la!

Marshall looks from side to side.

MARSHALL (CONT'D)

Not sure what every-bunny was even so afraid -- uh...

As Marshall looks right he trails off and stops in terror. Carwood passes him in formation.

TO THE RIGHT

Frank's house is twenty-feet away -- where a huge Siamese cat (female, adult) glares at them from behind a sliding glass-door. The cat's expression is the embodiment of ravenous, sadistic evil.

Tempe' trots back to where Marshall is frozen.

TEMPE'

Marshall! Hurry up!

MARSHALL

Do you see see -- see that?!

TEMPE'

Of course I saw it! What do you think I told you to quit looking around for?! Just keep going.

MARSHALL

I -- I can't!



TEMPE'

Well the rest of us are -- and if  
you don't you'll see that cat much  
closer before too long!

Tempe' runs to the front of the line again. Marshall sits petrified a few more-seconds till he regains his senses enough to scamper after the group.

EXT. DIRT FIELD - MOMENTS LATER

All rabbits pass through a large fence-hole on the other side of Frank's farm.

The adjacent-property consists of an expansive dirt-field that has numerous mole-holes and a neglected, boarded-up house. The sun continues to fall.

Tempe' SNIFFS at a large mole-hole.

TEMPE'

We'll spend the moon inside here.  
Follow me!

Tempe' goes down the hole.

INT. MOLE HOLE - MOMENTS LATER

Tempe' walks with caution down a narrow-tunnel and the others follow behind. Tempe' stops to SNIFF again.

MOMENTS LATER

The rabbits come into a moderate-sized open area that ends in a collapsed wall-of-dirt.

CARWOOD

Not too shabby a place really! Is  
this another warren? We should have  
come-round a long time ago if so!  
Might have met some refined  
foreign-bunnies instead of all the  
plain-janes back home!

TEMPE'

This isn't a rabbit-warren Carwood.  
It's a mole hole.

CARWOOD

What?! A mole hole?! Have you taken  
complete leave of your hay-bales  
Tempe'?!  
(MORE)

CARWOOD (CONT'D)

A labour of those ugly things will  
dice us into critter-cubes!

TEMPE'

There've been no moles here for  
many-suns Carwood. So it's doubtful  
we will get -- uh, cubed?

CARWOOD

And how do you know that?!

TEMPE'

The Great Evil's master called a  
swift-river down that killed them  
all.

CARWOOD

Oh, that's good to -- huh?! That  
cat's owner despises us Tempe'!  
He'll send that same river onto us  
while we're sleeping and we'll  
drown!

TEMPE'

He's not a god Carwood, and he  
can't bring the river down on  
command. He'd need to make an --  
*appointment* first. We should have  
plenty of time even if he knew we  
were around in the first place,  
which I doubt! So get some rest  
everyone. We move out early-sun!

EXT. DIRT FIELD - MORNING

Tempe' pops out of the hole first with Robert's tags around  
his neck and sprints away. The other rabbits follow.

EXT. SIDE ROAD - DAY

A nice afternoon.

The rabbits stand together on the shoulder of a paved side-  
road. A dead opossum is flattened in the near-lane and an  
open-field stretches into the distance on the opposite side.

MARSHALL

What happened to that opossum you  
think?

TEMPE'  
Trampled by an iron-horse most  
likely.

CARWOOD  
By a what?

TEMPE'  
(annoyed)  
A car Carwood! Like the one the  
hay-farmer and his family sometimes  
leave the farm in.

CARWOOD  
Oh a car! Why didn't you just say  
that then?!

TEMPE'  
Tradition I guess.

Tempe' stares across the road.

CARWOOD  
Bah!  
(pause)  
I was named after a car you know?

TEMPE'  
(distracted)  
You don't -- say?

CARWOOD  
I do say! Cause I'm tough and fast  
just like an auto! Va-room!

TEMPE'  
Uh-huh...

A silent pause.

MARSHALL  
You with us Tempe'?

TEMPE'  
(back in moment)  
Oh -- yeah. I was just thinking.  
(short pause)  
No rabbit from our warren has been  
past this road before.

MARSHALL  
Not even your dad?!

TEMPE'

No. The elder rabbits came out of  
*the wilds* from a different  
direction.

CARWOOD

So why are **we** crossing it then?

TEMPE'

You have to ask?

No response.

TEMPE' (CONT'D)

There's only one path to take so  
never mind the rest I suppose.

(short pause)

When I give the word we all run  
across! Make sure you're at top-  
speed cause a car can be from  
nowhere to on you like **that!** And  
cars of iron will still plow  
through a Carwood right?

CARWOOD

(annoyed)

Har har! Very funny!

Tempe' grins.

TEMPE'

I mean, I thought it was alright.

Tempe looks both ways.

TEMPE' (CONT'D)

On your mark, get set -- scurry!

The rabbits race across the street. Even with the dog-tags  
Tempe' reaches the far-side first and is met by Carwood,  
Marshall and lastly Patches from a distance back.

EXT. FIELD - LATER

A slow-moving creek blocks the rabbits' path to a forest  
beyond.

CARWOOD

You never said anything about water  
Patches.

PATCHES

I don't know. Dawson never mentioned it.

CARWOOD

Wonderful. I'm sure it'll be just the first of the things he never mentioned.

Tempe' puts a foot in the water.

TEMPE'

Seems like a calm-enough creek at least. Shouldn't be a problem to swim I think.

CARWOOD

Aside from the problem of being soaked you mean?

TEMPE'

Our elders fought with badgers and we're worried about getting damp?

Carwood SIGHS.

CARWOOD

(sarcastic)

Well then -- what a **lovely** sun for a refreshing dip!

TEMPE'

That's uh -- closer to the right attitude I guess.

(short pause)

Bunzai!

Tempe' leaps into the creek with the military-tags and swims across. Carwood and Marshall do likewise.

Patches is about to jump until he notices his own reflection in the water. He looks at it and frowns.

CARWOOD

What's the matter Patches?! Afraid of a little water?!

Patches stares at his reflection, morose.

PATCHES

No.

TEMPE'

(to Carwood)

Didn't you not want to do this like two-seconds ago?! Seems a little quick to be hypocritical Carwood, even for you.

CARWOOD

That's cause I didn't want to be wet and not because I'm afraid of water like Patches! Let's not pretend there's no difference Tempe'!

PATCHES

I'm not afraid of the water.

TEMPE'

Then what's wrong Patches? You want me to come back so we can swim together?

PATCHES

No, it's...

Patches shakes his head.

PATCHES (CONT'D)

Never mind. It's nothing.

Patches jumps into the creek and swims across.

CARWOOD

See! Look at that! That's what they call *negative-reinforcement* in the industry. Works like a charm right?! No need to thank me or anything, just doing my --

Patches and Tempe' enter into the forest with no reaction.

MARSHALL

What industry is that?

CARWOOD

Oh stuff it Marshall!

Carwood GRUMBLES.

CARWOOD (CONT'D)

(to himself)

Never appreciated in my own time!

EXT. FOREST - LATER

The sun moves several-hours west across the sky.

MOMENTS LATER

The rabbits traverse the forest.

A branch SNAPS somewhere. Carwood jerks his head back and forth.

CARWOOD

What was that?!

TEMPE'

(annoyed)

A branch Carwood.

CARWOOD

I know it was a branch **Tempe'**! What snapped that branch is what you should be telling me! Branches don't just snap themselves!

TEMPE'

How should I know what snapped it?! Maybe a deer -- or a giant bear hungry for bunny-burgers. What's your deal anyway?! You've been spazzing out at **everything** for the past hour! You don't see the rest of us doing that do you?! I mean you're nearly twice Patches' size and he hasn't had any complaints.

(short pause)

No offense Patches.

PATCHES

None taken. In fact it's a lovely-sun for a stroll.

CARWOOD

Oh what does Patches have to worry about anyway?! A bear probably wouldn't even notice him while the rest of us glide right into its stomach! I'm the lone-Lepus here with any sense is all!

A pause.

MARSHALL

Branches do sometimes snap themselves.

CARWOOD

What?!

MARSHALL

Um, when they're really old and  
fall off a tree.

CARWOOD

No-bunny asked you!

MARSHALL

That's true.

Tempe' halts and SNIFFS the air.

CARWOOD

Now what?!

TEMPE'

Despite our luck with the weather  
so far there's a storm forming on  
the horizon. We should look for a  
place to hunker-down so we're not  
exposed in the thick of it.

CARWOOD

(sarcastic)

So it's not really even a good-sun  
for a stroll then?

(short pause)

Fantastic.

EXT. FOREST - EVENING

RAIN pounds on a felled-log across the ground. Lightning  
flashes close with loud THUNDER soon after.

INT. HOLLOW LOG - NIGHT

The log's mostly hollow except for the base which is still  
solid-wood. All four rabbits are inside near the entrance-  
opening. SPORADIC RAIN hits the top.

CARWOOD

This is a terrible place to be!  
What happens when a clan of rabid-  
badgers tries to get in here to  
escape the rain?!



TEMPE'

If I don't see them coming first because some -- one in here keeps being a distraction we probably really will get ripped-to-pieces! Hopefully **after** a valiant fight at the base of this tree!

CARWOOD

It's just dumb is all.  
(short pause)  
You can also still say *some-bunny* you know.

TEMPE'

No. I'm an adult-rabbit now, so I should put all the kit-phrases to-burrow. And if you'd rather wait for the sun outside I'm not going to stop you.

No response from Carwood. Marshall pokes his head out the log then pulls it back.

MARSHALL

Seems like the rain's let-up mostly.

Tempe' SNIFFS.

TEMPE'

Yeah, but it's just a lull. More's coming.

CARWOOD

How long from now?

TEMPE'

Couple of hours by my nose.

CARWOOD

We could use that time to find a safer place.

TEMPE'

Not a good idea. We don't know the layout of this forest and I'd rather not be stumbling around in blackness when the next-front hits.

CARWOOD

We do know a place tho! Those mole-holes closer to our warren!

(MORE)

CARWOOD (CONT'D)

If we hopped-it we could reach those in a couple-hours no problem!

TEMPE'

There isn't time to lose ground Carwood. We should be further along already if not for this storm.

CARWOOD

How bout we just call off the whole-mission instead then?! Remember your dad said --

TEMPE'

King Cotton-Rod said...

CARWOOD

Alright, whatever. But he did say we should come-home if this all felt fruitless!

TEMPE'

It doesn't feel fruitless yet.

CARWOOD

Of course it does! I mean, **if** we survive through this forest at all and reach town how will we find the veterinarian and how do we know she'll help us?! How do we know she **can** even help us?!

TEMPE'

Carwood...

CARWOOD

What if Daisy's dead?! Or if she's recovered already?!

TEMPE'

I'm not forcing you along. If anyone wants to return to the warren they can. I continue on however.

CARWOOD

May I consult a-few-thumps alone with Marshall?

TEMPE'

Sure.

A pause. Carwood just stares at Tempe'.

TEMPE' (CONT'D)

(annoyed)

Fine! We should probably do a surveillance-sweep round the log anyway. Come on Patches.

Tempe' and Patches leave the log to circle around it.

CARWOOD

And we should go back to those mole-holes Marshall.

MARSHALL

Tempe' won't come with us and we'd never catch up with him tomorrow.

CARWOOD

I don't care! I'm over this entire thing! It was a mistake to leave the warren in the first place.

MARSHALL

So you want to quit?

CARWOOD

Yes.

MARSHALL

But what will every-bunny think if we scamper home by ourselves?

CARWOOD

Don't worry. I've got a plan for that.

MARSHALL

OK. To be honest I'm not so hot on this anymore either.

CARWOOD

It's settled then.

Tempe' and Patches re-enter the log.

TEMPE'

Enough time to decide?

CARWOOD

Yes. Marshall and I are out.

TEMPE'

Fine.

CARWOOD  
 (faux concern)  
 You coming home with us Patches?  
 We'll protect you on the way.

TEMPE'  
 Do you want to go Patches? This may  
 be your last chance.

PATCHES  
 Absolutely not!  
 (to Tempe')  
 Please don't ask me that again.

Tempe' smiles.

TEMPE'  
 Alright. I apologize.

CARWOOD  
 (sarcastic)  
 Super touching you two.  
 (short pause)  
 We should leave now Marshall. I  
 don't want to be stuck-out in a  
 storm either.

TEMPE'  
 Another sun then.

CARWOOD  
 Another...

Carwood exits the log and Marshall follows him out.

EXT. FOREST - MOMENTS LATER

Carwood and Marshall trot back in the direction the rabbits  
 came from. There's a RAIN-DRIZZLE.

MARSHALL  
 So what's this plan of yours? I'm  
 not keen on showing-up the new  
 warren-coward either.

CARWOOD  
 We'll go to the mole-holes and wait  
 a few-suns first. If Tempe' and  
 Patches haven't shown by then it'll  
 be safe to assume they're dead and  
 we can pretty-much make up any  
 story about this we want.

(MORE)

CARWOOD (CONT'D)

(pause)

And if Patches comes back alone...

MARSHALL

Then what?

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Tempe' and Patches leave the log and continue on. The morning's clear and Tempe' has the military-tags.

TEMPE'

Looks good! No rabid-badgers -- or even a drizzle!

PATCHES

I hope Carwood and Marshall avoided badgers too. The drizzle I don't care as much about.

Tempe' LAUGHS.

TEMPE'

To tell you the truth I'm not even sorry they left! That pair was starting to get tiresome.

PATCHES

Oh you don't have to tell me! I was tired of them a long time ago!

TEMPE'

At any rate if your dog-friend was right we should be coming to the edge of this forest soon, and town after.

PATCHES

What then?

TEMPE'

Your guess is as good as mine. Hopefully find an animal or something like he said that can --

A CAW sound ahead.

PATCHES

Oh! Maybe a bird is the word!

Patches runs toward the sound.

TEMPE'  
Hold up Patches!

Patches stops and Tempe' catches up.

TEMPE' (CONT'D)  
There's several-birds out there  
large enough to eat a rabbit. Maybe  
we should at least **try** to be  
covert?

MOMENTS LATER

Tempe' and Patches 'stealth-fully' peer around a large tree  
and see a lone CROW (male, adult) eating blackberries from a  
bush ahead.

The rabbits pull behind the tree again.

TEMPE'  
Oh forget about that!

PATCHES  
Why? What kind of bird is it?

TEMPE'  
A crow -- I think.

PATCHES  
A crow?! I've never seen a crow  
before!

TEMPE'  
Neither have I. Heard about them  
though. And none of those things  
were good.

PATCHES  
Like what?

TEMPE'  
That they're shifty and not to be  
trusted.

PATCHES  
An elder told you that?

TEMPE'  
No. I just heard stuff through the  
grapevine, you know?

PATCHES

I mean, we pretty much know all the same animals right?

TEMPE'

Well I guess we do mostly! But you know how some animals know about other animals but they might not tell one animal they know those other animals and -- uh look, you remember that scarecrow we passed on our neighbor's farm?

PATCHES

Yeah?

TEMPE'

It's to scare crows right? Do you generally try to scare-away things you want around?

PATCHES

The man who put that up doesn't seem to want us around either Tempe'.

TEMPE'

Um --

PATCHES

At any rate it doesn't look like a rabbit-eating bird to me!

Patches runs toward the bird again.

TEMPE'

Patches! Ah!

(to himself)

An animal dumb-enough to be fooled by that pile-of-straw isn't going to be much help any-rate.

Tempe' rushes to catch Patches.

PAST THE TREE

Tempe' reaches Patches a few feet from the crow.

PATCHES

(to crow)

Hi there!

The crow eyeballs Patches, Tempe' and then the tags around Tempe's neck.

CROW  
 (mild annoyance)  
 Yes? What may I do for you two?

PATCHES  
 We were hoping you could help us.

CROW  
 Whether I can help you depends on  
 what exactly it is you need help  
 with.  
 (pause)  
 Whether I **will** help you is also up  
 in the air at the moment.

TEMPE'  
 (angry)  
 We don't need any grammar lessons!

PATCHES  
 Come on Tempe'. Chill out!  
 (to crow)  
 Do you know the um, veterinarian?  
 The one in town?

CROW  
 Not personally -- but I'm aware of  
 who you reference.

PATCHES  
 Then do you know where we could  
 find her?

CROW  
 At her office I suppose.

PATCHES  
 We're not sure where that is.

CROW  
 Really? What's your business then?

PATCHES  
 We're trying to get the  
 veterinarian over to the hay-farm  
 we live on. One of our friends  
 there is sick.  
 (short pause)  
 She's dying.



CROW

Hm. I'm not inclined to follow you two into town since that's an hour's distance as the rabbit hops -- but I'll fly directly there and keep a lookout. Once you've arrived I'll flap-a-wing in the correct direction.

PATCHES

Really?! Thank you so much!

CROW

Not a problem.

(to Tempe')

I'll also have you know I'm not deceived by a particular -- straw-pile in human-clothes. I simply avoid persons, places and... pika  
(pronounced pie-ka)  
if I'm not wanted when I can help it.

Tempe' frowns.

The crow FLIES off. He CAWS.

TEMPE'

(annoyed)

Pika indeed! Didn't he see our tails?! Pika don't even have those!

(short pause)

We're never gonna see that dopey-bird again Patches.

PATCHES

I guess we'll have to wait and see. I liked him well enough anyway!

Tempe' smiles a bit.

TEMPE'

(decent natured)

Harrumph.

LATER

Tempe' and Patches approach the forest-edge about two-hundred feet in the distance.

PATCHES

(cheerful)

...and then, I couldn't stop scratching for like a week!

TEMPE'

I bet! How do you think that --

Tempe' stops dead in his tracks.

TEMPE' (CONT'D)

(hushed voice)

Patches, stop!

Patches halts too.

PATCHES

What is it Tempe'?

TEMPE'

Up ahead.

A FOX (male, adult) maneuvers around trees in the distance as it moves from the forest-edge toward the rabbits. Ten-yards ahead of them it also stops.

FOX

My! I don't remember ordering delivery!

PATCHES

(to Tempe')

Oh no! A fox! What are we going to do?!

FOX

Now, I know you weren't talking to me specifically -- but what **can** you do? Continue forward? I'll eat you. Run away? I'll catch you, then eat you. Try to hide? Well take a wild-guess there. It's quite the predicament you find yourselves in isn't it?

TEMPE'

(to fox)

May my friend and I briefly confer?

FOX

Hm. Take the time you'd like -- within reason. I've always wondered if fear tenderizing the meat was just an ancient-vixens'-story.

TEMPE'

(whispers to Patches)

Take the tags off me.

PATCHES

Huh?! Why?!

TEMPE'

(quiet)

If we split up the fox can only go after one of us. I'll dash left and when he chases me you scurry with them out of the forest to town. I'll meet you there when I can.

PATCHES

No.

TEMPE'

Patches, we have to get these dog-tags to the vet --

PATCHES

I know. And you'll be the one to take them.

(short pause)

I'll distract the fox.

TEMPE'

What?! Look, I'm not trying to be mean or anything -- but I'm at least twice your speed on three sprained ankles!

PATCHES

You're right Tempe'. That's why you need to keep the tags.

TEMPE'

This isn't some kind of death-wish you have is it?! You'll never escape from a fox!

PATCHES

No, it's not a death-wish. It may have been several-suns ago but now I have every intention of becoming the best inner-watch bachelor-rabbit known to a warren!

(short pause)

And there's only one way to see if I can ditch a fox.

TEMPE'

Patches! I'm ordering you to --

PATCHES

Oops! Didn't finish!

Patches darts to their left.

TEMPE'  
(frustrated)  
Ah!

The fox looks at Tempe' and then to Patches.

FOX  
Where are you going tiny rabbit?!  
You're my appetizer!

The fox takes off after Patches, which leaves a clear-path ahead for Tempe' to sprint (with tags) and exit the forest through the treeline.

MOMENTS LATER

Patches dashes around trees as the fox chases.

Patches' path is blocked by a wall of blackberry-bushes ahead. The fox halts a few-yards distant.

FOX (CONT'D)  
Looks like the end of your trail.

The fox licks his lips. He begins to move slowly toward Patches.

FOX (CONT'D)  
Now, do you taste any different  
from a full-sized rabbit I wonder?  
Perhaps the filet-Mignon of the  
hare-family?

PATCHES  
(cheerful)  
You know what they say right?

The fox stops again.

FOX  
(excited)  
No, what?!

PATCHES  
Hare today -- and...

Patches sprints to his right. The fox resumes pursuit.

Patches comes to a very-expansive patch of shrubs about five-feet high which he disappears inside. The fox SNAPS his teeth at Patches' heels as he follows into the bushes.

EXT. ROYAL TOWNSHIP - HARDWOOD STORE - DAY

Tempe' wanders into the hardware-store parking lot. He looks around, lost.

FLAPPING WINGS as the forest-crow lands nearby.

TEMPE'  
(surprised)  
Oh it's you!

CROW  
Yup. I'm still me. You -- rabbits certainly are smarter than you're given credit for sometimes! Where's your more agreeable friend?

TEMPE'  
We had to separate. I hope he can find me here or make his way back to our warren alone.

CROW  
Are you still looking for the veterinarian?

TEMPE'  
Yes.

CROW  
Follow me then.

The crow FLIES away.

EXT. ROYAL TOWNSHIP - VETERINARIAN'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Tempe' and the crow stand on a grass-patch in front of the vet-office. A sign reads "ROYAL-TOWNSHIP VETERINARIAN".

CROW (CONT'D)  
This is the place.

An ANNOYED MAN half-drags a leashed BULLDOG (male) up a cement-path to the building's front-door. The dog resists and HOWLS each step of the way.

ANNOYED MAN  
Come on Rex! It isn't -- that -- bad!

Tempe' watches with wide eyes.

TEMPE'

That dog certainly doesn't want to go in there!

CROW

Doesn't appear so, no.

TEMPE'

Is it safe?!

CROW

I've never been so I can't say for certain. But I know of the animals that do go inside -- most come out again.

Tempe' GULPS.

TEMPE'

(nervous)

Most?!

CROW

More than half and less than all I'd say.

Tempe's courage returns.

TEMPE'

Those are good-enough odds for me anyway!

(pause)

Um, **how** can I get in there?

CROW

I'd follow a visiting-animal and their human to the front-door and sneak-inside behind them when it's been opened.

The bulldog HOWLS again by the front office-door.

CROW (CONT'D)

Maybe wait for the next pair though.

TEMPE'

Sounds good. Thanks then.

CROW

No problem. In the meantime I'll head back to the forest and try to find your friend. If I can I'll direct him to you.

TEMPE'  
 (surprised)  
 Really?! Thank you so much!

CROW  
 Again, no problem.

The crow FLUTTERS his wings to lift off.

TEMPE'  
 Wait! What's your name?

CROW  
 Bo.  
 (pronounced bow/arrow)

TEMPE'  
 Bo the crow?

CROW / BO  
 (annoyed)  
 Yes. Is there anything wrong with that?

TEMPE'  
 Oh no no! I just uh, wanted to apologize to you Bo. I hadn't met a crow before and heard some bad things about -- uh, never-mind all that. Anyway, I'm very sorry and thanks again for everything! I'm Tempe' by the way!

BO  
 (friendly)  
 Well then, it's good to know you Tempe'.

TEMPE'  
 You also!

BO  
 Good luck in there! I do hope you're one of the many who return!

Bo FLIES away. He CAWS.

TEMPE'  
 (to himself, serious)  
 Same.

LATER

An ELDERLY WOMAN walks her POODLE (female) up the path to the office-door. Tempe' rushes forward and enters the building behind them.

The door SHUTS.

INT. VETERINARIAN'S OFFICE - RECEPTION ROOM - DAY

The office waiting-room has empty stuffed-chairs and a VET RECEPTIONIST (female, adult) behind her desk.

Neither the receptionist, elderly-woman or poodle notice Tempe' as he scurries behind a large, potted-plant in the nearest corner.

VET RECEPTIONIST  
(to elderly woman)  
Hello Mrs. Landry! What can we do  
for you today?

ELDERLY WOMAN / MRS. LANDRY  
I was hoping to get Muffin's nails  
trimmed. We don't have an  
appointment though.

VET RECEPTIONIST  
That's no problem! Doctor Stephens  
is with another pet right now, but  
she should be available soon if  
you'd like to sit down a moment.

MRS. LANDRY  
Alright. Thank you.

Mrs. Landry takes a seat in a waiting-chair.

The poodle SNIFFS at the front of the plant which conceals Tempe'.

Mrs. Landry pulls the leash to bring the dog to her.

MRS. LANDRY (CONT'D)  
(to poodle)  
Please don't be weird Muffin.

MOMENTS LATER

The hands of a wall-clock move from "11:50AM" to "12:15PM".

MOMENTS LATER

Mrs. Landry opens the office front-door to leave with Muffin. The waiting-area has no new patients.



VET RECEPTIONIST  
 Thanks for coming in Mrs. Landry!  
 Hope to see you again soon!

Mrs. Landry smiles.

MRS. LANDRY  
 Well, hopefully not **too** soon! Maybe  
 in a couple weeks for the nails  
 again.

The vet-receptionist CHUCKLES.

VET RECEPTIONIST  
 I suppose you've got a point there.  
 Have a great day!

MRS. LANDRY  
 You too!  
 (to poodle)  
 Come on Muffin.

Muffin eyes the plant before Mrs. Landry leads her outside.

MOMENTS LATER

Doctor Stephens, the town-veterinarian (female, late 30's)  
 comes out from a back room.

DOCTOR STEPHENS  
 I don't have any more patients do I  
 Mary?

MARY / VET RECEPTIONIST  
 Not for about ninety-minutes.

DOCTOR STEPHENS  
 Great! I'm going out for lunch then  
 I think. Want to come?

MARY  
 I brought mine in today so probably  
 not. Would you like me to put a  
 sign on the door?

DOCTOR STEPHENS  
 That'd be great, I --  
 (looks near the office  
 chairs)  
 Uh, Mary? You sure I don't have any  
 appointments now?

MARY  
 No Doctor Stephens, why do you --

Mary follows the vet's gaze. She sees Tempe' in the open near the chairs with dog-tags around him.

MARY (CONT'D)

Huh?!

DOCTOR STEPHENS

Does it belong to one of our clients? Maybe someone in the bathroom?

MARY

No one has even brought a rabbit in this week!

(short pause)

What's that thing around its neck?

DOCTOR STEPHENS

I don't know. Some kind of uh -- identification maybe?

Doctor Stephens approaches Tempe'.

DOCTOR STEPHENS (CONT'D)

(to Tempe', cheerful)

Hi Mister Bun Bun -- no one here's gonna hurt you.

Tempe' makes no effort to escape and Doctor Stephens picks him up.

DOCTOR STEPHENS (CONT'D)

(to Tempe')

Now aren't you just very well-mannered!

Doctor Stephens reads the ID-tags. She LAUGHS.

DOCTOR STEPHENS (CONT'D)

Mary, you'll never guess what these are!

MARY

I don't have any yet so you're probably right.

DOCTOR STEPHENS

They're Robert Fisher's Army-tags!

MARY

What?! Farmer Fisher?

DOCTOR STEPHENS

The same!

MARY

Isn't his hay-farm a couple miles out of town? How'd they get here?

DOCTOR STEPHENS

Yup, it is! And I don't have a clue -- unless --

(to Tempe')

You're not one of those rabbits that Frank Garrison complains about when he brings his cat in here are you?

MARY

Ugh! Don't even mention that cat! Heebie -- jeebies!

Doctor Stephens removes the tags from Tempe'. She smiles.

DOCTOR STEPHENS

(to Tempe')

Well, thanks for your service I guess!

(to Mary)

I'll give Mister Fisher a call from my office and let him know they're here.

MARY

Sounds good!

Doctor Stephens takes Tempe' and the dog-tags back to her personal office.

INT. VETERINARIAN'S OFFICE - PERSONAL OFFICE - DAY

Doctor Stephens sets Tempe' and the tags down on a large desk with a telephone.

She grabs the phone, dials and puts it to her ear.

DOCTOR STEPHENS

(seconds later, to herself)

Hum. No one home? Tho I guess they could all be outdoors bout this time.

Doctor Stephens hangs up the phone. She opens a desk-drawer and puts the tags into it. Then -- inspiration strikes!

DOCTOR STEPHENS (CONT'D)  
 (to Tempe')  
 You know what? I just had a much  
 better idea!

The vet removes the dog-tags from the drawer along with a notepad and pen. She sits down and begins to write.

INT. VETERINARIAN'S OFFICE - RECEPTION ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Doctor Stephens approaches Mary with Tempe' in her arms.

DOCTOR STEPHENS  
 Do we still have that Polaroid  
 camera around somewhere?

MARY  
 Should be in the back closet I  
 think. Want me to get it for you?

DOCTOR STEPHENS  
 Yes please! This whole business is  
 too good for a phone call!

INT. VETERINARIAN'S OFFICE - PERSONAL OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Tempe' is back on the desktop with the ID-chain around his neck. Doctor Stephens aims an old Polaroid camera at him.

DOCTOR STEPHENS  
 (to Tempe')  
 OK! Say *carrots!*

Doctor Stephens CLICKS the camera button and a photograph SPITS-OUT. She SHAKES the photo in an attempt to develop it, then takes a peek.

DOCTOR STEPHENS (CONT'D)  
 (to Tempe')  
 Might not be Instagram-ready, but  
 I'm also not a professional  
 photographer or anything so don't  
 go blaming yourself there!

The veterinarian locates an envelope and puts the photograph, Robert's military-tags and the note she'd written previously inside.

She licks the envelope and seals it.

DOCTOR STEPHENS (CONT'D)  
 (to Tempe')  
 So how about it? You ready for a  
 ride?!

EXT. ROYAL TOWNSHIP - VETERINARIAN'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Doctor Stephens walks across the parking-lot with Tempe' in her arms and a purse slung-round her shoulder.

MOMENTS LATER

The vet sets Tempe' down on her car's passenger-seat, gets in the vehicle, tosses her purse in the back and CLOSES the door.

Tempe' looks around.

INT. CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Doctor Stephens drives down a two-lane road in farm-country.

DOCTOR STEPHENS  
 (to Tempe', cheerful)  
 Luckily this trip should only take me ten minutes past my lunch-stop, but to be honest if you're in one part of Royal Township you're probably never more than ten minutes from any other part.  
 (pause)  
 Get it? Because it's a small-town right?

No official response from Tempe'.

MOMENTS LATER

Doctor Stephens parks the car on Robert's farm by his house. She collects her purse from the back-seat and gets out.

EXT. ROBERT'S HAY FARM - DAY

Tempe' bounds over the driver's seat, out the open car-door, past Doctor Stephens and blasts off toward his warren like a rocket.

DOCTOR STEPHENS  
 Alright. Good meeting you too!  
 (pause, to herself)  
 I guess he's got somewhere to be.

MOMENTS LATER

Robert's porch. A nail juts out near the door-frame about half-way up (that Dawson took the ID-tags from previous).

Doctor Stephens KNOCKS on the front-door. No answer. She KNOCKS again.

The vet looks around the farm.

DOCTOR STEPHENS (CONT'D)  
Seems no one's here after all. Oh  
well, I gave it my best shot!

Doctor Stephens takes the envelope with Tempe's photo, dog-tags and note out of her purse and slips it through a crack under the door into Robert's house.

She starts down the porch steps.

Pained, dreadful DOG-HOWLS begin from Dawson's enclosure. Doctor Stephens looks worried.

INT. RABBIT WARREN - SICK UNIT FOYER - DAY

Barlow is in the foyer outside Daisy's sick-unit.

BARLOW  
(to the far entrance-hole)  
Daisy? Daisy?!

Daisy COUGHS.

DAISY (O.S.)  
(weak voice)  
Ye -- Yes?

BARLOW  
Things are in motion now. We need  
to get moving.

DAISY (O.S.)  
Are the rabbits back?

BARLOW  
I've seen Tempe' at least. He'd be  
here but was taken in for  
mandatory-debrief -- one at least a  
thousand-thumps long if the King's  
demeanor was an indication.

Daisy SNEEZES and COUGHS again.

DAISY (O.S.)  
 I'm very glad to hear that. He's  
 done too much already!  
 (short pause)  
 But I don't think I can make it out  
 of the warren by myself.

BARLOW  
 Don't worry! Jack and I are both  
 happy to assist!

DAISY (O.S.)  
 Aren't you two worried about the  
 chance of Snuffles?

BARLOW  
 Jack said something about *duty*,  
*commitment* and *duty* again I think.  
 A noble-rabbit for certain! Myself  
 -- I've tussled with The Great Evil  
 and lived to not discuss it so I'm  
 hardly concerned about your cold.

Daisy LAUGHS.

DAISY (O.S.)  
 (cheerier)  
 Alright then. I'm coming.

EXT. ROBERT'S HAY FARM - DAY

Doctor Stephens rushes to Dawson's enclosure and opens the  
 gate. Dawson rolls on the grass and HOWLS in agony.

DOCTOR STEPHENS  
 What is it Dawson?! What's wrong?!

Doctor Stephens goes into the enclosure.

Dawson jumps up, races past the stunned veterinarian and  
 escapes out the open-gate across the yard.

DOCTOR STEPHENS (CONT'D)  
 (annoyed)  
 Ugh! Dawson!

The veterinarian leaves the enclosure and WHISTLES.

DOCTOR STEPHENS (CONT'D)  
 Come Dawson! Come here boy!  
 (pause, sarcastic)  
 Just great.

MOMENTS LATER

Doctor Stephens OPENS her car's trunk. She puts her purse inside and takes out a leash and dog-treats bag.

She GRUMBLES.

DOCTOR STEPHENS (CONT'D)  
 (to herself)  
 If you weren't just a dog and I  
 didn't know any better...

Doctor Stephens SHUTS the trunk.

MOMENTS LATER

As the vet passes Robert's house again (with the leash and treats) she notices Daisy, (16 human-years, white colored) lying alone in the grass. The bunny is both sick and now exhausted from her journey. She WHEEZES. Barlow and Jack both look on from the home's porch, not visible to Doctor Stephens.

DOCTOR STEPHENS (CONT'D)  
 Oh hey.

The veterinarian places her hand on Daisy for a quick medical-check.

DOCTOR STEPHENS (CONT'D)  
 (to Daisy, sympathetic)  
 Looks like Pasteurellosis. Sorry  
 about that girl.

Doctor Stephens leaves Daisy to collect Dawson.

LATER

Doctor Stephens SHUTS the gate of the dog's enclosure with Dawson back inside. She has the leash and treats bag.

DOCTOR STEPHENS (CONT'D)  
 (to Dawson)  
 I hope you managed to get your fun  
 in today because now I'll have to  
 get my fish n' chips as take-out  
 and won't be able to enjoy any of  
 the restaurant-ambiance at all!  
 (short pause,  
 disappointed)  
 (MORE)



DOCTOR STEPHENS (CONT'D)  
 They have a real ship-anchor and  
 captain's wheel Dawson!

Doctor Stephens SIGHS.

DOCTOR STEPHENS (CONT'D)  
 Ah well.

MOMENTS LATER

On the walk back Doctor Stephens sees Tempe' and about twenty other WARREN RABBITS (including Barlow, Jack and King Cotton-Rod but not Patches, Carwood or Marshall) now circled around Daisy at a moderate distance from her.

The rabbits bow as a group to Doctor Stephens, with King Cotton-Rod doing so last.

DOCTOR STEPHENS (CONT'D)  
 (surprised/touched)  
 Alright guys, but I can't guarantee  
 anything. She's really sick  
 alright?

Doctor Stephens moves into the rabbit circle, scoops up Daisy and carries the bunny toward her car with the dog items.

LATER

Tempe' moves from Robert's farm to Frank's through a space of several missing-boards in the left-fence.

EXT. FRANK'S FARM - DAY

Tempe' again comes to the scarecrow above the blueberry bushes.

TEMPE'  
 (to scarecrow)  
 I guess you're even less  
 intimidating than you look huh?

SINISTER VOICE/MISTY (O.S.)  
 (behind-bushes)  
 I wouldn't be so sure of that!

Frank's cat Misty saunters out from behind the final row of bushes and stands in front of Tempe'.

MISTY (CONT'D)  
 Greetings little-bunny. Come all  
 alone to play have we?

Tempe' is much less fearful of this cat than one would expect.

TEMPE'

I'm a little-rabbit now to be technical. Sup?

MISTY

(shocked/angry)

Sup? Sup?! Can you really be ignorant of who **I** am -- whatever-it-is-you-are?! Have you hare-brains lost even your slight mental-capacity?!

Misty SIGHS. Calms down.

MISTY (CONT'D)

But I suppose I haven't annihilated any of you for months now so perhaps I share blame here. Let me introduce myself before I decimate -- yourself. My name is -- Misty!

TEMPE'

What sort of name is that for a dangerous cat?

(short pause)

Self-described.

Misty SCOFFS.

MISTY

**Misty** for when my claws slash so fast through a rabbit's throat that their blood floats up in a mist instead of spilling to the ground!

TEMPE'

That doesn't seem like it jives with basic physics to me.

Misty raises a paw and EXTENDS her claws.

MISTY

Unfortunately you'll be missing your head before you know for sure. Adieu little --

A large-shadow forms behind Misty until it towers above her. The cat turns around to look.

Dawson is right there!

DAWSON  
 (ferocious)  
 Bark! Bark! Bark!

Misty SCREECHES and nearly jumps out of her own skin! She flees toward Frank's house and out of sight.

TEMPE'  
 Thanks buddy!

DAWSON  
 Não faz mal  
 (Portuguese for 'No  
 problem')  
 Tempe'! You played your part well  
 there. A most enjoyable experience  
 all around!

TEMPE'  
 You didn't do so bad yourself!

Dawson CHUCKLES.

DAWSON  
 Perhaps there's a little Great  
 Terror deep-down after all eh?  
 (short pause)  
 But we should get moving before  
 anyone on our farm notices my  
 absence.

TEMPE'  
 Sounds good.

Tempe' and Dawson continue across Frank's yard.

TEMPE' (CONT'D)  
 Thanks for coming too. General  
 Hanson and I went out before but it  
 had rained again and we couldn't  
 pick up a scent.  
 (short pause, insecure)  
 I've always been better with  
 weather-smells anyway.

DAWSON  
 My pleasure! And sometimes it's  
 just a good idea to call in a  
 specialist.

EXT. FIELD - LATER

Dawson and Tempe' come to the slow-moving creek.

TEMPE'

And this is where we improvised a bit!

(pause)

I guess you didn't mention this creek to Patches in your directions.

DAWSON

Oh? I must have forgotten.

TEMPE'

(good natured)

No problem! So you ready for a dip then? Can't say I'm excited to have my nose full of wet dog but --

DAWSON

(confused)

Wet dog?

TEMPE'

It's just an expression you know? No harm meant or anything.

Dawson looks to their left.

DAWSON

Didn't you cross the bridge down there?

TEMPE'

The wha...?

Tempe' turns his head to look as well. There's a small, wooden bridge that spans the creek about a hundred-feet away.

MOMENTS LATER

Tempe' crosses the bridge behind Dawson and GRUMBLES.

TEMPE' (CONT'D)

(to himself)

Always look both ways every time!

(short pause)

I bet this is what General Hanson kept laughing about too!

EXT. FOREST - LATER

Dawson SNIFFS around the wall of blackberry-bushes where Patches faced the fox.

DAWSON

Both Patches and the fox were here  
-- where they halted for a brief  
time -- then...

Dawson walks to the right and Tempe' follows.

MOMENTS LATER

Dawson and Tempe' arrive at the spot where Patches entered the bushes. Broken branches mark where the fox also passed through.

DAWSON (CONT'D)

Patches went into these bushes with the fox right on his tail. I must say I'm pretty impressed with the little guy! He's stayed ahead for quite a while and foxes are hardly known as slowpokes.

TEMPE'

I'm not surprised. He's a very impressive rabbit.

(short pause)

I'd never have made it to town without him.

DAWSON

I've got a feeling we'll find what we're looking for here whether good or ill. Are you ready for that?

TEMPE'

Yes. It's what I came to do.

DAWSON

Alright. I don't think the fox is around now or I'd be getting a much heavier scent, but you're probably better-off sticking close to my hindquarters.

TEMPE'

Understood.

Dawson and Tempe' enter the bushes.

EXT. FOREST - BUSHES - MOMENTS LATER

The animals traverse through bush-growth that extends well-over their heads. Dawson stops to SNIFF a spot of ground.

MOMENTS LATER

Dawson and Tempe' move around a large bush. Behind is a pile of bones that belonged to a small rabbit.

TEMPE'

(sad)

Poor Patches. I'd hoped he had gotten away-safely but deep-down I never really expected it.

DAWSON

He died to help his friends.

(short pause)

I once heard someone say there's no greater love than that.

TEMPE'

I believe it.

(pause)

How long did you know he was dead?

DAWSON

Not very. The fox killed him about ten-yards back and brought his body here to consume. I think it was a quick death if that's any comfort for you.

TEMPE'

It's too bad we can't get his remains back to our farm.

DAWSON

It is -- but perhaps we can find a better place close by to bury them.

EXT. FOREST - BUSH CLEARING - LATER

Sunlight shines on an open clearing circled by the tall bushes. Several sunflowers rooted in the center move a bit in the light breeze.

Dawson comes out of the bush-growth into the clearing with some of the bones in his mouth. He places them on top of a small bone-pile he's already made near the sunflowers. Tempe' sits close to the pile.

DAWSON

Now this is a beautiful spot!

TEMPE'

(sad)

Yes, but Patches will still be  
alone here.

DAWSON

Bones have no memories Tempe'.  
Those will travel home with you.

Dawson starts to dig a hole near the flowers.

TEMPE'

Wait! I'd like to dig if that's  
alright.

Dawson smiles.

DAWSON

Of course it is! I'll stand-guard  
in the shrubs and return in a  
while.

TEMPE'

Thank you.

Dawson returns into the bushes.

Tempe' looks to the sky and then at the sunflowers.

TEMPE' (CONT'D)

May all the suns shine on you  
Patches.

Tempe' digs further at the small-hole.

EXT. FOREST - LATER

Tempe' and Dawson travel back in the direction of Robert's  
farm.

DAWSON

Any news on your sick friend?

TEMPE'

Nothing since the veterinarian took  
her a couple-suns past.

EXT. ROBERT'S HAY FARM - LATER

Dawson and Tempe' pass the dog's fenced-enclosure.

Robert's daughter runs up to them.

ROBERT'S DAUGHTER  
Dawson! I've been looking  
everywhere for you!

She notices Tempe'.

ROBERT'S DAUGHTER (CONT'D)  
Oh! Did you make a friend?!

Doctor Stephens' car pulls into Robert's yard.

The veterinarian gets out with Daisy wrapped in her arms.  
Daisy's now in excellent health!

Robert comes out of his home all smiles. He approaches Doctor  
Stephens holding up his military-tags, then drops his arm.

ROBERT  
So what's this all about then? I  
read your letter about -- some sort  
of Watership Down sequel beginning  
on my farm?

Doctor Stephens notices Robert's daughter, Dawson and Tempe'  
grouped-together in the distance. She LAUGHS.

DOCTOR STEPHENS  
(to Robert)  
I see Dawson isn't the ferocious  
rabbit-killing dog in that tale at  
least!

Robert looks back and sees them too. His daughter bends down  
to pat Tempe' as Dawson PANTS.

He turns back to the veterinarian.

ROBERT  
Guess he's a lover-not-a-biter  
after all!  
(reaches out to scratch  
Daisy's head)  
Is this the famous town-traveling  
rabbit then?

Doctor Stephens smiles.

DOCTOR STEPHENS  
Nope. I found this one sick near  
your house a few days back with --  
um, after I slipped my note under  
the door. It was touch and go for a  
bit but she seems to have made a  
full recovery!  
(MORE)



DOCTOR STEPHENS (CONT'D)  
 (to Daisy, cute voice)  
 Haven't you Miss bunny-wunny?

ROBERT  
 Oh. Well uh, what are rabbit  
 treatments going for these days? I  
 bought a new threshing-machine so  
 I'm a little cash-tight at the  
 moment -- and while these animals  
 are from around here they're not  
 exactly pets of mine you know?

Doctor Stephens CHUCKLES.

DOCTOR STEPHENS  
 Don't worry! I was never planning  
 to charge you! That'd be quite the  
 racket tho wouldn't it? Pick up  
 animals in people's yards without  
 asking and then bill them for it?  
 Nah! This was just my good deed for  
 the hour.

Robert smiles.

ROBERT  
 The hour?

DOCTOR STEPHENS  
 Yeah. Why limit those to once-a-day  
 right?

ROBERT  
 I like your thinking there!

Doctor Stephens puts Daisy down on the grass. The bunny looks  
 up, bows to the vet and then trots off toward Tempe'.

Robert's eyes widen.

ROBERT (CONT'D)  
 Now what in the world was that?!

DOCTOR STEPHENS  
 Not really sure to be honest. I've  
 never seen it in my years of  
 practice till it became a thing  
 recently. I'm just taking it as a  
 sign of gratitude.

ROBERT  
 Huh!  
 (short pause)  
 (MORE)

ROBERT (CONT'D)

Speaking of gratitude -- would you like to stop inside? The wife or I could make up a batch of lemonade and --

DOCTOR STEPHENS

Oh, I don't want to be a bother!

ROBERT

We also have some extra fish n' chips we picked up from --

DOCTOR STEPHENS

Never mind! Lemme at em!

LAUGHTER. Robert and Doctor Stephens walk toward his house.

EXT. ROBERT'S HAY FARM - DAY

Abigail stands near the small-rock under the tree where Patches first met Dawson. She speaks to the entire three-hundred-plus WARREN-RABBITS/BUNNIES who've gathered.

ABIGAIL

Thank you for coming to recognize the life of my son Prosser, or as practically everyone knew him since he had fur -- my son Patches.

(pause)

I know he spent a lot of time under this tree, whether it was to rest or think alone. And while I wasn't always convinced the solitude was beneficial, I'm sure he would be honored by the selection of this spot as his memory-marker provided it had been chosen with the love and care in which it clearly was.

(short pause)

Again, thank you all.

Abigail walks to the group of rabbits and sits near King Cotton-Rod, Queen Cotton-Rod, Tempe' and Daisy at the front. Queen Cotton-Rod nuzzles Abigail.

King Cotton-Rod moves up to the rock to speak.

KING COTTON-ROD

My fellow rabbits and bunnies --

A long, loud FLAPPING sound interrupts King Cotton-Rod and a brief moment of near-darkness ensues.

## IN THE SKY

A mass of crows (thousands) flies across the sun's path and nearly obscures it from the ground below. CAWS fill the whole air.

Crows land near the rabbits, up in the trees, on Robert's barn and --

## EXT. FRANK'S FARM - DAY

Many crows also descend in Frank's yard, on Frank's house and even onto his erected scarecrow! This is now a true standing-room only affair!

## EXT. ROBERT'S HAY FARM - DAY

Bo lands near Tempe', who sees him.

TEMPE'

(hushed voice)

Hey Bo!

BO

(hushed voice)

Hi Tempe'. Just came to pay respects.

TEMPE'

(hushed voice)

Glad you could make it!

BO

(hushed voice)

Me too.

The initial surprise of the rabbits begins to wear off.

KING COTTON-ROD

Well then, ahem -- my fellow rabbits, bunnies and uh, crows -- I dedicate this spot to the memory of the rabbit Patches, who aside from being kind and brave was also one of the best inner-watch rabbits this warren has ever produced! From all reports little to nothing escaped his notice, which I'm sure was both a blessing and a hardship at times.

(pause)

(MORE)

KING COTTON-ROD (CONT'D)

My son Tempe' once approached me with the thought of training Patches for outer-watch. I believe I brushed him off at the time due to some other-issue competing for my attention, although I can no longer remember what it was. I should have explained then, but I will do so now.

(short pause)

When a rabbit has dug a perfect burrow would he then be wise to trade it for a random hole-in-the-ground?

(short pause)

That's both metaphor and a literal statement for the benefit of any young-bunnies here.

POLITE CHUCKLES from the crowd.

KING COTTON-ROD (CONT'D)

After the service you may each spend time at the stone in memory. But don't feel pressure to rush your reflections -- since tomorrow is another sun.

LATER

Carwood and Marshall are near Patches' stone. No other animals are now around.

CARWOOD

(to rock, insincere)

Hey Patchy! Too bad for you little guy! See ya wouldn't wanna be --

MARSHALL

(angry)

If you don't have anything nice to say just get outta-here Carwood!

CARWOOD

Excuse me?!

MARSHALL

You heard what I said!

CARWOOD

Getting a little big for your hind-legs there ain't ya Marshall? You sure you're some-bunny that wants ta mess with me?!

MARSHALL

Well that's up to you isn't it ya  
big do --

(begins to say *dope*)  
unpleasant bunny! Either put-up-  
paws or turn-tail!

Carwood thinks a second then trots away. He turns his head  
back to Marshall.

CARWOOD

You ain't worth the effort pal!

MARSHALL

Yeah yeah, whatever.

Carwood leaves. Marshall approaches the rock.

MARSHALL (CONT'D)

(to rock, genuine)

Hey buddy. I know this rock isn't  
really you, but I wanted to get  
something out and think you can  
hear me so... I'm sorry for  
anything -- **everything** mean I said  
or did to you. I'll try to make up  
for it when I see ya again. Save  
some lettuce from the sky-patch for  
me alright? I hear that stuff is  
primo.

(short pause)

Till then I'll try to be better to  
everyone here.

Tears fall down Marshall's face.

EXT. FRANK'S FARM - DAY

A car pulls into the front-driveway of Frank's house.

Frank gets out the driver's-side and a PHOTOGRAPHER exits the  
other. They meet at the car's trunk.

FRANK

Here's the ole' place!

PHOTOGRAPHER

(not enthused)

Good times.

FRANK

Is it true Hiram-County Magazine has had articles re-printed in national publications?

PHOTOGRAPHER

We did once, but it was about a veteran who'd lost his legs from an IED and started a children's physical-rehabilitation center.

FRANK

(spoken quickly)

Oh yeah, that sort of thing is really important I'm sure.

(pause, excited)

So you ready to get some actual-work done today?!

Frank starts to walk off.

PHOTOGRAPHER

Mind opening the trunk so I can get my camera-gear first?

FRANK

(lies)

Of course! Just testing ya right?! You know most creative-types -- don't have a lick of common-sense! But now I see I can trust you to have at least a base-level of competence!

PHOTOGRAPHER

(still not-enthused)

Alright.

MOMENTS LATER

Frank and the photographer approach the petunias in Frank's backyard. The photographer carries his camera and a gear-suitcase. Frank has extreme tunnel-vision.

FRANK

About time you all recognized my wife's flowers! I've got no idea what was so impressive about Ms. Anderson's. Roses are so cliché these days and I figure that...

The photographer stops in his tracks and looks around.

PHOTOGRAPHER

Uh -- you got a problem with birds here?

FRANK

(confused)

What? Birds?

Frank looks too. The back of his house and yard have both been blanketed with bird-poop and feathers from crows that landed on his property for Patches' memorial. Frank's petunias also have noticeable-damage from crows that settled amongst/around them.

Frank SCREAMS, prolonged at the sky.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Ahhh!

PHOTOGRAPHER

I could um, come back later?

EXT. ROBERT'S HAY FARM - DAY

Spring turns to summer, turns to fall, turns to winter and again becomes spring. Another year has passed.

Robert's barn is now completely painted.

INT. RABBIT WARREN - TEMPE'S LIVING-BURROW - ONE YEAR LATER - SPRING - DAY

Daisy (now 32 human-years) has just given birth to five BABY BUNNIES. One (male) of these is quite large, and another bunny (male) while not a dwarf, is on the smaller side.

Tempe' (now 33 human-years) comes through the entrance-hole with purple flower-petals in his mouth. He drops these where Daisy rests.

TEMPE'

I brought you some petals Daisy.

DAISY

Oh! How very thoughtful -- and tasty!

(short pause, concerned)

You're not gonna get in trouble for this are you?

TEMPE'

Nah! King Cotton-Rod put the flower-issue up for a vote at elder-council's last session and the neighbor's farm is back to a recommendation of *avoid*. I was the deciding vote there -- tho I guess all the allow-votes were deciding-votes technically.

Daisy grins.

DAISY

Well, that's just **technically** I'm sure! But thank you. They do look very good right now!

TEMPE'

You're very welcome! I hope you like them.

(short pause)

Have you thought of any names for our new-bunnies?

DAISY

Not just yet.

Tempe' points out the largest male-bunny.

TEMPE'

We could name this one after Patches. He seems very robust and spirited!

DAISY

Yes, we should name one for Prosser I think -- but perhaps...

Daisy indicates the smaller male-bunny with her nose.

Tempe' smiles.

TEMPE'

You're right. He probably would have been happiest with that.

Tempe' and Daisy nuzzle their baby bunnies.

Abigail's voice comes from outside the burrow's entrance-hole.

ABIGAIL (O.S.)

Is this a good time for a visit?!



DAISY  
Always a perfect time!

Abigail (now 57 human-years) and Barlow (now 62 human-years)  
enter Tempe's burrow.

TEMPE'  
Hi Mrs. Abigail! Mister Barlow!

BARLOW  
Hello you two!

ABIGAIL  
(to Tempe')  
You don't have to be so formal with  
us Tempe'! You were best-bunny at  
our wedding after all!

TEMPE'  
(jokes)  
Huh! I was wasn't I?! But that was  
ten-suns ago and I'm starting to  
forget things as my ears droop.  
Also, General Jack was co-bunny so  
I believe he's required to keep  
half those memories on file. Mostly  
any where I embarrassed myself  
trying to hop-paw to rhythmic crow-  
caws.

ABIGAIL  
What?! You are such a fluff-ball  
sometimes!

DAISY  
(to Tempe')  
She does have you there.

Tempe' grins.

TEMPE'  
Maybe.  
(to Abigail)  
Would you like to meet our new  
bunnies?

ABIGAIL  
(very eager)  
Yes! That's about three-hundred  
percent why we're here!

TEMPE'  
Alright!

Tempe' points out the smaller male-bunny.

TEMPE' (CONT'D)

Then let me first introduce you  
to...

FADE OUT.

THE END