

Title: Journey to Peace

One dark and cloudy spring night, Scarlet was sleeping soundly with her brothers Andrew and Eric. Scarlet was the youngest and Eric was the oldest. Suddenly, a small pellet came shooting down and broke the table in half. Next came a stick poking around, thankfully in the living room where none of them were sleeping. Hearing the broken table crashing down, Scarlet jumped to her feet and peeked into the living room. Then, she looked up. In the entrance of their burrow, a huge human eye was looking straight at her! Scarlet shrieked and ran to her mom and dad to report the news.

Andrew and Eric were snoring so loudly that they hadn't heard the noise, so Scarlet, Mom, and Dad had to wake them up and tell them the bad news. Humans were hunting them for the family's red fluffy tails.

In the morning, the foxes secretly packed up their stuff, and left to find a safe new home. "How about behind this bush?" asked Scarlet. "At night even if the moon is shining, the entrance of the burrow would be in the bush's shadow." "Well, I guess so. Let's start digging!" said Dad.

In no time their new home was ready. In their new home, Scarlet started making traps. She made one that kept the poking stick stuck to the floor of the burrow and another trap that would trip a human trying to look inside the burrow and send them falling into a ditch. Scarlet was sure the traps would work.

That night, they heard the same noise again and the humans did not fall into the ditch and their poking stick didn't even get stuck. Scarlet found out quickly that none of her traps were working. So she got out her slingshot and started shooting nuts into the human face peering into their burrow. The human just glared at her with his fiery eyes. Scarlet quickly scurried away and reported the news to her mom and dad. She wondered, "How did the humans find our home?" Later, when she asked why, her father said, "I think they put cameras up to find where we are." "Humph," sighed Scarlet. "Those humans are smart, but we will find a way to get away!"

The next morning, Scarlet's mom said: "Dad and I will turn into humans. If any of you have read Japanese stories before, foxes are thought to be magical and can turn into humans and turn back. This is our plan. First, we will turn into humans and buy a backpack that you can put facing the front of you, and a basket to put our food in. While we are buying things, stay here. When we come back, we will call for you to get your things and come outside. We are going to find a new, safe home."

"Wait, what about your tail? I've read that the tails always stick out when a fox turns into a human," said Eric. "Oh, we will just buy bulky clothes," said Dad. While Mom and Dad were going shopping, the little foxes got their precious things such as Scarlet's slingshot.

A little later, their mom and dad called for them and they dashed out. One by one the foxes jumped into Mom's backpack. Mom and Dad's tails didn't show at all.

Scarlet said, "I got your precious things, too." Mom said, "Thanks. Dad has food. So, if you are hungry, let us know." That was the beginning of their journey.

Soon enough, a bus came and stopped. Mom and Dad got on. They took a seat. Suddenly, Andrew's tail stuck up out of the backpack by accident. A bunch of guys turned around in their seats and looked suspiciously at Mom. Mom said, "Who are you looking at? I was only getting my red handkerchief." The guys turned back around. Mom quietly sighed a sigh of relief.

From inside the backpack, Andrew whispered to Mom, "Where are we going?" When no one was looking, Mom whispered back: "To the Pine Bush. Hunters can't hunt there in the spring and summer. They can only hunt in the fall and winter."

"Wow. The Pine Bush is pretty far away from the Waterfall Forest that we used to live in," thought Scarlet.

Not expectedly, the guys that looked at Mom before, turned around again and looked at her. A big guy said: "I've been thinking. That red thing wasn't your handkerchief. It was the tail of a red-tailed fox!"

“No it wasn’t! I’ll prove it!” said Mom. She pretended to reach into her backpack and get a red handkerchief, but since she was magical, she turned her backpack pocket into a handkerchief that was red. She didn’t need that pocket anyway. But when she was pretending to reach in, she accidentally tickled Eric. Eric laughed and Dad had to cough loudly to cover it up. “Here it is,” Mom said as she took the red handkerchief out of the backpack. The guys were dumbstruck. “What! Sorry,” said the big guy who had accused Mom.

A little after that, they got to the Pine Bush. Mom and Dad got off the bus and started walking into the deep woods. Suddenly, they heard a big crack behind them. Dad turned around. Who was it? No one was there. Just some weird shadow. Dad whispered to Mom, “Someone or something is following us. We shouldn’t turn back into foxes until no one is following us.”

“Okay,” said Mom. Just then, another loud crack sounded and Mom jumped and her tail showed. Mom quickly covered her tail and turned around to see who it was. It was a fuzzy brown thing. Guess what? It was a small bear.

“I knew it! You guys are foxes that are pretending to be humans! It’s okay. There are no hunters here. Who are you? Do you have kids? Can I be friends with them? My name is Louie the Bear. I don’t have a single friend or sibling.”

“You can be friends with us!” shouted Scarlet as she poked out her head from the backpack.

“We are here from the Waterfall Forest because we were being hunted,” said Andrew. “Do you want to have a picnic with us?” asked Eric.

Louie laughed at them talking one by one and said, “If we’re going to have a picnic, I’ll go get my stash of wild berries!” And Louie ran back into the woods.

When Louie came back, Mom said, “Where is a good place to have a picnic?” “Follow me,” replied Louie. He took the fox family to a small valley and stopped. “How about here?” he asked. “Okay!” said Scarlet.

The three little foxes jumped out of the backpack and started looking at flowers and sniffing around. Mom reached into the backpack, took out a huge, soft blanket, and spread it out on the grass. Dad took out the food basket in the middle of the blanket. Mom and Dad turned back into foxes. When Scarlet saw them, she started laughing. “The human clothes are too big for you guys!” she shouted. Mom and Dad quickly took off their human clothes. The air smelled of flowers. Everything was peaceful. Louie and the little foxes became friends. The picnic food was delicious. No more being hunted. Peace forever? All is well...maybe...

THE END.