

The Misadventures of Swift Fox

Episode 4 (Draft)

CHAPTER 1

Hi! My name is Swift and I'm a fox kit! I'm having a lot of fun in my new life and learning neat things with my bothers and sisters. Hunting, tracking, fighting, stalking, all kinds of lessons Mother and Father are teaching us. But some things just come naturally to foxes, especially to kits. Trouble and mischief are just two of these that feature prominently in my existence. Maybe prominent is a little light of a term. When it comes to these two traits, I think I've received the 'Lion's share.' That aside, I would like to offer you an invitation to join me in one of my misadventures. Why not!? It just takes a flick of your tail and a shake of your head and you're a fox too! Come on friend! Follow me!

The story today takes us deep into the woods next to a rotting, hollowed out, fallen log at the climax of another spectacular adventure of Indiana Fox and Rascal Coon.

“Are you sure that the golden chicken bone is hidden in this cave Indy?” The raccoon asked cautiously, “It looks awful dark and dangerous in there.”

“Ha!” laughs the fox loudly beside him, “Rascal, you are ever the cautious sidekick. I am certain the golden chicken bone has been entombed here for centuries. All my research confirms it should be in this cave.”

The fox rubs his paws together in anticipation, “Rascal, light the torches.”

“Swift, we’re not allowed to play with fire.” Rascal states flatly, “You remember what happened last time?”

“Rascal.” Swift sighs, “It’s only pretend. Just say ‘They’re ready.’”

“They’re ready Indy.” Rascal repeats, a little embarrassed he fell out of character again, but he’s learned he can never be too cautious with Swift around. The fox had a way of finding trouble.

“Good, then let’s go in!” Swift says and begins to walk slowly but confidently into the log with Rascal following behind him.

They make their way several steps into the log, the light from outside barely illuminating the space, and they move on using their noses and whiskers. Suddenly Swift stops and flings himself at the wall of the log in an effort to stop Rascal from moving further. The move elicited an audible **CRACK** from the old log.

“Swift! Don’t do that.” Rascal said.

“But you could have set off a trap!” Indiana Fox advised, “I just saved your life. Step where I do my faithful companion.”

With his next step, the log cracked again and began to roll to the left.

“GET OUT!!” Rascal and Swift yipped in unison as both animals turned into one another. The collision was all that was needed to dislodge the log completely. It began to roll further, then pick up momentum throwing both Swift and Rascal off their paws and tumbling along inside.

“WHOA! WHOA! WHOA!” Came the chorus of the two small animal’s voices. The log hit a root in the ground, which sent it careening to the right. A partially embedded rock caught the left end and pulled the log back around to the left. Trees passed by to the right and left, the log barely missing them all.

Finally the log rolled to a stop and then sat still on level ground.

“Oh Creator, I think I’m gonna be sick.” Swift moaned.

“I think I’m gonna be sick too.” Rascal echoed as the two friends stumbled dizzily out of the log and out into a clearing.

“That was great!” Swift yepfed, “We gotta do that again!”

“We gotta get back into the woods Swift.” Rascal said, “It’s not safe to be in the open during the day.”

“Yeah, your right.” Swift conceded, “Besides I’m hungry...let’s go back home.”

“Foood.” Rascal salivated, “I can almost smell the chicken now.”

“Yeah.” Swift breathed, then added while sniffing the air, “You know now that you mention it, I can smell chicken now.”

Rascal raised his nose, “I can smell it too. But we...”

“...Should go check it out.” Swift inserted quickly, “Come on!” The fox leapt forward and followed his nose towards the edge of the woods. Satisfied that they were at least getting out of the field, Rascal followed after. The smell got stronger the further they went.

The two friends reached the tree line and re-entered the forest following the scent of fresh chicken. They didn’t have to go much further as just four feet into the forest was a long rectangular metal box. It was colored a light blue and had a solid metal floor with wire sides and top. The open end was faced away from the two animals, but each could

clearly identify the chicken breast laid out on a platter inside the box on the end nearest them.

“Swift?” Rascal spoke first, “You don’t think...”

“...I don’t think this is the lost Temple of Poultopolis, you ask?” Swift interjected, “Did not the deductive reasoning of Indiana Fox not tell you that the cave we entered was correct? It lead us here to the lost temple and now it stands before us...’The Golden Chicken Bone!’ Come Rascal! Our treasure awaits us!”

“But Swift!” Rascal shouted.

“Not Swift.” The fox corrected as he began to examine the metal box for the entrance, “It’s...Indiana Fox!”

Rascal made another attempt to get a word in but Swift yerfs, “This is great! Rascal, look at these.” Swift examines the metal screening and gives it a lick, “Pure silver! The riches of Poultopia weren’t exaggerated!”

“Swift,” Rascal finally gets out, “It could be a trap. A real one.”

“Nonsense! No trap in the world is smarter than Indiana Fox!” Swift barked triumphantly, “Look! The entrance is here!”

Swift stands before the wide opening peering 3 feet back down at the tantalizingly savory chicken breast at the other end. He examines all the features carefully in his own imaginative light, which gives Rascal enough time to catch up to his foxie friend.

“Swift” Rascal starts.

“Indy.” Swift corrects.

“Okay, Indy.” Rascal concedes, “This doesn’t smell right.”

“Doesn’t smell right!?” Swift yips taking a long sniff, “What could smell more right than that? The Golden Chicken Bone?”

“But it’s not The Golden Chicken Bone!” Rascal growls.

Swift looks at his companion who is clearly agitated, “Hmmm. You may be right. It could be a decoy yes. Placed here long ago to throw us off the trail...”

Rascal lets out a quiet, “Phew.” But it is short lived.

“...very clever of them.” Swift finishes, “But I am more clever. I know their game and I will not fall for it.”

“Excuse me?” Rascal gawks at the fox, “What are you yerfing about?”

“It’s simple.” Swift answers, “You see, if I were them, I’d use a decoy too to throw off any robbers. But, I’d also know that any robbers would have an overly cautious partner, like you, who would suggest that this one was a fake and they would pass this one up in search of the real Golden Chicken Bone. But! Being as clever as they are, and knowing that an overly cautious side kick would divert the group away from the so called fake, I’d have put the fake where the real Golden Chicken Bone is and moved the real one...” Swift points down to the chicken breast at the far end of the box and barks, “HERE!”

“That is the most insane bit of logic to ever escape your muzzle do you know that?” Rascal laughed.

“You’re just jealous of my vulpine intellect.” Swift points out, “And just to prove I’m right, mister smarty ring-tail, let’s go see for ourselves?”

That sobered Rascal up and he chortled, “Wait Sw-Indy.” But Swift had already begun walking into the box. Not wanting to abandon his friend, but against his better judgement, he followed also.

Swift smiled as he glanced back to see Rascal following worriedly behind him. He tried to calm his friend by pointing out the features on the inside of the box, “Just like it was written. The floors of Poultopia are smooth as glass. And just look at their skills with silver. Each strand so fine and worked to such exacting standards in perfect geometric shapes.”

It was good enough that Rascal began to loose himself in his imagination again as Swift spun the illusion tighter and more convincing. Finally, they had traversed the grand hallway and stood before the altar upon which the Golden Chicken Bone was set.

“You never cease to amaze me Indiana Fox.” Rascal admitted.

“I’m glad you’re here to share the moment with me Rascal my trusted friend.” The fox replied with sincerity, “Now. The moment of truth.”

Indiana Fox reached out slowly, cautiously. His paw brushed over the chicken breast and the platter shuddered.

“Careful Indy.” Rascal advised as the fox quickly pulled his paw back.

“It’s very tricky.” Swift admitted, “We’ll have to work together. You get a hold of that side, and I’ll take this side and we’ll lift together. Okay?”

Rascal nodded and both creatures gently laid their paws on either end of the chicken breast.

“On three.” Swift said, “One. Two...Three!”

Both Swift and Rascal lifted the piece of chicken straight up in perfect unison...

...And nothing happened.

“It was the real one.” Rascal breathed again.

Swift nodded and said, “Now let’s get out of here.”

That was when the platter began to creak upwards...

Swift and Rascal both looked over their shoulders as the platter jerked up, then caught, then jerked up again.

“RUN!!” They both cried and as they scrambled to get out, the metal floor offered their claws no traction. Swift’s paws slipped out from beneath him first and he crashed to the floor, knocking Rascal’s paws out in the process and sending him to the floor of the box.

The impact jerked the trigger completely free and it sprang up to the ceiling, releasing the spring that was holding the door open which now sprang shut and locked.

CLANK! BOING! SWOOSH! CLUNK!

CHAPTER 2

Together in the sprung trap Swift and Rascal could barely stand up let alone move around.

“Great.” Cried Rascal, “Another fine mess you’ve gotten us into Swift. Why don’t you put that “vulpine intellect” to work now and find a way out of this trap.”

“I would if you’d get your big, diapered butt outta the way.” Swift shot back.

“Hey? Who’s got a big butt crinkle brush?” Rascal jeered and pushed the young fox.

Swift just stuck his tongue out at Rascal and turned to sniffing around the confines of the trap.

“Well, at least we still have the bit of chicken.” Rascal chitters finding the chicken breast near him, “At least we can eat something while we wait for Mom to come find us.”

Swift shot around and whacked the chicken out of Rascal’s paws with his own. “We can’t eat that.” Swift said, “It could be bad for us.”

“But I’m hungry.” Rascal whined.

“We’ll find something to eat when we get out of here.” Swift yeped, “Until then, no munching.”

The fox kept poking his nose at different pieces of the trap. He thought he was just beginning to figure out how it worked when the smell of fear caught his attention. Rascal had just stiffened. “Rascal, what is...” Swift’s question was cut short as he could smell it too.

MAN

Both young animals hunkered down and were very quiet and still. The man scent was growing stronger and they could now hear something approaching the edge of the wood line.

“Hey. You two better get out of here.” Said a voice from above them. Both Swift and Rascal looked up through the wire mesh of the cage and saw Terrence the Squirrel clinging to the bark of the tree next to them.

“We can’t.” Swift whispered, “We’re stuck.”

There was a snapping of a twig and heavy foot steps on the soft loam of the forest floor. Terrence turned and shot up into the canopy of the tree. The two young creatures looked back towards the approaching noise and saw the most frightening thing either had ever encountered.

It was huge it’s head barely clearing the lower branches as it stood there looking down on them. The paws were immense and clearly big enough to squash the life out of either of them.

To be continued...

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