

The chronicles of *Wild Hollow*

THE GRAY TRILOGY

EPISODE THREE **The Vixen's Choice**

A **Shouting Is Funny** production.

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TITLE SEQUENCE

MUSIC: 'The Chronicles of Wild Hollow (Main Theme)'

NARRATOR In a far off place... An endless forest grows. Sprawling. Barren. Impenetrable. But, beyond the tree line, creatures roam free. A land where adventure lurks around every corner. A land where legends are made. A land, called Wild Hollow.

SCENE 1 - THE SHORE. DAYTIME.

SFX: The trio wading to shore, waves, seagulls overhead.

MUSIC: 'A Fox, an Otter and a Penguin'

NARRATOR The sandy dunes of Wild Hollow glimmered in the morning sun. Artemis, Osric and Salami were soaked to the skin. Their raft floated in pieces far out to sea.

OSRIC Who's idea was it to bind the raft together with bleeding seaweed?

NARRATOR Salami was unusually quiet. The trio's makeshift vessel had lasted a mere ten minutes, before deteriorating, resulting in a night-long swim to the nearest shore.

ARTEMIS We need to move. Caine won't be fooled for long. You still have it?

NARRATOR Salami reached into her pocket, and drew out the Whale Song.

SALAMI So what do we do now?

ARTEMIS Well... I'm going that way.

NARRATOR Artemis was staring beyond the sandbank. In the distance was a shadowy mass of trees. The Stupid Woods.

SALAMI We can come with you?

ARTEMIS No. If my Truth is leading me in there... I think this is something I need to do on my own.

SALAMI Just be careful. People that go in there, they don't often come back. I've heard it's unbelievably... stupid.

NARRATOR Artemis nodded, and turned to Osric.

ARTEMIS What's your next move, cap'n?

OSRIC We have other business to attend to. Sinner's Cove ain't far. If we're gonna stand a chance of taking back The Crown, we're in need of a new crew.

SALAMI Ooh, a recruitment drive!

ARTEMIS Sounds like a plan.

NARRATOR Artemis looked across the shoreline. A tall stone tower stood nearby.

OSRIC The Old Beacon. As good a rendezvous point as any. Shall we say 12 hours?

ARTEMIS If I don't make it back... Don't wait for me. Go and give Caine what he deserves.

OSRIC You'll make it back.

SALAMI And we'll see you when you do.

NARRATOR The three looked at each other. A fox, an otter, and a penguin. Then they turned, their destinations set. The sun was rising high above them. And the clock had begun to tick.

SFX: Footsteps on sand, two pairs in one direction, one in the other.

SCENE 2 - THE STUPID WOODS. DAYTIME.

SFX: A gentle breeze, and footsteps on grass.

ARTEMIS This better be worth it.

NARRATOR A rolling sea fog was setting in as Artemis made her way to the Stupid Woods. She trudged through the thickets of long grass.

ARTEMIS 'Go to Primus! Find your truth!' Ugh.. fat lot of good he was, just a crusty whale with a boomy voice singing in riddles. And the things those poor folk did to each other... For what...

NARRATOR After about an hour or so, a line of tall green trees emerged through the mist. She had arrived.

MUSIC: 'The Stupid Woods'

NARRATOR As she approached, the mist cleared and a golden light gently fell on the tree-line.

ARTEMIS Here we go then...

SFX: Woodland birdsong.

NARRATOR She made her way in. Tall twisted tree trunks stretched up high into the sky. Each one was a different shape to the next, some bulbous, some bending, and some straight as an arrow. Moss and vines hung down and brushed the fox's shoulder as she journeyed deeper. The forest floor was covered in a mass of roots, with little mushrooms poking through. The air was thick with a heady scent of flora, and what looked like tiny sparkling seeds floating between the trees.

ARTEMIS Well isn't this picturesque...

SFX: A distant, melodic whistling.

NARRATOR At that moment, a jovial whistling sound echoed from nearby. The fox's ears pricked. The dainty tune was coming from deeper in the woods.

ARTEMIS Alright... Let's see what this place has to offer.

NARRATOR Artemis strode on, through the overlapping leaves, vines and mushrooms that littered the floor of the densely packed forest. She slashed and hacked through the foliage, following the noise, hidden amongst the trees.

NARRATOR The tune became louder as Artemis honed in on its location. She approached a small clearing within the thickets and low hanging willow trees that surrounded her. Sat on a fallen tree trunk in the centre of the clearing were two figures, deep in conversation.

BING ...Will you stop with the whistling! It's what I've been saying this entire time! Listen, Crosby, the castle never knew it had legs.

CROSBY Yes, yes, yes, Bing. Although I would have to argue the point that collectively, the folk who ate the cake did have a lot of it.

BING A really big sausage. Not to mention that chess is not a sport.

CROSBY How dare you! How very dare you, I say!

NARRATOR What sat before Artemis was deeply befuzzling. A praying mantis appeared to be lecturing a large lemming. As the sunlight broke through the bristling leaves and branches, the spores of the surrounding flora floated midair. The scene was truly serene, apart from the babbling creatures that sat atop their tree.

BING Up on the hill one day last Junevember...

CROSBY Oh please! I've heard this so many times. The bicycle came and the bread was delivered.

BING But you miss the point! I had only been there for a fortnight! A fortnight without bread! It's like... Like a.... Oh gosh, you know what I'm saying.

CROSBY I know exactly what you're saying, old friend. What a conundrum.

ARTEMIS Errr... Excuse me..?

NARRATOR The peculiar pair froze for a moment. They slowly tilted their heads, inspecting the newcomer.

MUSIC: 'Have You Brought Some Bread This Time?'

NARRATOR A dark expression crept across the praying mantis' face. The lemming's sleepy visage remained docile.

CROSBY I knew you'd return. The princess of the castle, here to torment us once more!

BING Have you brought some bread this time?

ARTEMIS I've actually never been here before, my name is Artemis...

BING Oh! Voulez-vous coucher avec moi, sausage?

CROSBY On the contrary, dear boy, the sausage is on holiday!

BING Oh, poppycock!

NARRATOR Artemis was non-plussed. The spores swirled around her head. With every breath of forest air, they flooded her lungs. Harmless enough, Artemis thought. But unbeknownst to the fox, the spores had a malevolent secret...

ARTEMIS What on earth are you talking about?

BING I'm sorry you will have to speak English, my French skills are limited to dismissive conversational and unnecessary exclamation.

ARTEMIS I am speaking English... What is going on?

CROSBY The silly bastard thinks you're French.

ARTEMIS I'm not.

CROSBY Aren't you?

ARTEMIS No!

BING Oh la vache! Le surprise magnifique!

ARTEMIS What does that mean?

BING Hmm?

CROSBY What?

ARTEMIS This is stupid.

BING Exactement!

NARRATOR Artemis' gaze fell on a cluster of mushrooms at the lemming's feet. They puckered slowly, before releasing a fresh plume of scintillating dust.

SFX: An unpleasantly moist, gassy release from the mushrooms.

ARTEMIS This is... Stupid... The Stupid Woods... The sausage woods... Oh no. My sausages...

NARRATOR The spores were taking effect. Any creature unfortunate enough to inhale these seedlings would very quickly descend into the realms of madness. The Stupid Woods were beginning to claim a new victim.

SONG: 'The Stupid Song'

NARRATOR At that moment, Bing and Crosby leapt to their feet, bursting into song.

(BING)

COULD YOU PASS THE MUSTARD PLEASE

(CROSBY)

IS A TOE A FINGER

(BING)

PATCHWORK DENIM DUNGAREES

(CROSBY)

YOU'RE A LOVELY SINGER

(BING)

THANK YOU!

FACE PAINT ON A SUBMARINE

(CROSBY)

MASOCHISM

(BING)

MARGARINE

(CROSBY)

HERE'S A PRETTY PICTURE OF A FARM

(BING)

TELESCOPIC APOPLECTIC

(BOTH)

TAKE A SOCK AND PUT IT ON YOUR ARM

(CROSBY)

I HEARD THAT YOU FANCY PETER

(BING)

CHESS IS NOT A SPORT

(CROSBY)

MOTHER CANNOT WAIT TO MEET HER

(BING)

CHESS IS NOT A SPORT

(CROSBY)

MONEY GROWS ON APPLE TREES

(BING)

WAIT, THAT'S APPLES

(CROSBY)

SILLY ME

(BOTH)

WE ALL KNOW THAT MONEY'S NOT A FRUIT

(CROSBY)

MISTER TWISTER FASHIONISTA

(BING)

JEALOUSY'S AN UGLY ATTRIBUTE

(CROSBY)

CAN I WEAR A HAT

(BING)

MY FRIEND, YOU

BETTER BELIEVE THAT YOU CAN WEAR

ANYTHING YOU WANT INCLUDING

CLOGS

(CROSBY)

I'VE NEVER OWNED A PAIR OF CLOGS

(BING)

CLOGS, IN MY OPINION ARE A

GROSSLY UNAPPRECIATED

CHOICE OF FOOTWEAR

(CROSBY)

LOOK, A PIG

(BING)

WHERE

(CROSBY)

SORRY, BUT IT'S GONE NOW

(ARTEMIS)

HOW DO I GET OUT OF HERE

(BING)

OH, THAT'S REALLY SIMPLE

HUNDRED YARDS THEN TAKE THE LEFT THEN

POP THE NEAREST PIMPLE

(ARTEMIS)

DOESN'T REALLY HELP, BUT THANKS

(CROSBY)

HE'S AS THICK AS TWO SHORT PLANKS

SHOUTING
IS FUNNY.

(BING)

WHAT WAS THAT

(CROSBY)

A MAN IS ON THE MOON

(ARTEMIS)

YOU'RE BOTH MAD, SO I'LL BE GOING

(BOTH)

NICE TO MEET YOU, HOPE YOU COME BACK SOON

COME BACK SOON

COME BACK SOON

(BING)

I HATE CHESS

NARRATOR Artemis watched the pair as they ran rings around the trees, shouting nonsense rhymes at each other. She felt a tingle in her ears and her vision was becoming hazy.

MUSIC: 'Something Familiar'

ARTEMIS I've gotta get out of here. I've gotta... drink a beer, an itchy ear. Oh god...

SFX: Stumbling footsteps, somehow distant.

NARRATOR She stumbled to her feet and took off into undergrowth, heading deeper into the woods. With every step she took, she could feel the spores taking effect. The fox gritted her teeth and pushed on, sniffing for anything that would give her answers.

ARTEMIS Damn you Primus... Ya booby... dooby mmmmlrrrr.

SFX: Artemis panting, beginning to panic.

NARRATOR Then all of a sudden, she caught a whiff of something. Something faint, old, but familiar. Something from her childhood, perhaps? Artemis desperately tried to follow the smell, tripping and falling as she went.

SFX: Artemis falling, hitting the ground.

NARRATOR The woods were now spinning, bright lights zooming around her head as she blinked. Just as she thought hope was lost, she felt something grab her from behind and pull her down.

SFX: The sound of Artemis's collar being grabbed, a rush of air and dirt, the birdsong fading away.

NARRATOR The woods were gone, dirt flew past her face. She was underground.

ARTEMIS What the...

SFX: Footsteps and the crumbling of loose earth.

NARRATOR Artemis turned to see a familiar face looking at her, hand gripping her collar and dragging her further down the earth warren. A face she hadn't seen in seven years.

ARTEMIS Mum?!

SCENE 3 - SINNER'S COVE. DAYTIME.

SFX: A port soundscape. Seagulls, waves on the shoreline, the whir of old machinery and boats. Footsteps from Osric and Salami.

NARRATOR Meanwhile, Osric and Salami made their way through Sinner's Cove, a port town on the southern coast of Wild Hollow.

OSRIC Okay, let's try The Squid's Legs, their clientele doesn't usually disappoint.

NARRATOR They approached a run-down looking bar, its roof a stacked mess of wooden planks, the door barely clinging to its frame.

SALAMI Oh, I can't wait to see who we find. This is going to be fun!

OSRIC Yeah, about that. Salami, I think it's best if you leave the talking to me, aye? You have a habit of getting a bit excited-

SALAMI Oh yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah of course! My lips are sealed!

NARRATOR Osric nodded grimly. They pushed the door ajar, and stepped inside.

SFX: The door creaking open. A jabbering of customers.

SALAMI Hello!

SFX: The atmosphere grinds to a halt. All eyes on the newcomers. A cough.

OSRIC (To himself) Wonderful.

SFX: The door closing.

NARRATOR The door creaked shut behind them. A sea of beady eyes followed their journey to the bar.

OSRIC One Wild Hollow Rum for me. Salami?

SALAMI Any chance of a strawberry daiquiri?

BARMAN Comin' right up.

SFX: The scraping of barstools as they sit down.

NARRATOR Osric pulled up a barstool, groaning as he took the weight off his feet. Salami hopped up onto the stool next to him, her flippers swinging happily by her sides.

SFX: Happy humming from Salami.

NARRATOR The crowd still watched them suspiciously.

OSRIC Well then. Seeing as you're all expertly failing at minding your own business, we might as well get started.

SONG: 'Recruitment'

(OSRIC)

ALRIGHT YOU LOT, LISTEN UP
WE HAVE A PROPOSITION
WE HAD A LITTLE QUIBBLE, NOW OUR PIRATE SHIP
IS IN THE HANDS OF A SCURVY VILLAIN

WHO AMONG YOU HAS GOT THE NERVE
TO HELP US SEIZE IT BACK
NOW'S YOUR CHANCE, ME HEARTYS
TO FIGHT FOR SAILS BLACK

WE'RE LOOKING FOR A PIRATE CREW
AND SO WE SAY

(SALAMI)

COME AND HAVE A TRIP ON A PIRATE SHIP
IT'S A LOVELY PLACE TO BE
TRY A COUPLE DAYS, YOU CAN CATCH SOME RAYS
AS YOU SAIL ON THE SEVEN SEAS

LEAVING HOME'S NOT EASY
BUT I TELL YOU, WHEN YOU'RE THERE
THERE'S NOTHING LIKE THE FEELING OF THE OCEAN BREEZE
AS IT WHISTLES THROUGH YOUR HAIR

OSRIC That's enough, Salami.

SALAMI I thought maybe we could lighten it up a bit ya know?

OSRIC We're doing this my way.

SALAMI Sorry.

(OSRIC)

RIGHT, WE WANT AN ORDERLY QUEUE
WE'LL MEET YOU ONE BY ONE
WE WANT TO HEAR WHAT YOU CAN BRING
TO HELP US GET THIS DONE

BUT LISTEN CLOSE, THIS AIN'T JUST
A FRIENDLY MEET AND GREET

WE NEED A CREW THAT'S HARD AS NAILS
TO COMBAT THIS DECEIT

OKAY LADDY, YOU'RE UP FIRST
HOW MANY MEN HAVE YOU KILLED

(SALAMI)

HI MY NAME'S SALAMI
DO YOU WANT TO VOLUNTEER
YOU'RE GONNA LOVE THE GLAMOROUS LIFE
OF FEARLESS BUCCANEER

ONLY ONE THING MATTERS
IF YOU WANT TO JOIN OUR GANG

SALAMI Are there any allergies or dietary requirements that
we should be made aware of?

VOICE No.

OSRIC Salami!

SALAMI Welcome aboard!

(SALAMI)

COME ON OZZY, CAN'T YOU SEE
WE CAN'T AFFORD TO SCRIMP
WE NEED THE HELP OF ANYONE
FROM MOUNTAIN LION TO SHRIMP

I REALLY THINK OUR BEST BET HERE
IS POSITIVE AFFIRMATION
SIDE NOTE, IS THERE ANYONE HERE
WHO PRACTICES MEDITATION?

OSRIC Salami, will you stop?

SALAMI What? That could be really useful! Does anyone else
here have any special skills?

(VARIOUS VOICES)

I'M A GRADE 4 GYMNAST
I CAN RIDE A BIKE
MY MUM TOLD ME I LOOK LIKE A MODEL

I'VE HAD 16 MARRIAGES
I JUST STEPPED ON A SLUG
I COLLECT SEMI-PRECIOUS ROCKS AND FOSSILS

I CAN DO A CARTWHEEL
IF SOMEONE HOLDS ME LEGS
I ONCE HAD AN AUDITION FOR LES MIS

VOICE I spent six years sailing under Wild Hollow expedition crews in search of lands that could potentially be used to help cultivate crops and resources for the good of our people but recently got let go due to budgeting cuts and I'm actually feeling pretty bitter about it and would be happy to make some rather questionable life choices...

SFX: General impressed discussion from the group.

OSRIC That actually sounds pretty perfect. Welcome aboard.

SALAMI Welcome aboard, everybody!

(ALL)

WE'RE GOING ON A TRIP ON A PIRATE SHIP
WE'RE GONNA HAVE LOTS OF FUN

(SALAMI)

I'M REALLY LOOKING FORWARD TO GET TO
KNOWING EVERYONE

(ALL)

WE'RE GOIN'A STOP A MUTINY
THEN MAYBE DRINK SOME GROG
WE'RE PIRATES NOW ME HEARTYS

(VOICE)

EVEN ME, AND I'M A FROG

(ALL)

WE'RE GONNA RAISE THE ANCHOR
WE'RE GONNA HOIST THE SAIL
WE'RE GONNA SWAB THE DECK
AND CLIMB THE RIGGING

WE'RE GONNA STEAL SOME TREASURE
AND WE'LL PUT IT IN SOME CHESTS
AND IF WE HAVE TO BURY IT
WE'LL MAYBE DO SOME DIGGING

SALAMI Come on everyone! Follow me!

OSRIC Excuse me?

SFX: An awkward silence, the music pauses.

SALAMI I mean, Osric... Everyone follow Captain Osric!
Yayyyyyyy... Hehehe... Woooooo... Eugh...

The music ends with a final flourish.

SCENE 4 - THE CROWN. DAYTIME. EXT.

SFX: Waves, and the creaking of The Crown.

NARRATOR On the Crispian Sea, Captain Caine had set a course for the Giblets. He stood at the ship's wheel, surveying his new crew.

CAINE This is more like it. Suits me up here, far more than that fat rodent.

NARRATOR Pablo the Seagull hobbled up the steps and cautiously approached Caine.

PABLO Caine- I mean, errr, Captain, the crew are wondering what the plan is now we've, err... taken over and all?

CAINE Someone's eager to get to business, aren't they? Fancy taking charge yourself, do you bird?

PABLO No, no, I'm sorry. We are just dying to know what incredible plans you have sir... And, err, why we're going back to the Giblets...?

CAINE Now I've proved I'm the strongest, I need to know if the council will back me. I need the truth from the Great Whale.

PABLO You're going back down to Primus?

NARRATOR Caine seized the seagull by the scruff of the neck.

SFX: Pained squawking, choking sounds from Pablo.

CAINE Got a problem with that?

PABLO (Choking) No sir!

CAINE They had their turn with the Song, why shouldn't I have mine?

PABLO (Choking more) Oh yes, you deserve it sir, very much!

SFX: More dramatic, panicked squawking from Pablo, then a thud as he hits the deck.

NARRATOR The lizard relaxed his grip and the seagull crumpled to the floor, gasping for breath.

CAINE We're here...

MUSIC: 'Replica?!'

NARRATOR The Giblets loomed ahead, the waves crashing against the craggy stone pillars. The Crown dropped anchor. Caine and a couple of his cronies took a small boat and rowed to the base of the tallest Giblet.

SFX: Rowing through the stormy waves.

NARRATOR Above them, the sky was a bruise of storm clouds and sea fog.

SFX: Thunder and lightning. Wet footsteps on rock as Caine ascends.

NARRATOR Caine climbed to the top of the jagged steps and stepped out onto the ledge. His spikes bristled with anticipation. He withdrew the Whale Song from his jacket and held it to his cold lips.

SFX: More thunder, heavy rain against rock.

CAINE My turn.

NARRATOR He blew into the giant tooth.

SFX: A weak squeal.

CAINE What?! No.

NARRATOR He blew again.

SFX: Squeal.

NARRATOR Nothing. He turned the Whale Song over in his hands, and saw a tiny sticker on the bottom.

CAINE Replica? REPLICA?! AAGGGH!

SFX: Scared gasps from two pirates waiting below.

NARRATOR In the rowboat below, the two pirates looked up, terrified at the blood curdling cry. Caine hurled the fake tooth into the churning sea and shot down the steps.

SFX: A splash as the fake Whale Song hits the surface of the water. Running footsteps as Caine returns to the boat.

CAINE They gave me a fake! Set course for land! I want their heads!

SFX: A final crack of thunder.

SCENE 5 - THE STUPID WOODS. DAYTIME. UNDERGROUND.

SFX: Footsteps on dirt.

ARTEMIS I'm sorry, can we talk about this?

FREYA Not yet. We need to go deeper.

MUSIC: 'Hello, Artemis'

NARRATOR Back in the Stupid Woods, Artemis was being lead further and further underground. A tunnel had been burrowed deep into the earth, countless pathways disappearing in every direction. The walls were covered in murals, scrawlings, faded paintings. A labyrinth of dirt and soil, far beneath the dangerous woods.

FREYA Just a little further... Here we are.

SFX: A crackling fireplace fades in.

NARRATOR The tunnel opened out into a low ceilinged room. Artemis gazed around in amazement. A fire crackled in the dug-out hearth, its smoke dancing up through a hole in the roof. There was a tree stump close by - a makeshift seat. In one corner, a mattress of soft leaves and a blanket that looked like a torn-off piece of old sail. A roughly built table was laden with mushrooms, berries, fruits that Artemis didn't even recognise. And in the centre of it all, her fur matted and dirty, her whiskers grey, her clothes hanging off her in tatters, stood the fox Artemis had been searching for.

FREYA Hello Artemis.

NARRATOR Freya Gray looked at her daughter, her eyes glistening.

FREYA Look at you. You've grown.

ARTEMIS Aye. Children tend to do that.

NARRATOR An awkward silence hung between mother and daughter.

ARTEMIS So, you've been living down here, have you?

FREYA I... wouldn't call it much of a living, but... yes.

NARRATOR Artemis didn't know where to look. Anywhere seemed better than the woman in front of her, right now.

ARTEMIS You made all this?

FREYA Partially. The main tunnel system was already here. I've developed it since then. New sub-tunnels, bit of furniture.

ARTEMIS And we're safe down here?

FREYA The spores are only surface level. You can still be affected for about five or ten feet, but after that... Whoever built this place knew what they were doing.

NARRATOR Artemis looked around once more. The same murals from the tunnels covered the walls. They seemed to depict a great battle. A vast expanse of warriors. A badger riding on the back of a ram, a glistening sword held aloft.

SFX: Footsteps as Freya approaches the murals.

FREYA Old World, I think. I've looked at these murals longer than I'd care to admit. Can't make hide nor hair of them. A forgotten story. I've added a few of my own though. Look.

NARRATOR Freya beckoned Artemis over to another wall of drawings, and pointed. Artemis crouched, staring wide-eyed. These etchings were far more fresh, their lines more defined.

SFX: Distant laughing from a younger Artemis, the rustling of grass as she plays.

NARRATOR A fox-cub, eyes full of innocence and life, dashing through long grass. Another, the same cub emerging from its den. And a third, nestled with its mother, deep underground. Safe.

ARTEMIS Is that...?

FREYA It's been a long, long time down here. But the one thing that's helped me get by... was thinking of you.

NARRATOR Artemis continued to gaze at the wall, her heart thudding. She finally turned to Freya.

ARTEMIS Why did you leave?

FREYA ...There was a job. A big job, but it sounded so easy.

SFX: The crackling of the fire intensifies and we're whisked back in time. We hear the scribbling of a quill on parchment, the echoing words of Mr Wart.

MR WART Dear Miss Gway, I twust our agreement still stands... The twuffles move at midnight... More than enough for both you and your daughter...

SFX: Another whoosh, to a younger Freya Gray at her daughter's bedside.

FREYA Sleep well, wee'n. When you wake up, we'll never want for anything ever again. I'll be back before you know I'm gone.

SFX: Fading footsteps, Freya's final words echoing to silence, as we return to the present.

FREYA It was one of the Scumwarter crime bosses, Mr Wart. He hired me to hijack a shipment from the truffle mines. On paper, it was one night's work for a lifetime of earnings. It was all going well until...

SFX: The fireplace roars again, and back we go to the night of the job. Marshland insects chirrup in the background.

MR SCUM Good evening, Freya. I really hoped I wouldn't be seeing you tonight.

FREYA Mr Scum. You're meant to be in-

MR SCUM -High Tower? Yes, my brother did tell you that, didn't he. It's so rare for us to see eye to eye, but... the opportunity to put a stop to the legendary Freya Gray... It's really brought us together.

FREYA You played me.

MR SCUM Oh, come now. It's only fair. You've caused my brother and I plenty of trouble over the years.

FREYA Please, I have a daughter.

MR SCUM Oh, don't worry about little Artemis. We're not animals. Well, not in the metaphorical sense. No, we'll leave her well alone. It's you that we want.

SFX: Hurried footsteps of Freya running away.

MR SCUM Oh, for god's sake, don't run. Crosby, Bing, get after her!

SFX: Two sets of footsteps pursue Freya. A final whoosh back to the present. The fireplace crackles gently.

FREYA I ran faster that night than ever before. I couldn't go back to Lamorbey Forest. I couldn't risk leading them to you. So I went south instead, straight into the Stupid Woods. And, well, you've seen what happens in the Stupid Woods. We all went doolally. Scum's goons all lost what little of their minds they had left. They're still up there, walking around, not a clue who they are.

ARTEMIS But... What about you?

FREYA I'm a fox, Arty. I went as barmy as the rest of them, but natural instincts must have kicked in. When I came to, I was here.

NARRATOR She nodded towards the hole in the roof, where the fire's spiralling smoke continued to escape.

MUSIC: 'You Can Leave'

FREYA I'd dug all the way down here without even realising, and I must have found this place. It saved my life.

NARRATOR Artemis sat still, gazing at Freya. She felt numb. Her mother's story rang through her head.

ARTEMIS You could have contacted me. Sent a pigeon or-

FREYA -I couldn't risk putting you in danger.

ARTEMIS Ah, you couldn't risk putting yourself in danger! Seven years, mum! Seven years, hiding in a hole in the ground?

FREYA Scum and Wart have eyes everywhere. The second I leave these woods, they'll know.

NARRATOR Artemis froze. A realisation washed over her.

ARTEMIS Mum, they're dead. Scum and Wart, they're gone.

FREYA What? When did this happen?

ARTEMIS About a month ago? There was this announcement. Everyone got a pigeon about it, something called the Annihilator or... But it killed them both.

NARRATOR Freya stared at her daughter. She couldn't believe what she was hearing.

FREYA I can leave?

ARTEMIS You can leave.

NARRATOR She gazed around the room, her eyes glassy.

FREYA Too long...

NARRATOR She looked back at her daughter, a smile creeping onto her face.

FREYA Follow me.

SCENE 6 - LEAVING SINNER'S COVE. DAYTIME. EXT.

SFX: Footsteps of Osric, Salami and the new crew crossing a meadow. Salami is humming "Come and have a trip on a pirate ship". Birdsong overhead.

OSRIC Salami.

SALAMI Yes?

OSRIC You're doing it again.

SALAMI Doing what again?

OSRIC You're... You know what, never mind.

MUSIC: 'An Edible Mutiny'

NIGEL So, this mutiny.

OSRIC Yes, Nigel?

NIGEL Is it one of those edible mutinies?

OSRIC An edible mutiny?

NIGEL Yeah, like, I've heard sometimes you can eat them.

OSRIC I... No. No, it's not an edible mutiny.

SFX: A pause.

NIGEL But there is gonna be food there though, right? Like a buffet or something?

SALAMI Ooooh I love a buffet!

OSRIC Stop!

SFX: The footsteps come to a halt.

NARRATOR Osric turned to face his new crew. They looked at him quizzically.

OSRIC Out of interest, in regards to where we're going, just how many of you lot expected there to be food provided?

SFX: A gaggle of 'yes', 'me', 'I did' responses.

NARRATOR Osric closed his eyes, muttering under his breath.

OSRIC We're all going to die.

SFX: The footsteps start up again, fading into the distance.

SCENE 7 - THE TUNNELS. DAYTIME. INT.

SFX: Footsteps through dirt. We're back in the tunnels.

FREYA So, Arty, how've you spent the last seven years?

NARRATOR The two foxes were making their way through the underground tunnel system, nearing the edge of the Stupid Woods.

ARTEMIS After searching everywhere I could think of for my missing mother, you mean?

FREYA Ah.. Aye, after that.

ARTEMIS You didn't leave me with much, mum. But, I did have your penchant for smuggling. I started small, didn't go too far past Petit Glade at first. But, I worked my way up. Dust Town, Scumwarter, I had a big contract in Fortuna City couple of weeks

ago. That went up in flames. Literally, apparently. But I never stopped looking for you.

NARRATOR Freya looked sideways at her daughter, her expression softening.

FREYA If I could have come back...

ARTEMIS I know. I get it.

FREYA So um... How did you find me? In the end?

ARTEMIS You won't guess. I was in Sinner's Cove, I'd just finished a drop, when I overheard a conversation outside.

SFX: Fast cut to Sinner's Cover, footsteps through the port town.

SALAMI Come on, Osric. One more drink. I bet you the Whale Song that the captain won't even notice we're gone.

OSRIC Salami, how many times? Don't go shouting about the Song. You never know who might be listening.

SFX: Fast cut back to the tunnel. The footsteps scrape to a halt.

NARRATOR Freya stopped in her tracks.

MUSIC: 'Hold Our Breath'

FREYA You found the Whale Song?

ARTEMIS I followed them back to their ship. Stealing it was easy, I learned from the best. I was in and out in no time. They caught up to me, but long story short, I used the Song to find out my Truth, and it led me here.

NARRATOR Freya's eyes were wide.

FREYA You heard your Truth?

ARTEMIS I went to Primus, mum. It's real, the whole story you used to tell me. Primus is down there, deep under the ocean.

FREYA I can't believe it.

SFX: The footsteps start up again.

NARRATOR They began walking again, the ground beginning to slope upwards towards the surface.

ARTEMIS Are we getting close?

FREYA What? Oh, yes. We're about to emerge, about twenty feet inside the tree line. I couldn't risk digging any closer than that. But as long as we hold our breath, we'll be fine.

NARRATOR They reached the end of the tunnel, the opening sealed by a large rock.

FREYA Ready?

ARTEMIS Right behind you.

NARRATOR The two foxes took a great gulp of air, before pushing the rock aside and clambering out onto the mossy earth.

SFX: Two gasps from the foxes, and the scraping of the heavy boulder being rolled to one side. Birdsong can suddenly be heard as they surface.

NARRATOR The edge of the woods could be seen beyond the trees, and they ran, weaving between the thick trunks and tangled vines.

SFX: Running footsteps.

NARRATOR Artemis was mere feet away from the opening when she heard a yelp from behind her. She turned to see Freya in the grasp of a huge panda, grinning from ear to ear.

PANDA Furry red thingy! Put it in the wishing well and don't tell grandma!

SFX: Squeezing, tightening sounds.

NARRATOR Freya's eyes bulged, the panda's grip was vice-like. Her chest heaved for air, but she kept her mouth shut tight, the spores swirling around her. Artemis pounced, seizing a vine and swinging towards the creature.

SFX: Swinging sounds as Artemis launches through the air.

PANDA Uh oh! Swingy furry red thingy! Raspberry screwdriver! Samba! OOF.

NARRATOR Artemis had collided with the panda's chest, knocking it backwards, her mother tumbling to the ground. But as she landed, Freya involuntarily took a breath, Stupid Spores immediately flooding her lungs.

SFX: Freya gasping as she lands with a thud.

FREYA Arty! No... No! I can't... Don't let me... Little boots for spider people.

NARRATOR Freya's mind began to fog. Artemis grabbed her around the waist and hauled her to her feet.

FREYA Up and up and around the sky...

PANDA (Fading away) Awww, bye bye furry red thingies!

SFX: Snapping of branches as the rustling of leaves as the foxes make a break for the clearing.

NARRATOR The two stumbled towards the sunlight. Ten feet. Five feet. Two...

SFX: Artemis gasping air into her lungs.

NARRATOR They hurtled out onto the grass, falling to their knees. Artemis finally gasped fresh air into her burning lungs, her eyes streaming. Freya mumbled incoherently beside her.

ARTEMIS Mum? Mum, can you hear me?

FREYA Coco pops and milk make a-

ARTEMIS -Snap out of it!

SFX: A harsh slap.

FREYA I suppose I deserved that.

NARRATOR Freya's head cleared, and Artemis' face swam back into focus.

FREYA You saved my life...

ARTEMIS Yeah well, you owe me one. Come on, I've got friends that need my help.

NARRATOR She stood, pulling her mother to her feet. They shared one last glance at the Stupid Woods, before turning tail, and striding towards the coast line.

SFX: Footsteps on grass, fading away.

SCENE 8 - THE OLD BEACON. DAYTIME. EXT.

SFX: Waves on the shore. Approaching footsteps and a distant gull.

NARRATOR Artemis and Freya arrived at the Old Beacon. As the mist rolled away, the stone tower was revealed. It stood eighty feet tall atop a sandy bank, overlooking the nearby shoreline. Harsh winds and time had ravaged the Beacon; the windows were cracked, the wooden platform at the top looked rickety and tired. On the surrounding sand dunes lay old, overturned and discarded rowing skiffs. Paint flaked from their decrepit husks. It was like a graveyard of boats.

FREYA A classy rendezvous.

MUSIC: 'A Classy Rendezvous'

NARRATOR The foxes moved through the rotting vessels towards the Old Beacon. As they approached, they saw Osric and Salami emerge from over the sand dunes, a gaggle of sailors and seafarers in tow. The sun behind them, the wind in their clothes.

SALAMI Do we look cool? I feel like we look really cool!

FREYA This must be the new crew. Doesn't fill you with confidence eh?

ARTEMIS Mum, stop it.

SFX: More footsteps in the sand as the group approaches. Salami audibly squealing excitedly.

NARRATOR The new band of pirates joined the foxes. Osric smiled and greeted them with vigorous handshakes. Salami bounced with excitement.

OSRIC You made it! I trust the woods weren't too stupid?

ARTEMIS I've dealt with worse.

SFX: A thud, followed by a little 'oof' from Salami as she hits the sand.

NARRATOR Salami had tripped over some driftwood, face planting into the sand. Osric sighed.

OSRIC And you must be..?

FREYA Freya Gray, pleased to meet you.

OSRIC The pleasure is ours! A success for us all then! You found your truth, we found a crew! Fortune is smiling on us.

NARRATOR Freya stepped closer and placed a paw softly on Osric's arm.

FREYA I hear you hold the Whale Song?

OSRIC Why yes, as acting Captain, it is my duty-

FREYA -Oh! I thought it was just a legend! I'd love to see it. Please...

OSRIC Um, why yes, of course. Salami, the Whale Song!

NARRATOR The penguin rushed over, rifling through her bag, and presented the Whale Song to Osric. He held it aloft in his paw, letting the sunlight catch the glossy surface.

OSRIC A beautiful thing. The jewel of the sea.

NARRATOR Freya's eyes were fixed in wonderment. She began to reach out to touch it...

SFX: The thud of an object landing in the sand, the fizz of a lit fuse.

SONG: 'Showdown'

NARRATOR Then something heavy landed with a thud at their feet. They looked down to see a small, black ball roll to a stop. A tiny flame fizzed along the length of twine protruding from its surface.

OSRIC GRENADE!

NARRATOR The pirates and the foxes dived for cover.

SFX: An explosion, sand and debris launching in all directions.

NARRATOR The grenade sent a fire ball into the air, creating a haze of sand and splinters.

SFX: Battlecries, laughter and jeering as the mutineers appear.

NARRATOR Suddenly, the old boats that were surrounding them were overturned, revealing Caine and his crew. The villainous reptile let out a blood curdling cry.

CAINE CHARGE! BRING ME THE WHALE SONG!

SFX: Sword fighting, gunfire, screams - a sudden war zone across the shore.

NARRATOR Caine's pirates descended on Osric's new crew. A furious battle broke out. The sound of clashing steel and musket shots engulfed the beach. Osric scrambled to his feet, bleary-eyed. Where was the Whale Song? Atop the sand dune, Artemis had pulled Freya away from the grenade blast. She dusted herself off. Freya turned to Artemis, holding the shining white treasure in her paw.

FREYA It's ours now Artemis. We have to leave, now!

ARTEMIS What? No, we can't take it.

FREYA Do you know how much this will sell for? We could have a fresh start, anywhere we want!

ARTEMIS It isn't yours to sell! You've not changed. At all.

NARRATOR Freya was about to speak, when the foxes were barged into by a stumbling bison.

SFX: Galloping hooves, and a thud as the bison makes contact with the foxes.

NARRATOR The giant bovine pirate sent the pair tumbling down the hill and into the thick of the fight. The Whale Song was knocked flying. Osric and Caine stood facing each other, their eyes burning with a mutual hatred.

(CAINE)

IT'S MINE BY RIGHT, I'M CAPTAIN NOW
I TOOK THIS SHIP BY FORCE
I NEED TO KNOW IF I'M A KING
THE COUNCIL WILL ENDORSE

(OSRIC)

I'LL NEVER LET THIS HOLY THING
FALL INTO EVIL HANDS
ITS RIGHTFUL PLACE IS HERE WITH ME
SO CHOKE ON YOUR DEMANDS

(CAINE)

YOUR TIME IS UP, YOU'VE HAD YOUR CHANCE
YOU SHOWED YOUR COLOURS MY OLD FRIEND

(OSRIC)

I ALWAYS KNEW THAT SCUM LIKE YOU
WOULD COME TO NO GOOD IN THE END

(BOTH)

AND NOW IT'S DOWN TO ME
TO DO WHAT MUST BE DONE

(CAINE)

THE SONG IS MINE

(OSRIC)

YOU'RE WRONG, CAINE
THE SONG ISN'T A PRIZE THAT CAN BE WON

NARRATOR The pair launched at each other, weapons drawn.

SFX: Osric and Caine cry out as they lunge towards each other.

NARRATOR Across the battleground, Freya and Artemis were back to back, fending off the enemy as they argued fiercely.

(FREYA)

ARTY, WILL YOU JUST FOR A
MOMENT, CALM DOWN AND THINK

(ARTEMIS)

I CANNOT BELIEVE I ACTUALLY
SAVED YOUR LIFE AND THIS IS HOW YOU

(FREYA)

DON'T GIVE ME THAT, IF YOU
LISTEN, I'M TRYING TO

(ARTEMIS)

TRYING TO DISREGARD OVER A
THOUSAND YEARS OF HISTORY, JUST TO

(FREYA)

GIVE OURSELVES ANOTHER CHANCE AT
HAPPINESS? YEAH, MAYBE I AM

(ARTEMIS)

YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND
I CAN'T LET YOU DO THAT, MAM

SFX: Artemis grunts as she's knocked to the ground. A gargling cry from the advancing chinchilla.

NARRATOR At that moment, a nasty chinchilla knocked Artemis to the ground, sand stinging her eyes. She rolled over and skewered the rodent on the end of her sword.

SFX: A squelch and a squeal as the sword impales the chinchilla.

NARRATOR But by the time she had clambered to her feet, Freya had vanished.

ARTEMIS No... Mum? Mum!

NARRATOR The Whale Song was doing the rounds like a bowl of parmesan at an Italian restaurant. One moment Caine's pirates had it, then Osric's crew grabbed it back. One hand to another, as swords flailed and punches landed.

CAINE You'll never win this one, ya one-eyed furball!

OSRIC Never underestimate an otter!

NARRATOR Osric seized the tooth from one of Caine's crew, slicing the pirate in half in the process.

SFX: Another gory scream as the blade carves through the creature.

NARRATOR He tried to run, but Caine blocked his path. The otter hurled the Whale Song to Salami, who caught it deftly and made for the entrance of the Old Beacon.

SFX: Salami jumping in the air, catching the Whale Song. Footsteps as she runs to the Old Beacon.

NARRATOR She burst through the doors and began climbing the rickety spiral staircase. A yellow eyed stoat and a rat with a hook for a hand tumbled through the doorway in hot pursuit.

SFX: The stoat and the rat breathing heavily as they pursue Salami up the tower. Footsteps reverberating off the spiralling stone walls.

NARRATOR They chased the penguin to the top of the tower and backed her into a corner, their cutlass blades gleaming. Then from behind came a shriek.

SFX: Freya screaming as she pounces upon the attackers.

NARRATOR It was Freya! The fox dived into the melee, rapier in hand, and began fighting off the pirates.

FREYA ‘Mon then, you filthy bastards!

SFX: A loud clash of swords as we cut back to Osric and Caine.

NARRATOR Down in the sand dunes, Osric and Caine were furiously trading blows. Metal clanged on metal. Sparks flew.

CAINE You know, I’ve wanted to gut you open for years. Always pandering to the King, being a good little boy.

OSRIC There’s more to being a pirate than violence and plundering!

CAINE Yeah! Don’t forget mutiny and murder!

OSRIC Oh, you’re a sick lizard, Caine. You never deserved a place on that ship. Not then, and not now.

SFX: Another scream from the pair as they collide, another sword clash cuts us back to the top of the Old Beacon.

NARRATOR Back in the tower, the fight continued. After a tense struggle, Salami managed to knock the rat off balance, sending him tumbling down the stairs and landing with a nasty crack at the bottom, impaled on his own hook.

SFX: The rat tumbling head over heels down the staircase, ending with a nasty squelch as the hook finds its mark.

NARRATOR Freya artfully whipped away the stoat's cutlass and skewered the pirate on her sword. He slumped to the ground.

SFX: A sword clattering across the floor, the stoat groaning as he is skewered. A thump as he falls to the ground.

SALAMI Thank you Freya, I don't think I could have taken them on my own.

NARRATOR But Freya turned, a fiendish glint in her eye. She raised her sword to Salami, the point of the blade only inches from the penguin's throat.

SFX: Footsteps on creaking wooden floorboards as Freya advances on Salami.

FREYA I should be thanking you, wee child. Now, if you don't mind, I'll be taking the Whale Song.

SALAMI But... it's not for you. It belongs to the Pirate King.

NARRATOR Salami shuffled backwards and stepped out onto the gallery. The boards creaked as the pair slowly edged along the thin walkway, the salty sea air blowing across their faces.

SFX: The wind whistles as they emerge onto the walkway.

FREYA Let's not play games now, little bird. This sword isn't for show, you know.

SALAMI You'll have to use it then, cause I'm not giving you the Whale Song.

NARRATOR Freya raised her sword ready to attack.

FREYA Suit yourself.

SFX: The swing of Freya's sword raising high above Salami's head. Then a cry from Artemis, far below.

NARRATOR But then she heard a cry from down below. It was Artemis. On the ground, the fighting had persisted. Osric lay against a sandy bank, doubled over in pain. Artemis and Caine were savagely entangled, trying to reach for a bloodied dagger that lay just feet away in the dirt. He eventually threw her off, and she landed with a thud against the beacon.

SFX: A crunch as Artemis hits the wall.

NARRATOR Caine picked up the long pointed dagger and approached the fox.

CAINE Time to die, bin sniffer. I think that orange coat of yours would make me a fine Captain's robe.

NARRATOR Freya watched from above. She glanced back at Salami cowering, gripping the Whale Song tightly.

SFX: Whimpers of fear coming from Salami.

NARRATOR Caine was edging ever closer to Artemis, brandishing the dagger high. Artemis looked up woozily, and caught her mother's eye. Freya took a deep breath, and whispered to herself.

FREYA Let's have you, beasty.

NARRATOR She climbed the rail of the gallery and jumped.

SFX: An intake of breath from Freya, before she launches herself from the tower. Air whistles around her as she drops.

NARRATOR Freya plummeted down from the top of the tower, like a penny down a wishing well, her sword outstretched.

SFX: A heavy impact as Freya lands on top of Caine. A bloody squelch as the lizard is run through, a cry of anguish, and the tumbling of two bodies down the sand bank.

NARRATOR The fox ploughed into Caine, both of them tumbling down the sandy bank.

SFX: A final breath escaping Caine's body.

NARRATOR When they came to a stop, the bearded dragon lay carved open. His reptilian blood oozed into the sandy earth. Freya lay but a few feet away, Caine's pointed dagger sticking out awkwardly from her side. Artemis scrambled over to her mother. The other pirates had stopped fighting, and stared at Caine's lacerated corpse.

SFX: Running footsteps as Artemis approaches, then a thud as she drops to Freya's side.

ARTEMIS Mum, Mum are you okay?

FREYA (Coughs) I've been better darling.

SCENE 9 - BENEATH THE OLD BEACON. DAYTIME.

SFX: Footsteps as Salami races out of the tower entrance and across the sand.

MUSIC: 'Save Your Captain'

NARRATOR Salami came barrelling down the stairs of the tower and out onto the sand dunes.

SALAMI Caine is dead! Mutineers, lay down your weapons! This battle is over.

SFX: A cheer of victory. Weapons hitting the earth.

NARRATOR There was a cheer from the new crew, as swords, hatchets and knives dropped to the ground around them. They congratulated each other on a job well done. Their first taste of combat had been a victorious one! Many of Caine's mutineers loitered with their tails between their legs, bashful and guilty looks plaguing their faces.

PABLO We're really sorry, guys! Errr... Caine was super pushy. And we just had to follow him. Err...

SFX: General sheepish agreement from the defeated mutineers.

SALAMI I'm sure Captain Osric will show mercy. Where is he anyway?

NARRATOR And at that moment, the festivities were cut painfully short. Just a few yards away from the rejoicing pirates lay Osric. The otter was deathly pale and clutching a nasty wound, groaning and grimacing as he tried to sit upright.

SFX: Groans from Osric.

NARRATOR Further down the bank, Artemis held Freya in her arms, trying desperately to stem the flow of blood from the dagger in her mother's side. The pirates slowly gathered.

PIRATE 1 Quick, someone get something to help the Captain!

PIRATE 2 He's been hurt bad. There isn't much time!

NARRATOR Salami's eyes lit up.

SALAMI Ooh!

SFX: Rummaging in Salami's pockets.

NARRATOR She began furiously rummaging around in her coat pockets, and then pulled out a small purple flower. It was Paeon's Kiss.

SALAMI I've got one of these! I've got a magic flower! It's got a few petals missing, but it should be just enough!

NARRATOR The pirates burst into action and quickly set about concocting the healing remedy. Salami ground up the flower, and a kindly haddock named Simeon summoned a belch of seawater to add to the mix.

SFX: The grinding of the flower, then a burp from Simeon and a splash of water.

NARRATOR The potion was ready.

ARTEMIS Stop!

NARRATOR The pirates turned. Artemis was standing behind them, her dagger outstretched.

SFX: Footsteps as Artemis approaches.

ARTEMIS Give me the potion.

NARRATOR The pirates looked at her, bemused.

SALAMI We have to save Osric.

ARTEMIS She's my mum.

SALAMI She... She tried to take the Whale Song, Artemis.

ARTEMIS She's still my mum.

NARRATOR Then a voice came from behind the fox.

FREYA My darling girl. Let them go. Don't regret this.

NARRATOR Freya was staggering towards her daughter. Artemis dropped the weapon and rushed to her side, catching her as she began to lose her footing.

SFX: Freya stumbles and falls in the sand.

ARTEMIS No. No, I don't want to lose you again. You're all I've got.

FREYA Don't be silly. The way you fought for them. The things you have done together. They are your family.

ARTEMIS There's only enough potion for one of you.

FREYA I had my chance, and I wouldn't change it. Oh, the adventures I've had! And the wonderful daughter I've finally met. (To the pirates) Now go, save your Captain!

SFX: Hurried footsteps as the pirates gather around Osric.

NARRATOR The pirates hurried over to Osric and administered the magic potion. The otter glugged it down. His breathing began to calm, and, with a sparkle, the wound in his side slowly disappeared.

SFX: Slurping as Osric drinks the potion, and a sparkle.

NARRATOR The Captain was saved. Freya lay back into her daughter's arms one last time.

FREYA I'm... so... proud of you... Arty.

NARRATOR And with that, she closed her eyes and faded away.

SFX: The music ends. The waves on the shore fade to silence.

SCENE 10 - THE BEACH. EVENING.

SFX: Waves lapping the beach return.

SONG: 'Beyond the 'Morrow (Reprise)'

(CREW)
WHEN WE REACH
OUR FINAL HOME
WE'LL MEET AGAIN

BEYOND THE MORROW
HMMMM

MUSIC: 'The Orange Hue of the Sunset'

NARRATOR Artemis and the pirates had made their way to the shore's edge. The Crown had been retaken and was now anchored in the bay not far from the Old Beacon. Freya's body had been wrapped in a muslin cloth and laid to rest in a small wooden dinghy. Around her, the crew had gathered wild beach flowers, which were packed in tightly with thickets of long grass and driftwood kindling. After waiting for the sun to set, a small fire was lit at the bow and they pushed the boat out to sea.

SFX: The crackling of the fire catching alight. The rippling of the water as the boat floats away.

NARRATOR Artemis watched as the blazing dinghy drifted across the lilac waves, until it was only a shining lantern on the horizon. Osric turned to Artemis.

OSRIC I want to thank you for everything you've done, Artemis. The Crown is ours again, the mutineers are gone and the Whale Song is back in its rightful place.

ARTEMIS Glad I could be of service, Captain.

OSRIC Are you sure we can't tempt you to come with us?

ARTEMIS Thank you Osric, but I've got some searching to do. The Whale Song led me to my mother, but I still need to work out the rest of the riddle.

OSRIC I thought you solved it all. The creature whose past was their foe? Wasn't that your mother?

ARTEMIS I don't think so. She was at peace at the end. There's more to it, I can feel it.

NARRATOR Primus' words echoed through her mind.

PRIMUS (Distant) Look for the creature whose past is their foe, and prepare to set foot where most dare not go...

OSRIC Well, we have our own riddle to solve. That scurvy parrot wasn't working alone, and I can't let the King go unavenged.

ARTEMIS Good luck.

OSRIC You will always have a place on this ship.

SALAMI We're gonna miss you Artemis!

SFX: Soft footsteps, then a rustle as Salami hugs Artemis.

NARRATOR Salami the Penguin ran over and hugged the fox tightly.

ARTEMIS I'll miss you too little one. Or should I say First Mate now?

SALAMI What? No. SALAAAAMIIII.

ARTEMIS No, I meant that -

SALAMI You really should have remembered my name by now.

OSRIC Salami-

SALAMI THANK YOU. It's not hard.

NARRATOR The fox, the otter and the penguin shared a silent moment. The pirates finally set off and boarded the leaving boats.

SFX: Grunts and chatter as the crew pile into the boats. Rowing sounds fading away as they head back to The Crown.

NARRATOR Artemis watched from the shoreline as they floated away towards The Crown, their silhouettes growing smaller in the orange hue of the sunset.

OSRIC (Distant) For the King, we sail!

PIRATES (Distant) For the King, we sail!

ARTEMIS For the King, we sail.

SFX: The waves fade away. The music swells, then ends.

EPILOGUE - THE DOUBTER'S LIGHTHOUSE. NIGHT TIME. INT.

SFX: Heavy knocking on an old wooden door. Then...

SFX: Waves against rock, the ticking of a bedside alarm clock.

NARRATOR Two weeks later, Artemis Gray awoke. The gentle lapping of waves against rock crept through the open window. She groaned, rolling over and squinting wearily at the battered old clock on the bedside table.

SFX: The squeaking of the mattress as Artemis roles over.

NARRATOR It was three in the morning. She sat up. Something felt different tonight - she could have sworn a noise had pulled her from her sleep. She had taken refuge in The Doubter's Lighthouse, a solitary structure a little way out to sea, set upon a rock. She'd come here after saying farewell to Osric and the crew, attempting to solve the riddle of her Truth. An attempt that, up until now, had been unsuccessful.

ARTEMIS I'm not getting back to sleep now.

SFX: Another squeak from the mattress, and a thud as she stands up from the bed.

NARRATOR She thought, dragging herself out of bed.

SFX: Footsteps on old wooden floorboards as she heads downstairs. The ticking clock fades into the background, replaced by a spitting of a dying fire.

NARRATOR She made her way down the spiral staircase, into the living room. The embers of last night's fire still glowed warmly in the hearth. On the mantelpiece above, her dagger rested, collecting dust. She looked at it, her mind drifting.

PRIMUS (Distant) Look for the creature whose past is their foe...

SFX: Knocking, much louder and closer this time.

MUSIC: 'A Hard Fox to Find'

NARRATOR Artemis spun towards the door. That was it. The sound that had woken her. There was somebody outside.

ARTEMIS Hello?

SFX: Knocking.

ARTEMIS Who's out there? I'm armed.

SFX: The scrape of Artemis' dagger on the mantelpiece.

NARRATOR She snatched up her dagger, and edged towards the door.

SFX: Creaking wooden floorboards as Artemis approaches the door.

NARRATOR Reaching out, she seized the handle, took a breath... and pulled.

SFX: The door opening, the rush of waves and wind intensifies.

NARRATOR He stood on the doorstep, leaning heavily on a wooden crutch. His leather duster billowed around him in the ocean wind.

FANDANGO You're a hard fox to find, Artemis Gray.

MUSIC: 'Fandango's Theme (Sting)'

SFX: The music, waves and wind reach a crescendo... then silence.

MUSIC: 'Artemis's Theme'

CREDITS

You have been listening to a **Shouting Is Funny** production.

ARTEMIS GRAY Heather Gourdie

OSRIC Harvey Badger

SALAMI Alice E. Mayer

CAINE / MR WART Christian Powlesland

FREYA GRAY Eleanor Kane

NARRATOR / BING Angus Maxwell

CROSBY Sorrel Jordan

MR SCUM Tom Chudley-Evans

PRIMUS Roddy Lynch

PABLO Loris Scarpa

THE DOCTOR David Tennant (in the golden age of Doctor Who. Wobbly wobbly, timey-wimey stuff.)

All additional roles were played by members of the company.

All music was created in-house by **Shouting Is Funny**.

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