

LEMMINGS

Written by

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FADE IN:

ON SCREEN

QUOTE

Don't blindly follow any leader.
--Marguerite Young

1 INT. COZY STUDY AT THE NATURE NETWORK 1

The setting: a backdrop for the TV show, Animal Tails. The host, PROFESSOR KIM MCDONALD, relaxes in her lounge chair, an ARCTIC FOX FUR STOLE wrapped around her shoulders.

She looks into the TV camera...

PROFESSOR KIM MCDONALD

Hello and welcome to Animal Tails.
I'm Professor Kim McDonald. When I say the word, "lemming", what is the first thing you think of?

(beat)

If you are like most people, you envision dozens of furry creatures leaping to their death. You should know that this belief is a myth. Lemmings do not leap off cliffs to their death.

(beat)

Oh, they almost did - many centuries ago - until a young lemming named Leo saved the day. This is his story. It takes place in the beautiful hillsides of Norway in the enchanting hamlet of Landsby...

DISSOLVE TO:

2 EXT. OVERHEAD VIEW OF THE HAMLET OF LANDSBY - MORNING 2

APPROPRIATE MUSIC plays as we look down upon Landsby from a great distance above. The view clearly shows rolling green hills, a nearby small lake, and brown areas designating the lemming community.

It also shows PERFECTLY STRAIGHT DOTS going both directions throughout the community. ZOOMING IN, LEMMINGS OF ALL AGES AND SIZE make up the perfectly straight moving lines. They all wear APPROPRIATE CLOTHING.

3 EXT. THE HAMLET OF LANDSBY - DAY 3

Spring. Dark green hills with small remnants of snow dot the area. Colorful flowers bloom. The sun shines brightly.

Advancing down in the valley, we come upon the Hamlet of Landsby, a bustling lemming town with three different zones:
 (1) The Elite Estates, highlighted by the enormous dirt castle, known as the Royal Burrow, that hosts King Lemming.
 (2) Downtown, filled with modern day shops and restaurants.
 (3) The Burrows (the poor peasant area).

4 EXT. LEO'S FAMILY BURROW - LATE AFTERNOON 4

A line of lemmings walk in step in a straight line on a dirt road, passing in front of a plain dirt burrow with the name, PEDERSEN.

5 INT. LEO'S FAMILY BURROW - MORNING 5

A cute little living room with old dirt couches and chairs made of sticks and leaves. A wooden table stands near the kitchen. Toys lay on the floor.

PAPA, wearing overalls, sits in one of the chairs reading the local newspaper (on a leaf), THE DAILY LEMMING. MAMA wears an old apron around an old dress as she prepares dinner.

PAPA

Not one mention of the food shortage. They call this a newspaper? It's just ads for the elite.

MAMA

Papa, dinner's ready...

PAPA

(calling out)

Kids! Time for din--!

A rush of fur flies by Papa, making him spin around, as TEN YOUNG LEMMINGS (5 boys, 5 girls) take their seats at the table.

Papa lays the paper down and walks over and sits at the table.

LEO, a bright and bubbly lad, anxiously awaits his meal.

LEO
 What's for dinner, Mama? Spaghetti?
 Lasagna? Fettucine Alfredo?

Mama places a plate in front of Leo with a quarter of a seed on it. Leo looks disappointed.

MAMA
 I'm sorry, Leo. Times are tough
 right now.

LEO
 I know. I can dream, can't I?

Mama sets a quarter of a seed in front of each child, who just stare down at it.

PAPA
 Kids, remember to give thanks.

LEMMING CHILDREN
 (deadpan in unison)
 Thank you, King Lemming.

PAPA
 And thank you, Mama.

Everyone begins to slowly eat their seed.

PAPA (CONT'D)
 This isn't right! We work in the
 fields every day, all day,
 harvesting seeds and plants, and
 all we get is ten seeds and five
 blades of grass a week. We haven't
 seen a leaf for two months.

MAMA
 The King says there is a shortage
 of food.

PAPA
 He must not be aware of our plight.
 From all of the reports we hear
 coming out of the castle, he is a
 loving, caring King.
 (beat)
 This lemming can make a difference.
 I shall ask for an audience with
 the King.

LEO
 Really, Papa?

PAPA

Sure! Why not? What can it hurt?

MAMA

You could end up in a dungeon...

PAPA

Don't be so dark...

MAMA

You could end up in a dungeon with windows...

Papa defiantly stands up.

PAPA

I'm going!

(beat)

And I'll come back with more food than you can imagine.

MAMA

Don't get the children's hopes up, Papa.

PAPA

Why not? Hope is all we have right now.

LEO

I want to help.

PAPA

No, no, Leo. It is up to your mother and father to take care of you, not the other way around.

MAMA

Not yet, at least.

LEO

But I want to make a difference too. After all, I am the oldest.

LEMMING BROTHER 1

By twenty-four seconds!

PAPA

(to Leo)

I'll tell you what, you can walk with me and keep me company until reach downtown. From there, I need to go by myself.

6

EXT. LEO'S FAMILY BURROW - DAY

6

Peasant lemmings walk lock step on a MARKED LINE as Papa and Leo wait for their turn to enter. A sign above them reads, ENTER HERE. An older lemming, HODER, passes by.

PAPA

Who's leading the line today,
Hoder?

HODER

Gunnar. His pace is excellent.

A female lemming, AGNES, slows down and motions Papa and Leo to merge.

PAPA

Tusen takk, Agnes.

Papa places his paws on Leo's shoulders, prompting him to step out into the line.

AGNES

Merge at the same speed, Kenneth.
You too, young Pedersen.

(beat)

Left, right, left, right...

Leo and Papa stare at their feet until they feel they are matching the marching line.

The line of lemmings continues to march on the road, past a handmade sign that reads, The Burrows.

LEO

Papa, why do we have to always
march in a single line on the
roads?

PAPA

King Lemming says that everything
in order brings order to
everything.

(beat)

Following the leader is what
lemmings do best.

LEO

(starts hopping)

What's wrong with hopping like a
bunny?

PAPA
 (embarrassed)
 Leo, please, we march, not hop.

LEO
 (starts skipping)
 Skipping is fun.

Agnes gives Papa a stern look of disapproval.

PAPA
 Adults can't skip...

LEO
 Can they do a somersault?

PAPA
 No, Leo! Not a somersault!

Papa is too late. Leo performs a perfect somersault - right into the legs of LEMMING 1 in front of him. Lemming 1 falls into LEMMING 2, Lemming 2 into LEMMING 3, and the rest of the lemmings go down like dominoes.

LEMMING GUARDS (larger lemmings) inaudibly chastise Gunnar, who pleads his case. Other lemmings lay on the ground dazed.

LEO
 Hey! We're downtown.

7 EXT. DOWNTOWN - MORNING

7

Papa quickly pulls Leo out of line and hastily makes his way past an EXIT HERE sign and jumps into a smaller line leading into downtown.

Downtown is an area where the lemmings continue to walk in lines leading into shops, restaurants, or the peasants' carts.

The PEASANT LEMMINGS (well-worn clothes, leaner) sell a lot of goods on the side with their carts.

The ELITE LEMMINGS (expensive clothes, hats, styled hairdos, lazy, obese) stand in line on MOVABLE SIDEWALKS that do not cross into The Burrows. They do most of the shopping. The ELITE CHILDREN mirror their parents.

A CROSSING GUARD holds a STOP sign to control the lines of criss crossing traffic. He WHISTLES for lines to stop through his buck teeth, then MOTIONS the other line to cross.

8 EXT. NECTARBUCKS - CONTINUOUS 8

A very long line of lemmings wait their turn for an espresso outside of NECTARBUCKS.

9 INT. NECTARBUCKS - CONTINUOUS 9

ESPRESSO LEMMING, very jittery, orders her drink.

ESPRESSO LEMMING

(spoken quickly)

Double restretto venti half-soy
nonfat decaf organic chocolate
brownie iced vanilla double-shot
gingerbread nectar extra hot with
foam whipped cream upside down,
double-blended, one sweet 'n' low,
and one nectarsweet with ice.

ESPRESSO BARISTA

((monotone))

Can you repeat that?

10 EXT. DOWNTOWN - CONTINUOUS 10

A movie theater billboard reads, SILENCE OF THE LEMMINGS.

A store window shows off a new TV, with sticks as antennae. A LEMMING REPORTER is broadcasting:

LEMMING REPORTER

That's right! Some lucky Landsby
citizens are going to have the
opportunity to leap into the
ultimate lemming party and bring
back more food for their family and
friends than they could ever
imagine...

11 EXT. DOWNTOWN - CONTINUOUS 11

A GOING OUT OF BUSINESS SIGN hangs in a window of a SURF SHOP.

PEASANT LEMMING 1 (holding a NEWBORN) calls out to passing elite lemmings who pass by, their noses in the air...

PEASANT LEMMING 1

Please, sir, alms for the baby...

Next door, a restaurant named, THE VIKING, welcomes chubby elite lemmings (some who have problems squeezing through the doors).

Another NECTARBUCKS on the right.

Hair flies out of the door at a barber shop named, TEETH.

12 INT. TEETH - CONTINUOUS 12

BARBER OLSEN, using his teeth (sounds like clippers), cuts the hair of MR. KARLSSON (Elite Lemming).

BARBER OLSEN

Now, Mr. Karlsson, if you would
just lean your head back so I can
take a little off the top...

Mr. Karlsson tips his head back. Barber Olsen sets his teeth near the top of Mr. Karlsson's head just as Mr. Karlsson SNEEZES, causing Barber Olsen's teeth to cut off Mr. Karlsson's hair right down the middle, giving him an inside-out mohawk. Barber Olsen's eyes grow as big as dinner plates.

13 EXT. DOWNTOWN - CONTINUOUS 13

Another NECTARBUCKS.

A SNO-CONE CART, run by PEASANT LEMMING 2, attracts a bunch of lemming children.

PEASANT LEMMING 2

(to lemming children)

We have lots of flavors: honey,
mint, lavender, dirt...

14 EXT. DOWNTOWN - CONTINUOUS 14

Leo and Papa walk in a line through downtown.

LEO

(looking ahead)

Hey! There's the park. I'll see you
later, Papa.

Leo jumps out of the line eliciting WHISTLES from the Crossing Guard.

PAPA

Leo! You must wait until it's your--

The CHORUS OF WHISTLES confuse the line of lemmings, causing them to bump into each other - once again starting a dominoe effect.

PAPA (CONT'D)
--exit.

Papa looks around at all of the disapproving lemmings lying on the ground and nearby elite lemmings frowning at him...

PAPA (CONT'D)
(embarrassed)
Heh, heh, kids...

15 EXT. PARKA PARK - DAY

15

Leo passes a sign that reads, PARKA PARK: NO LINES REQUIRED.

Leo comes upon a group of peasant lemming children...

YOUNG PEASANT LEMMING 1
(to others)
Who wants to play Fox and Lemmings?

YOUNG PEASANT LEMMING 2
(to Young Lemming 1)
Isn't that kind of violent? Why do we always have a fox trying to kill us? Why don't we play a game where we all get along? We can call it, Fox and Friends.

YOUNG PEASANT LEMMING 1
Fox and Friends is dumb.
(sees Leo)
Oh, hi, Leo! Do you want to play Fox and Lemmings with us?

LEO
Maybe later. I'm looking for Todd and Pudge.

YOUNG PEASANT LEMMING 1
All right. Tell them that they can play too, if they'd like.

Leo continues on...

YOUNG PEASANT LEMMING 1 (CONT'D)
Okay. I get to be the fox since it was my idea. You guys are the lemmings.

YOUNG PEASANT LEMMING 3

(loudly)

I'm always a lemming!

16 EXT. THE ROYAL BURROW - DAY 16

The most impressive, beautiful building ever made of dirt, complete with towers, large balconies, even a drawbridge over a moat.

Large LEMMING GUARDS stand tall and proud in the towers and the entrance.

The Elite Community of Burrows, glazed dirt, shiny doors, flowers, even palm trees, adorn both sides of the castle.

17 INT. THE ROYAL BURROW - DAY 17

Papa walks in a line along with two other peasant lemmings, each filled with trepidation. They pass by much larger GUARDS, who look down upon them with distrust and disgust. The two lemmings faint, leaving Papa on his own.

The elite lemmings, transported by the moving sidewalk, look almost surprised and horrified to see peasants in the King's castle.

VICTOR, a vole - small in stature but large in importance - scurries across the room with TWO LARGE MENACING LEMMING GUARDS following him.

Victor serves as the king's Grand Vizier. He wears silk garments fit for royalty.

MR. GAMMELPLASSEN, an elite lemming, waddles over to get in Victor's way.

MR. GAMMELPLASSEN

Victor! Victor!

Victor stops in a huff.

MR. GAMMELPLASSEN (CONT'D)

(conceitedly)

Victor, the creme puffs are too creamy and the berries taste about ten minutes too old.

(beat)

Could you see to it that my meal is replenished?

VICTOR
 (surly)
 Why, of course, Mr. Gammelplassen.
 I'll take care of you right away.

Victor continues on, then abruptly stops when he sees Papa.

VICTOR (CONT'D)
 Stop where you are, varmint
 peasant!

Papa nervously stops.

VICTOR (CONT'D)
 By what under-handed reason do you
 tread on your majesty's hallowed
 grounds?

PAPA
 (bowing)
 If you please, your eminence, I
 wish to have an audience with the
 king.

Victor, the guards, and nearby elite lemmings all LAUGH.

VICTOR
 And what would warrant such an
 exchange?

PAPA
 The lemmings in my community are
 starving, your eminence. I came to
 ask our benevolent king to release
 more of the harvest bounty to his
 loyal and grateful subjects.

VICTOR
 Pish posh! I don't see any other
 varmint peasant complaining.
 (beat)
 Guards! Toss this infidel into the
 moat.

As the guards grab Papa by the arms:

PRINCESS PEGGY (O.S.)
 Release him!

PRINCESS PEGGY descends the stairs. Beautiful, kind, and
 confident, the princess approaches Papa and Victor.

VICTOR

Princess Peggy, this peasant has made plans to steal something of your father's.

PRINCESS PEGGY

Such as?

VICTOR

Why his, his, his valuable time, my lady.

(beat)

As his Grand Vizier...

PRINCESS PEGGY

As the Princess, I release you of any responsibility for this matter, Victor.

(beat)

Run along now. Scoot!

Victor sneers as he slinks away. His guards follow him.

PRINCESS PEGGY (CONT'D)

(to Papa)

What is your name, my friend?

PAPA

(bowing)

Kenneth Pedersen, your highness.

PRINCESS PEGGY

Come with me, Kenneth, and I will listen to what you have to say.

18 EXT. PARKA PARK - DAY

18

Leo passes by a flower cart on the outskirts of the park.

LEO

(to flower cart owner)

Your flowers look beautiful, Mrs. Johansen.

MRS. JOHANSEN

Why, thank you, Leo.

Mr. Karlsson, the lemming sporting a bad haircut, tips his hat to Leo as he walks by in his line.

MR. KARLSSON

God morgen, Leo. Say hello to your father for me.

LEO
Hair do... I mean, will do...

Leo stops.

LEO (CONT'D)
There they are...

TODD and PUDGE, Leo's best friends, are at another nearby cart, hoping to pick a pocket or two.

The two brothers look like Laurel and Hardy: Todd - lean and quick. Pudge - chubby. Pudge does not speak.

As an elite lemming inaudibly haggles with a peasant over some merchandise, Todd meticulously reaches into her basket and takes her bouquet of flowers, hands them off to Pudge, who then hands them off to Leo without thinking...

LEO (CONT'D)
Hi, Todd. Hi, Pudge.

Leo places the flowers back into the basket without her knowledge. Todd looks surprised to see more flowers in the basket, grabs them again, hands to Pudge, who hands them to Leo, who once again places them back in the basket.

TODD
Aww, Leo. Those were good flowers.

LEO
You don't have to steal flowers, Todd. There's a surprise for you in the valley.

TODD
The valley? What is it?

LEO
It's an area of low land between hills or mountains. But that's not important.
(beat)
There's a bunch of flowers in the valley. Berries too. Enough for everybody in the Burrows.

TODD
The Forbidden Valley? There's weasels, foxes, and hedgehogs. Certain death.
(beat)
Don't you agree, Pudge?

Pudge nods his head quickly three times.

LEO

Awww, that's just a rumor. The elites tell us that so we'll stay away from their food.

TODD

Leo, we're lemmings. We're soft and cuddly...

Pudge whispers in his ear.

TODD (CONT'D)

And juicy. Hedgehogs are bad dudes.

LEO

It's our chance to make a difference. We can begin changing things around here.

Pause as Todd and Pudge stare at Leo.

LEO (CONT'D)

Well, I'm going. I'm not afraid of no hedgehogs or those other things.

(beat)

Who's with me?

Todd and Pudge look at each other.

19

EXT. VALLEY - DAY

19

Leo and Todd joyfully munch on some juicy berries. Pudge stuffs as many berries as he can fit inside his cheeks.

TODD

Well, I've got to hand it to you, Leo. These berries are worth the risk.

LEO

Told you it was just a rumor. Just wait until we break the news to everyone.

TODD

It really is nice here. Nice and peaceful.

LEO

(standing up)

Let's play a game...

20

INT. KING'S CASTLE - DAY

20

KING LEMMING, a large regal-looking lemming cloaked in king's garments, sits on his throne of jewel encrusted dirt.

Victor and the head guard, HERCULES - a muscular lemming with limited intelligence - stand off to the King's right. Victor taps his staff on the floor - the crystal glows - then he whispers in the king's ear.

Various ELITE LEMMINGS, sporting fine clothes, kneel before the King.

ELITE LEMMING 1

Most humble supreme leader, we are receiving notes of concern regarding the upcoming Annual Spring Celebration.

KING LEMMING

Such as?

ELITE LEMMING 1

That we are offering great amounts of food just for attending a party.

KING LEMMING

And--?

ELITE LEMMING 2

We fear that a peasant may some how end up in the party and be given food that they and their peasant brethren have worked so hard in harvesting for us.

KING LEMMING

My loyal subjects, your fears are not warranted.

ELITE LEMMING 3

Peasants aren't allowed at the party?

KING LEMMING

Peasants are going to make up most of the guest list.

ELITE LEMMING 1

We don't understand...

KING LEMMING

The increasing number of trouble-makers from within our community has reached biblical proportions. We can't have anyone questioning my leadership.

VICTOR

I have begun to compile a list of mischiefers.

KING LEMMING

(sotto)

Mischiefers?

VICTOR

Yes, mischiefers.

(beat)

I was about to add another peasant to the list, but the Princess interfered.

KING LEMMING

How did I end up with a child that cares for everybody? It's her mother's fault.

(beat)

Regarding the party: as you know, lemmings are followers and followers are extremely gullible. Many of our (ahem) populace - the Peasants - are hungry. We are going to combine those two traits and have the trouble-makers leap off a cliff.

The elite lemmings look at each other in bewilderment.

ELITE LEMMING 2

Forgive me for asking, your Supremeness, but why would they jump off a cliff?

KING LEMMING

To get to the food.

ELITE LEMMING 3

And the food is...where?

KING LEMMING

At the bottom of the cliff.

ELITE LEMMING 1

Wouldn't that -- hurt?

KING LEMMING
They won't know it will hurt.

ELITE LEMMINGS
Why not?

KING LEMMING
Because I will tell them that they are leaping into the ultimate Lemming Party, featuring food, music, and comfort they can only imagine. Remember, they are gullible. Whatever I say, they'll believe.

VICTOR
Plus we have the media to help us.

KING LEMMING
We'll have them convinced that it is so much fun that they might not ever want to return.

ELITE LEMMING 1
But what if their family members ask too many questions?

KING LEMMING
Then they can join their loved one - at the party.

EVIL GIGGLING (and a SNORT from Hercules).

21 EXT. VALLEY - DAY - LATER

21

Leo shares the rules of the game...

LEO
...and I'm not only going to try and find you, but scare you. That's why I call it, Hide and Go Seek and Then Scare. Any questions?

TODD
Boundaries?

LEO
Stay within the creek and the hill. Any other questions?
(pause)
All right. I'll count to twenty. Ready? Go!

(MORE)

LEO (CONT'D)
 (closes eyes)
 One - two - three...

As Leo counts, Todd and Pudge scurry to a fallen hollow log and jump inside.

LEO (CONT'D)
 ...eleven, twelve...

As the counting continues, OMINOUS MUSIC plays as the SHADOW OF A GYRFALCON flying above can be seen.

LEO (CONT'D)
 ...eighteen, nineteen, twenty!
 Ready or not, here I come.

Leo peers around, searching for Todd and Pudge. The Gyrfalcons shadow can be seen flying back and forth. Leo prances towards a large open hole.

LEO (CONT'D)
 (looking down into hole)
 Aha!

Leo jumps into the air and disappears into the hole - just as the Gyrfalcons razor-sharp talons miss him. Leo pops his head out.

LEO (CONT'D)
 Nope. Not here.

Leo spots Todd's head poking out of a hole in the log to peek. Todd's head disappears back into the log.

LEO (CONT'D)
 (sotto)
 I gotcha now!

Leo stays low and scurries towards the log. The shadow of the hawk continues to circle overhead. Leo climbs onto the log and quietly makes his way to where Todd and Pudge hide. The shadow of the hawk draws nearer.

22

INT. HOLLOW LOG - CONTINUOUS

22

Todd and Pudge crouch near an opening when suddenly, Leo's head appears above them, mouth open and tongue flailing wildly:

LEO
 A-BLUH-LA-LA-LA-LA-LA-LA!

Todd and Pudge leap out of the log in surprise.

23

EXT. OUTSIDE HOLLOW LOG - DAY - CONTINUOUS

23

A startled Todd and Pudge turn around to see Leo jump off the log and plop down in front of them. Their eyes suddenly become large with fear. The huge Gyrfalcon stands right behind Leo, sporting a wide, evil grin.

LEO

Ha! That was great! You should have seen you jump. Course, I gotta admit, I can be a pretty scary lemming.

Leo sees that Todd and Pudge continue to shake nervously.

LEO (CONT'D)

Hey, calm down, guys. You look like you've seen a hawk.

(beat)

Which reminds me: what do you call a hawk holding a moldy salami? Siamese twins.

(thinking to himself)

I still think that's an insult to moldy salamis. Oh well, you can guess which one is smarter.

(realizes something)

It's standing behind me, isn't it?

Todd and Pudge nod nervously.

LEO (CONT'D)

(yelling)

Fruit basket upset!

Leo races backwards right between the surprised Gyrfalcon's legs. The confused Gyrfalcon bends over and looks between its legs at the backwards-running lemming. Meanwhile, Todd and Pudge race for safety.

A concentrating - and still backwards-running - Leo continues to mutter plans to himself.

LEO (CONT'D)

So far, so good, Leo. Think! What did the fire marshal say to do?

The Gyrfalcon re-positions himself behind Leo and patiently waits for him as Leo draws closer and closer. Just as the Gyrfalcon lifts one of his deadly talons, Leo remembers what he was taught:

LEO (CONT'D)

Drop, tuck, and roll! Drop!

Leo drops to the ground just as the Gyrfalcon swipes at him, catching nothing but air.

LEO (CONT'D)

Tuck!

Leo tucks in his legs.

LEO (CONT'D)

And roll!

Leo quickly rolls like a ball away from the confused Gyrfalcon. He then stops and repeats, rolling further and further away from the Gyrfalcon. The frustrated Gyrfalcon takes to the air and soars after Leo, who continues to "drop, tuck, and roll".

24 EXT. HILL OVERLOOKING VALLEY - DAY - CONTINUOUS 24

An amazed Todd and Pudge look on as other PEASANT LEMMINGS, hearing the commotion, race over to witness the chase.

25 EXT. ROYAL BURROW BALCONY - DAY - CONTINUOUS 25

Princess Peggy and Papa talk as the melee can be heard faintly in the distance.

PRINCESS PEGGY

I will talk to my father and come up with a solution to your problem.

PAPA

Thank you, your highness. You are too kind.

The commotion below catches Princess Peggy's attention.

PRINCESS PEGGY

What is going on down there?

She crosses to a viewpoint, followed closely by Papa.

PRINCESS PEGGY (CONT'D)

(shocked)

Oh, my gracious!

PAPA

(horrified)

That's my boy! That's my boy!

He runs to the corridor, followed closely by Princess Peggy.

26 EXT. THE ROYAL BURROW - BALCONY - DAY - CONTINUOUS 26

King Lemming, Victor, and Hercules stand outside on another balcony facing the valley as they watch the hysteria below. Several elite lemmings watch from their chairs.

27 EXT. VALLEY - DAY - CONTINUOUS 27

Leo continues to "drop, tuck, and roll" - this time right into a bush of thorns. The Gyrfalcon lands next to the thorn bush, waiting for the beaten lemming to show himself. Just then, Leo rolls back out of the thorn bush and right onto the feet of the Gyrfalcon, who grins triumphantly.

28 EXT. HILL OVERLOOKING VALLEY - DAY - CONTINUOUS 28

The on-looking lemmings bury their faces into their paws, not wanting to see the tragic end. A worried Peggy and Papa take several steps forward.

PRINCESS PEGGY

No!

PAPA

Leo!!!

29 EXT. VALLEY - DAY - CONTINUOUS 29

Meanwhile, Leo - not knowing he has stopped right on top of the Gyrfalcon's feet - stands up ready to "drop, tuck, and roll" once again. Several thorns remain embedded in Leo's fur.

LEO

Drop!

Leo drops right on top of the Gyrfalcon's feet, stabbing the bird with the embedded thorns. The Gyrfalcon's beak opens wide in pain.

LEO (CONT'D)

Tuck!

Leo tucks in his legs.

LEO (CONT'D)

And roll!

Leo rolls towards the Gyrfalcon's legs, not away from them. His rolling causes the perplexed Gyrfalcon to also roll up into a ball and roll along with Leo.

The two of them roll into a large rock, with the Gyrfalcon taking the full brunt of the collision. As the dazed Gyrfalcon remains on the ground, Leo continues to roll on, none the wiser.

The dazed Gyrfalcon struggles to his feet, slowly takes off, and flies right into a tree. Eventually he is able to fly away.

30

EXT. TOP/BOTTOM OF HILL - DAY - CONTINUOUS

30

The Crossing Guard whistles through his teeth to try and stop a throng of peasants from advancing:

CROSSING GUARD
Order! Order! Stay in lines!

But the large group of lemmings, led by Todd and Pudge, continue undeterred to a rolling Leo.

TODD
(excitedly)
Leo! Leo! You did it!

Leo finally stops rolling when he bumps into Pudge. Papa joyfully runs to his dizzy son and with open arms in anticipation of a huge hug.

PAPA
Leo!

The dazed Leo sees three of his Papas...

LEO
(dizzy)
Papa-sss...

As Papa approaches Leo, Leo moves towards him, but veers right due to his dizziness. He ends up running into Princess Peggy, who steadies him.

PRINCESS PEGGY
That was incredible!

LEO
(still dizzy, seeing two Peggys)
Aw, twern't nothin', Princess, Princess...

Todd steadies Leo's dizzy head so that Leo actually looks at Princess Peggy.

The crowd of peasant lemmings congratulating Leo on his nifty escape suddenly bow when DAFFODIL TRUMPETS triumphantly announce the arrival of King Lemming, along with Victor, Hercules, and the King's Guards.

PRINCESS PEGGY
 (to King Lemming)
 Daddy, what did you think?

The stoic King Lemming looks Leo up and down.

KING LEMMING
 (shrugging shoulders)
 Humph! Lucky...

He quickly turns around and heads back towards the Royal Burrow as the Daffodil Trumpets triumphantly announce his departure, along with his followers.

VICTOR
 (to Leo)
 Humph! Lucky indeed.

He writes a quick ticket, then hands it (after the fifth attempt) to Leo's shaking paw.

VICTOR (CONT'D)
 A citation for surviving the
 Forbidden Valley.

Victor follows King Lemming to the Royal Burrow as Hercules and the Guards pull up the rear.

PRINCESS PEGGY
 (to Leo)
 You were great.

She gives Leo a kiss on the cheek, grabs the ticket, and runs after her father. A stunned Leo, fully-recovered, cheeks turning pink, stares at her with wide-eyes as she leaves.

The rest of the lemmings continue to celebrate.

31 INT. ROYAL BURROW - LATER - DAY

31

King Lemming sits on his dirt throne. Victor taps his staff - the crystal once again glimmering - and leans over to whisper something into King Lemming's ear.

Hercules bench presses a dandelion as Princess Peggy enters the room.

HERCULES

HUMPH!

PRINCESS PEGGY

Father! Father! Why did you do that? He's the first lemming to have survived an attack from a hawk and you dismiss him like he's nothing.

KING LEMMING

My daughter, you do not reward luck. He should not have been in the open field to begin with. What he should be is in the hawk's nest, being fed to her chicks.

PRINCESS PEGGY

But he's not! He out-smarted the hawk. That alone should bring him some of your praise.

KING LEMMING

Don't be silly. If anyone is to be praised, it is I.

VICTOR

I do believe that hawk was blind, my king.

KING LEMMING

Is that right? Doesn't surprise me in the slightest.

(to Princess Peggy)

Anything else, Peggy-Lou?

PRINCESS PEGGY

Yes. Would it be possible for us to share more of our bounty with those in need?

KING LEMMING

Wherever did you come up with the notion that there are members in my community in need of anything, my dear?

PRINCESS PEGGY

A lemming - the father of the one who defeated the hawk, told me that there are many, such as his family, that are going to bed hungry.

VICTOR

This lemming that you talked to -
do you know his name?

PRINCESS PEGGY

Pedersen. Kenneth Pedersen.

Victor writes the name on his list.

KING LEMMING

Well, he must meet with the queen
at once! She is most revered in our
peasant community and has the
resources to solve this problem.

VICTOR

So he would have to...

KING LEMMING

He would be one of the lucky
peasants to take one of the
inaugural leaps into the ultimate
lemming party that the Queen is
hosting. We will let your mom know
that he is coming.

PRINCESS PEGGY

Can I go with him? I miss her so
much.

KING LEMMING

She asked me to promise not to send
until the time is right. At this
this moment, the time is wrong.

(beat)

Besides, the Lemming Challenge for
your paw in marriage is fast
approaching.

(beat)

It's a time honored tradition...

PRINCESS PEGGY

...that you just started.

KING LEMMING

Traditions have to begin sometime,
my dear.

VICTOR

We can make it part of the Spring
Celebration.

KING LEMMING

Excellent idea, Victor! Of course, staging it is just a formality. No lemming would dare challenge the great Hercules.

HERCULES

Hercules strong lemming!

PRINCESS PEGGY

I never agreed to this challenge.

KING LEMMING

It was your mother's idea. You know how fond she is of Hercules.

PRINCESS PEGGY

(skeptical)

She is?

Hercules pounds his head into the wall to impress the princess, then falls to the floor, unconscious.

Princess Peggy CLAPS sarcastically.

PRINCESS PEGGY (CONT'D)

Bravo, Hercules, bravo...

32 EXT. LEO'S FAMILY BURROW - EARLY EVENING 32

A hand-made sign reads, A HERO LIVES HERE!

33 INT. LEO'S FAMILY BURROW - EARLY EVENING 33

A dazed Leo sits on a rocking chair made out of rocks. Papa hangs up a recent picture he took of a dizzy Leo.

Leo's brothers and sisters act out Leo's heroics with stick figures.

LEMMING SISTER 1

All right, hawk, if I execute this move properly, no can defend.

LEMMING BROTHER 2

(airplane sounds)

Eee-yownnn...

Lemming Brother 2 flies his stick figure hawk towards Lemming Sister 1's stick figure Leo. Lemming Sister 1's Leo kicks the hawk.

LEMMING SISTER 1

Hi-yah!

LEO

I can't believe what just happened.

PAPA

I know. You're the first lemming to go face-to-face with a hawk and live.

LEO

(not listening to his Dad)
She kissed me. The Princess kissed me.

Mama brings Leo some nectar. Lemming Sister 2 brings Leo a warm bucket of water to soak his paws.

MAMA

(to Leo)
Here you go, Honey. Have some nectar.

Leo takes the cup and sips.

PAPA

I am so proud of you, son. Where did you learn those moves?

LEO

What? Oh, fire drill training at school: "Drop, tuck, and roll."

MOM

Wait a minute - isn't that from my croissant recipe?

KNOCK at the door.

PAPA

That's probably Fox News wanting to interview our son.

MAMA

Oh, I hope not. They are so rude.

Papa opens the door.

MAIL CARRIER (O.S.)

Kenneth Pedersen?

PAPA

Aye. I am Kenneth Pedersen.

A PAW thrusts a letter into Papa's paw. Once Papa takes it, the Mail Carrier's paw holds a ledger out in front of Papa.

MAIL CARRIER (O.S.)
Sign here, please.

Papa licks his paw, dabs it on their mud wall, and signs his name. He then shuts the door and opens the letter.

MAMA
What is it, Papa?

PAPA
(sotto)
It's an invitation -
(excitedly)
- to speak with the Queen!

MAMA
Oh, Papa! What an honor!

PAPA
See, Leo? I told you one lemming
can make a difference.

Leo stands up.

LEO
Doesn't that mean you have to leap
into that party?

PAPA
Yep. If that's what it takes to see
the Queen, then count me in. The
King wouldn't let anyone go if it
was dangerous.
(beat)
Besides, I get to bring back food
for us and the community.
(beat)
Listen, children, there is only one
thing that can stop me from
returning from this party...
(beat)
And it hasn't been invented yet.

Leo smiles. Mama does too.

A beautiful, glistening full moon shines down upon the peasant burrows.

MAMA (O.S.)
 Okay, children, time for bed.
 (beat)
 Pick out a book.

LEMMING CHILDREN (O.S.)
 Where the Wild Things Aren't! Where
 the Wild Things Aren't!

35 EXT. LARSEN BURROW - LATER - DAY

35

Leo walks by a neighborhood of burrows, then stops at a burrow with the name, LARSEN, engraved in the mud.

Leo KNOCKS on the round wooden door and then quickly takes three steps back. Nothing happens. He slowly approaches the door again, KNOCKS, and quickly takes three steps back. Again, nothing happens.

He carefully approaches the door, about to KNOCK again, when suddenly, the door flings open, sending Leo tumbling into some mud.

TODD
 Hey, Leo! Whatcha doin' in the mud?

LEO
 Do you have a peephole or something
 so you can see when to smack me
 with the door?

Todd hops out of the burrow and shuts the door.

TODD
 I don't know what you are talking
 about.

POW! Once again the door flings open, this time sending Todd into the mud. Pudge squeezes out of the hole.

LEO
 Hey, Pudge.

36 EXT. A BROOK ON A HILLSIDE - DAY

36

Leo and Todd each float a stick on a brook, then lay down on some grass overlooking a small valley. Pudge quietly works on a project.

37 EXT. VALLEY - DAY - SAME TIME 37

Princess Peggy ice-skates beautifully on a small patch of ice. LEMMING BODYGUARDS (wearing sunglasses) stand at attention nearby.

38 EXT. HILLSIDE OVERLOOKING VALLEY - DAY - SAME TIME 38

Suddenly, a large, beautiful replica of a schooner passes behind Leo and Todd. Pudge smiles proudly.

TODD
 (to Pudge)
 Show-off.
 (beat)
 Hey, Leo...
 (beat)
 Leo?

Leo's gaze is fixated on Princess Peggy.

LEO
 (while staring at Peggy)
 Peggy Lemming... Princess and World
 Lemming Skating Champion...

TODD
 ...And King Lemming's daughter.

LEO
 She's beautiful.

TODD
 She's a Princess and is out of your league. Sorry, buddy, but the king has probably already picked out her mate, and I don't think any of us will make the cut.

Pudge looks down at Princess Peggy.

39 EXT. VALLEY - DAY - SAME TIME 39

Princess Peggy leaps in mid-air and goes into a spin.

40 INT. HILLSIDE OVERLOOKING VALLEY - DAY - SAME TIME 40

Pudge mimics her perfectly behind Leo and Todd. They do not notice as they continue to watch. Leo SIGHS.

41 FRONT PAGE OF THE DAILY LEMMING

41

The top headlines read:

(1) SPRING CELEBRATION TODAY!

(2) THE INAUGURAL (AND TRADITIONAL) LEAP INTO THE ULTIMATE LEMMING PARTY!

(3) LEMMING CHALLENGE! (Featuring a picture of the lovely Princess Peggy Lemming, accompanied by the line: CAN YOU WIN HER PAW IN MARRIAGE?)

(4) BLIND HAWK CAN'T CATCH DIZZY LEMMING. (A picture of a dizzy Leo accompanies the story.)

42 INT. LEO'S FAMILY BURROW - DINING ROOM - MORNING

42

Leo, wearing overalls, reads the paper as Papa, Mama, and every brother and sister enter. Papa is wearing a track suit.

PAPA

Good morning, Leo. We were just discussing what my signature leap should be. Swan dive? Cannonball? Triple Spin?

LEO

Just not the belly flop.

PAPA

Actually, that would work to. I hear we land in an enormous pillow of feathers. You know how much I love feathers.

LEO

What if you miss?

MAMA

Impossible. The king says that the feathers cover an area as big as the castle.

PAPA

I'll be back before breakfast - a breakfast featuring berries.

The children all CHEER.

MAMA

Let's hear it for Papa!

Every lemming starts a different cheer AT THE SAME TIME: (1) Two bits, four bits... (2) For he's a jolly good fellow... (3) P is for Perfect, that's what he's going to be... (4) Happy Birthday... (5) We will, we will rock you... (6) Papa, Papa, he's our man, if he can't do it, no one can...

43 EXT. LEO'S FAMILY BURROW - MORNING 43

Leo's family stands outside waiting for the end of the moving line on the road.

Leo notices Princess Peggy jogging below his hill. He bursts through the line of lemmings, sending the line into complete chaos:

LEO
I'll meet you at the Celebration!

Papa and Mama look embarrassed, then, noticing the line that was not effected by Leo continues to walk, quickly ushers their family into the rear.

44 EXT. BELOW THE HILL - MORNING 44

Leo, still wearing overalls, huffs and puffs as he catches up to Princess Peggy.

LEO
(wheezing)
Hi!

PRINCESS PEGGY
Why, hello.

They continue to jog.

LEO
I'm surprised to see you out here alone.

PRINCESS PEGGY
I'm not alone. You're with me.

LEO
How did you sneak out without the guards seeing you.

PRINCESS PEGGY
I didn't.

She gestures behind her. Leo turns to see FOUR GUARDS right on his heels. They look very upset.

PRINCESS PEGGY (CONT'D)
Do you jog a lot?

LEO
(winded)
Oh, uh, gulp, sure. Almost, um,
every day...

PRINCESS PEGGY
May I suggest running shorts?

LEO
(more winded)
Good... good idea...
(to Guards)
Okay, okay, I - get - the - hint...

Leo stops running with Princess Peggy. The guards GROWL at him as they pass him by.

LEO (CONT'D)
Bye...

Suddenly, Princess Peggy stops jogging. The guards come to a halt.

PRINCESS PEGGY
(to Guards)
That's enough for today, boys. You
are excused.

The four confused guards look at each other, not knowing what to do.

PRINCESS PEGGY (CONT'D)
(to Guards)
I'll be fine, really.

The guards still look perplexed.

PRINCESS PEGGY (CONT'D)
(to Guards)
Scram!

The guards exit. Princess Peggy approaches Leo.

PRINCESS PEGGY (CONT'D)
Sorry about that. Sometimes they
don't give me enough room to
breathe.

LEO
(nervously)
That's okay.
(MORE)

LEO (CONT'D)

Sometimes - I don't have enough -
breath to give me - a room. Heh,
heh, heh...

PRINCESS PEGGY

What?

LEO

You skate good.

PRINCESS PEGGY

Thank you. Are you excited about
your dad going to the party?

LEO

Not really. I don't know why anyone
needs to leap off a cliff. Why
can't we just have a big party
here?

(beat)

At least he gets to talk to your
mom.

PRINCESS PEGGY

Can you give him a message to give
her?

LEO

Sure!

PRINCESS PEGGY

Tell her I miss her and love her
and can't wait to see her again.
Tell her to come home.

LEO

How long has she been gone?

PRINCESS PEGGY

A month now. My father sent her to
visit other lemming kingdoms. He
said when she heard about his idea
for the party, she wanted to be in
charge of it.

(sadly)

I've almost forgotten her face.

LEO

Oh, she's beautiful, like you are.

Leo's eyes bulge and he GULPS as he realizes what he just
blurted out.

PRINCESS PEGGY

What a nice thing to say. Thank you, Leo.

The two lemmings smile at each other in a tender moment.

Leo, thinking he might be doing something wrong, snaps out of it and changes the subject.

LEO

Oh, gosh, I almost forgot. Today is your special day. The Lemming Challenge...

PRINCESS PEGGY

Don't remind me. One of my father's new barbaric traditions. He's already picked the winner - Hercules.

LEO

Well, he's, umm, strong - for a lemming, I guess. He has other fine qualities, I imagine... I just can't think of what those are at the moment.

PRINCESS PEGGY

He's dumber than a hollow log. Muscles aren't important to a lemming. I mean, what's he going to do - bench press a badger?

LEO

Well, maybe you can talk to your dad...

PRINCESS PEGGY

What I actually hope is that there is a lemming brave enough to challenge Hercules. My father would be stunned, and I don't think Hercules would know what to do.

LEO

You think Hercules can be beaten?

PRINCESS PEGGY

I think, in a challenge, if push comes to shove, Hercules might fail. Why, you could beat him, Leo.

LEO

Really?

PRINCESS PEGGY

After all, the only thing Hercules
has beaten is his chest. You've
beaten a hawk.

She starts to jog again.

PRINCESS PEGGY (CONT'D)

See you later, Leo.

LEO

(sotto)

See you later, Leo...

45 EXT. THE HAMLET OF LANDSBY - DOWNTOWN - DAY

45

Balloons and festive decorations highlight the Spring
Celebration. Lemmings peel off into smaller lines to buy
treats and goods from VENDORS.

VENDOR 1

Lemmingade! Get your nice, fresh
lemmingade!

VENDOR 2

Caramel apples! One for a dollar or
two for three dollars!

TWO YOUNG LEMMINGS enjoy playing WHACK-A-WEASEL. A FORTUNE
TELLER shares a prediction with a CLIENT.

FORTUNE TELLER

(looking into a crystal
ball)

I can see you leaping into a party
very soon.

CLIENT

Oh, goodie!

Leo and his brothers and sisters, Papa, and Mama walk in line
to the main gathering area.

Upon reaching the festival, Leo jumps out of the line,
followed by his brothers and sisters. The Crossing Guard and
other lemmings shake their heads in disapproval.

Papa and Mama grin uncomfortably as they take their exit.

Papa and Mama approach their family friends, HANS, ASTRID,
GUNNAR, and OTHERS.

PAPA
 (to Hans)
 Hans! How are you doing?

HANS
 Fan - doodly - astic!

PAPA
 Are you leaping today?

HANS
 Yes - sirree. Ironically, I got the invitation after I complained that they are charging us, peasants, to use the library.
 (beat)
 You?

PAPA
 Oh, yes. I have an appointment with the Queen.

MAMA
 Astrid! How's Gunnar?

ASTRID
 Well, why don't you ask him yourself?

She notices Gunnar is not behind her.

ASTRID (CONT'D)
 Oh, for crying out loud!
 (shrill)
 GUNNAR! GUN--NAR! Get your lazy, worn-out tushie over here now!

Gunnar reluctantly catches up.

ASTRID (CONT'D)
 (to Mama)
 I swear, Betty, if his head wasn't screwed on, he'd lose it. He's always falling behind. He's so slow, I'll probably have to push him off the cliff. He'll just be wandering around, mumbling,
 (mimics Gunnar's voice)
 "What do I do? What do I do?"
 (beat)
 Thank goodness, he has me or he would never know what's going on...

Gunnar continues past Papa and Leo and walks right off the cliff without anyone noticing.

ASTRID (CONT'D)
 (continuing to ramble)
 Dumb as a slug and dull as a blade
 of grass, I tell you. Sometimes I
 wonder what he ever did to deserve
 me...

She notices that Gunnar is missing.

ASTRID (CONT'D)
 Oh, no! Not again. Excuse me,
 Betty...
 (shrill)
 You ungrateful slob, it's almost
 time for the Lemming Challenge!

She exits.

46

EXT. DOWNTOWN - MAIN STAGE - DAY - LATER

46

Daffodil Trumpets once again triumphantly announce the entrance of King Lemming and Princess Peggy, along with Victor, and Hercules. They walk up onto the Main Stage. The lemming community begins to MURMUR excitedly.

KING LEMMING
 (to Lemming community)
 My loyal subjects, welcome to our
 Spring Celebration!

LOUD CHEERS.

KING LEMMING
 The party of a lifetime awaits
 several lucky lemmings at the end
 of our festivities, but first, the
 Queen and her servants await the
 food.

LOUD CHEERS as a parade of seeds, berries, wheat, and flowers are carried past the hungry crowd and towards the cliff by several guards.

The guards stop near the edge of the cliff and turn to the King. King Lemming nods. The guards pour the food over the cliff, receiving boisterous talk amongst the lemmings gathered.

KING LEMMING (CONT'D)

And now, a message from your Queen.

Everyone, especially Princess Peggy, gets very excited as a big screen made out of white tree bark shows just the crown sitting on top of the "queen's" head.

"QUEEN"

(poor imitation, high voice)

Good afternoon, oh wonderful ones. I am looking so forward to seeing the first of many of you at our amazing party...

PEASANT LEMMING 2

(yelling)

She sounds different than what I remember!

"QUEEN"

(clears throat)

Oh, excuse my hoarse voice. I have been singing with the Lemming Sisters.

The crowd look at each other in amazement:

MANY FROM CROWD

The Lemming Sisters!

PEASANT LEMMING 3 (O.S.)

Why can't we see her face?

"QUEEN"

Oh, umm, our camera is stuck and none of us are tall enough to, uh, fix it.

PEASANT LEMMING 4 (O.S.)

Send Hercules!

Hercules shakes his head vigorously.

"QUEEN"

I just have one more thing to say to everyone jumping today: enjoy the go! The trip down is to die for.

The crowd CHEERS.

47 INT. ROOM IN ROYAL BURROW - DAY - SAME TIME 47

A camera stands in front of the "QUEEN" - an elite lemming actor, who takes off a hand-made crown and breathes a SIGH OF RELIEF.

48 EXT. DOWNTOWN - MAIN STAGE - DAY - LATER 48

KING LEMMING

And now, it is time for the Lemming Competition, for the right to marry...

Princess Peggy pokes him in the side.

KING LEMMING (CONT'D)

I mean, for the right to court my lovely daughter --
(said quickly)
Andthenmarryher.

LOUD CHEERS. Leo stares at Princess Peggy with wide, hopeful eyes. Victor steps forward to read a proclamation, accompanied by the Daffodil Trumpets.

VICTOR

Here ye! Hear ye! Your omnipotent majesty invites any and all suitors of the beautiful Princess Peggy to step forward if they dare.

KING LEMMING

Now, as you know, the competition is open to all male lemmings. However, at this time, only one lemming has stepped forward...

He turns and notices Hercules still standing in his spot.

KING LEMMING (CONT'D)

Ahem!

Hercules doesn't move.

KING LEMMING (CONT'D)

(sotto)
I said, AHM, you idiot!

Hercules suddenly realizes that he is being summoned and steps forward.

KING LEMMING (CONT'D)
 As I was saying, only one lemming
 has had the bravery and desire to
 enter the dangerous, brutal,
 "Mothers, hold on to your
 children", event. That one lemming
 is, of course, the standard-bearer
 of invincible lemming power -
 Hercules!

The crowd CHEERS as a nervous Leo looks on.

KING LEMMING (CONT'D)
 It is almost sad, yet extremely
 understandable, that no other
 lemming seen fit to challenge
 Hercules.
 (points to Lemming 1)
 How about you, sir?

Hercules snarls at the lemming, who nervously shakes his head repeatedly.

KING LEMMING (CONT'D)
 (to LEMMING 2)
 You, sir?

Hercules towers over Lemming 2, who shakes in fear.

LEMMING 2
 (whimpering)
 Mommy!

KING LEMMING
 Last chance or the Challenge is
 closed. Going once, going twice...

LEO (O.S.)
 (voice cracking)
 I'll do it...

The crowd MURMURS and look around as they try to figure out who blurted out the fore-mentioned words. Mama and Papa look at each other.

MAMA AND PAPA
 Was that...?

LEMMING BROTHERS AND SISTERS
 (in unison)
 Le-o?

The crowd parts like the Red Sea, exposing Leo standing alone.

KING LEMMING
(sternly)
What did you squeak, boy?

Leo gathers his composure.

LEO
(bravely)
I said, I'll do it.

Mama and Papa approach Leo. Hercules looks confused by what is happening. Princess Peggy smiles at Leo.

MAMA
(terrified)
Leo! You can't...

PAPA
(to King Lemming)
Forgive him, your Eminence. He is still a little dazed from earlier this week.

LEO
No, Papa, I want to do it.
(to King Lemming)
I accept the challenge of the, uh, Challenge.

MAMA
But, Leo...

PAPA
(to Leo)
I forbid you.

LEO
(to Papa)
You told me this morning that I was the male of the burrow until you come back from the party.
(beat)
It's my decision, Papa. I can do this.

KING LEMMING
(to Leo)
Take your father's advice, son. I understand how you might feel almost invincible after your lucky escape from that blind hawk...

PRINCESS PEGGY

That hawk was not blind. I say Leo
is a worthy challenger for Hercules
- the most worthy in this kingdom.

King Lemming does not know what to do. He looks at Victor,
who whispers into his ear and hands the king two leaves.

King Lemming reluctantly motions for Leo to come up on the
stage. Guards escort Leo, while Papa and Mama and Leo's
brothers and sisters nervously watch. Other lemmings close in
around Leo's family to give encouragement.

Leo takes his place up front with an upset Hercules. Leo
pales in comparison to Hercules muscular body and height.
King Lemming stands between them.

KING LEMMING

(holding two leaves, to
crowd)

I hold in my hand two perilous,
tortuous challenges. Whichever
lemming is able to complete their
task, will be the winner. If they
are both able to complete their
tasks then the tie-breaker goes to
the lemming who is deemed to have
accomplished the most difficult
challenge of the two.

(beat)

Since he was the first lemming to
bravely enter the competition,
Hercules will select first.

King Lemming holds out the two leaves, although he basically
tries to shove one of the leaves into Hercules' paw.

Hercules, not understanding the hint, tries to grab the other
leaf. A struggle goes on for a while, with King Lemming
trying to force Hercules to take his leaf while Hercules
still tries to grab the other leaf.

Victor grabs Hercules' paw to try and steer him to the right
leaf.

Finally, King Lemming touches his leaf to one of Hercules'
paws and immediately takes it away.

KING LEMMING (CONT'D)

The great Hercules has chosen the
following challenge: He needs to
bend over and touch his knees.

The bewildered crowd objects with JEERS and BOOS.

PRINCESS PEGGY
Father, that's not fair!

KING LEMMING
(loudly)
Silence!

Everybody quiets down.

KING LEMMING (CONT'D)
Drum roll, please.

DRUM ROLL plays as Hercules dramatically reaches down and touches - his belly button.

KING LEMMING (CONT'D)
(whisper, to Hercules)
Knees, you idiot!

The Drum Roll continues as Hercules slightly bends over, then stops. He can't figure out which knee to touch.

KING LEMMING (CONT'D)
(whisper, to Hercules)
Both knees!

Hercules touches both knees, then proudly straightens up.

KING LEMMING (CONT'D)
Well done, Hercules! And a dangerous mission it was, I must say. You never know when vertigo could set in.

More SHOUTS OF DISSENT come from the crowd.

KING LEMMING (CONT'D)
(loudly)
Silence!

The restless crowd quiets down once again.

KING LEMMING (CONT'D)
(gesturing to Leo)
In all fairness, this young lad will have a challenge that is half as difficult as Hercules' challenge.

The crowd MURMUR in agreement and calm down. King Lemming reads the second leaf:

KING LEMMING (CONT'D)
The young lad has chosen the
following challenge...

LEO
(sotto, to King Lemming)
Actually, you chose it for me.

KING LEMMING
(clears throat)
Ahem! The challenge he selected...

LEO
(sotto, to King Lemming)
You selected.

KING LEMMING
(frustrated)
The only challenge left for you is
to bring me a single hair from an
eyebrow...

King Lemming pauses as the crowd MURMURS happily in
satisfaction with the easy task.

KING LEMMING (CONT'D)
(menacingly)
...of a wolverine.

The crowd GASPS at the horror. Mama faints. Leo stands still
with his mouth wide-open in shock.

PRINCESS PEGGY
(protesting)
Daddy!

TODD
No fair!

LEMMING 3 (O.S.)
That's not right!

LEMMING 4 (O.S.)
It's suicide!

PRINCESS PEGGY
Father, I will not stand for
this...

LEO
(interrupting)
I'll do it.

CROWD

WHAT?!

Papa approaches Leo from below.

PAPA

(pleading)

Leo --

PRINCESS PEGGY

(soft and caring, to Papa)

Mr. Pedersen, let me talk to him...

Princess Peggy pulls Leo off to the side.

PRINCESS PEGGY (CONT'D)

Leo, you can't do this. I'd never forgive myself. I shouldn't have encouraged you. I'll be okay. Your family needs you. The kingdom needs you, Leo.

(beat)

And I need you - I need you to stay alive.

LEO

I've never fit in with everybody else. They go right, I go left.

(beat)

The rules in this kingdom are stupid.

KING LEMMING

(sotto, to Victor)

Did he just say...?

LEO

All lemmings should be equal. No one should go to bed hungry or cold. And we should walk wherever and how ever we desire.

(beat)

Princess, I believe I can make a difference and I can only do that with you by my side.

With tears swelling in her eyes, Princess Peggy hugs Leo and kisses him on the cheek. Leo approaches King Lemming.

LEO (CONT'D)

(to King Lemming)

I accept the challenge.

The stunned crowd MURMURS in disbelief, then erupts in

CHEERS. Todd and Pudge stand speechless. Papa and a recovered Mama wipe tears from their eyes and smile at Leo as the rest of their children jump up and down in celebration.

LEO (CONT'D)
 (sotto, to Princess Peggy)
 One question: What's a wolverine?

49 EXT. EDGE OF LEMMING COMMUNITY - LATER - DAY

49

Todd and Pudge prepare Leo for his task. Todd reads off a list of equipment. Pudge hands the equipment to Leo.

TODD
 Sharp twig...

LEO
 Check.

TODD
 Pebble...

LEO
 Check.

TODD
 Dandelion...

A confused Leo looks at Todd.

TODD (CONT'D)
 You can find out if it's allergic
 to butter by tickling under the
 chin.

LEO
 Dandelion. Check...
 (beat)
 Butter?

TODD
 Nope.
 (beat)
 Encyclopedia, W edition...

50 EXT. WOLVERINE LAIR - LATER - DAY

50

The WOLVERINE's lair resembles a dragon's lair. Steam rises out of the hole from the Wolverine's thick breath. The Wolverine cannot be seen, but it can be heard SNORING.

Leo carefully and quietly approaches it, stopping about ten feet from the hole. He pulls out the encyclopedia.

LEO

(reading)

Wolverine: The wolverine, also referred to as glutton (that doesn't sound promising), carcajou (what?), skunk bear (ha ha, "skunk bear"), or quickhatch (oh - kay), is the largest land-dwelling species of the weasel family.

(beat)

It is a stocky and muscular carnivore, more closely resembling a small bear than other weasels.

(Hmm, maybe it looks like Winnie the Pooh.)

(beat)

The wolverine, a solitary animal, has a reputation for ferocity and strength out of proportion to its size, with the documented ability to kill prey many times larger than itself.

(sotto)

Oh, please, let it be the size of an ant...

(beat)

While they've been known to feed on carrion (Ugh! They eat luggage?), they are great hunters. Their prey include porcupines (ouch!), squirrels, beavers, marmots, rabbits, mice, caribou (Caribou!), deer, moose (HOLY COW!), and elk.

(sotto)

I think it's bigger than an ant.

(beat)

It's favorite food is...

(shuts eyes and prays)

Oh, please don't say, "lemmings". Please don't say, "lemmings". Beef jerky, beef jerky...

Leo glances at dictionary with one eye.

LEO (CONT'D)

(happily)

Ha! Lemons!

(sees it with both eyes)

Oh, wait - lemmings.

Leo drops the book. He bravely raises his chest, GULPS, and then proceeds to the opening of the Wolverine lair.

LEO (CONT'D)
 (with back showing)
 Hee, hee, skunk bear...

51 INT. WOLVERINE LAIR - DAY

51

The WOLVERINE sleeps. His dark, brown fur, razor-sharp claws, and glistening fangs are impressive. Drool leaks from his mouth.

Slowly, Leo's head pokes around the corner. The gigantic Wolverine dwarfs Leo. Leo quietly climbs onto a short ledge just above the Wolverine's ears. He inches ever so carefully along the ledge. He sees the Wolverine's black and thick eyebrow.

Leo brandishes a tweezer.

LEO
 The rules never said anything
 against using a tweezer.

Leo cannot quite reach the sleeping Wolverine's eyebrow. He grabs onto a root that is protruding from the ledge's side.

With tweezer in hand, Leo leans out over the eyebrow, but before he can attempt to pick off a hair from the eyebrow, the Wolverine moves slightly and yawns. Leo doesn't want the Wolverine to wake up, so he SINGS to it...

LEO (CONT'D)
 (to the tune of the
 University of Michigan
 fight song)
 Hail to your mighty howl,
 Just don't open your eyes right
 now.
 Hail! Hail! To Wolverine! The
 strongest and the best!
 You might eat deer and caribou,
 I bet you'd like salad too.
 Hail! Hail! To Wolverine!
 The champion and the best!

The Wolverine smiles and settles back to sleep. Leo passes his paw back and forth in front of one of the Wolverine's eyes to make sure he is in a deep asleep.

Leo readies the tweezer, slowly lowers it to the Wolverine's eyebrow, carefully closes it on one of the eyebrow's hairs, closes his eyes, and yanks.

Success! He plucked off an eyebrow without the Wolverine waking up.

Leo carefully climbs back onto the ledge. With a SIGH OF RELIEF, he lets go of the root. The root snaps the Wolverine on the nose, waking it up without Leo's knowledge.

Leo proudly struts towards the lair's opening.

LEO (CONT'D)
 (proudly)
 I guess that's Leo - one, Skunk
 Bear - zero.

A PLOP OF DROOL lands by Leo's paws, splashing him.

LEO (CONT'D)
 Oh, gross! Cave slobber...

Leo's eyes grow wide once he realizes that the drool came from the Wolverine. Leo slowly turns to look. The Wolverine's eyes are wild with anger, fangs glistening, and its' mouth drooling in hunger. Its' razor-sharp claws dig into the ground, daring Leo to run.

LEO (CONT'D)
 (pointing behind
 Wolverine)
 Look! A Buckeye!

The Wolverine whips its' head around to look for its' archrival. By the time it turns back to Leo, he is gone.

52

EXT. LEMMING COMMUNITY - DAY

52

The hushed crowd waits for any sign of Leo. Papa, Mama, Princess Peggy, Todd, and Pudge look extremely worried. A smiling and confident King Lemming lays on a smooth rock as his guards fan him.

TODD
 He's been gone a long time.

PRINCESS PEGGY
 He'll make it. I know he'll make
 it.

She puts her paw around Mama. Then, from a tree branch from above, BOOMER LEMMING, while looking through a hollow tree limb like a binocular, gives the play-by-play.

BOOMER LEMMING
(sounding like ESPN's
Chris Berman)

This is Boomer Lemming, reporting to you live from high atop the kingdom of Landsby. Never has such drama captured the imagination of an entire race of mammals.
(spots something)
Wait a minute! I see something! There are bushes moving! Lots of dust!

The crowd begins to get excited. King Lemming sits up in disbelief.

BOOMER LEMMING (CONT'D)
(shouting excitedly)

Is it? Could it be?
(beat)
YES! It's Leo "the Lion-Hearted" Pedersen! Stumbling, bumbling, and he has something in his hand!
(beat)
It can't be! It is! Leo has an eyebrow hair!

The crowd erupts into CHEERS. Papa and Mama hug each other. Princess Peggy hugs Pudge, who blushes. King Lemming stomps to the front of the Main Stage, followed closely by Victor.

BOOMER LEMMING (CONT'D)
(shouting excitedly)

He's running like a lemming on fire!
(beat)
Wait a second... There's something after him...
(beat)
Oh, my gosh, it's huge! It's ginormous! It's a wolverine!

The crowd becomes worried. King Lemming and Victor grin.

Leo huffs and puffs like a lemming possessed. The gigantic and frightening Wolverine draws closer and closer.

LEO
 Enough already, you stupid Skunk
 Bear!
 (sotto)
 Paws, don't fail me now!

54 EXT. LEMMING COMMUNITY - CONTINUOUS

54

BOOMER LEMMING
 The Wolverine is gaining on Leo!
 Leo is almost to the hill where he
 can slide to safety!

The crowd CHEERS.

BOOMER LEMMING (CONT'D)
 Yes! Yes! He - could - go - all -
 the - way!

55 EXT. THE CHASE - CONTINUOUS

55

LEO
 (seeing Princess Peggy)
 Princess! I'm going to make --

With one last leap in SLOW MOTION, the Wolverine glances one of his claws off Leo. The touch of the claw sends Leo flying off the side of a cliff.

56 EXT. LEMMING COMMUNITY - CONTINUOUS

56

The lemming community stands stunned. Papa and Mama look wide-eyed in horror.

TODD
 LE--O!

PRINCESS PEGGY
 No!

Papa begins to run towards the area where Leo fell off. The Wolverine still snorts and looks for Leo. Several lemmings grab onto Dad as he screams at the Wolverine:

PAPA
 Get away from my son!

The Wolverine, paying no attention to Papa, turns and heads back to its' burrow. Papa falls to his knees, sobbing. Mama and the children surround him solemnly.

King Lemming slowly approaches Princess Peggy and puts his paw on her shoulder.

KING LEMMING
 (to Princess Peggy)
 Tsk, tsk. Right into the Forbidden Valley. You have to admit, he was lucky to have made it as far as he did.

Princess Peggy looks at King Lemming with a mixture of sadness and anger.

PRINCESS PEGGY
 (tearfully)
 Oh, daddy!

She runs off. Victor sneers.

57

EXT. BOTTOM OF THE CLIFF - DAY - LATER

57

Leo holds onto the Wolverine's eyebrow as though holding onto a zipline as it hangs over a protruding root.

LEO
 (sotto)
 Well, Leo, look at it this way: it can't get much worse.

MARNI (O.S.)
 Hello.

There, right in front of Leo, is the head of a young Arctic Fox named MARNI.

MARNI (CONT'D)
 Whatcha doin'?

LEO
 (a bit nervous)
 Just hanging out.

MARNI
 Do you want some help down?

LEO
 That depends. Are you floating in mid-air or standing on the ground?

MARNI
 (giggling)
 Silly. Foxes don't float in midair.

LEO

Well, then, yes - I would like some help down.

Marni gets under Leo.

MARNI

All right - let go.

Leo closes his eyes and lets go of the eyebrow. He immediately plops onto the soft fur of Marni. He slides off of her.

Marni, a very friendly and beautiful Arctic Fox, is too young to realize that Leo is potential food.

MARNI (CONT'D)

My name's Marni. M-A-R-N-I. Marni.

LEO

No "Y"?

MARNI

No what?

LEO

No "Y".

MARNI

Why what?

LEO

"I". "I". I get it.

MARNI

What you got?

LEO

Never mind.

MARNI

I'm a fox.

(reciting what she has learned)

Foxes eat fish, waterfowl, and seabirds. We will also eat berries, insects, and seaweed, although that last one tastes like spinach. Yuck!

(beat)

I hear snowshoe rabbits are yummy, but I think I'd take the snowshoes off first. Oh, and we eat lemons.

LEO
 (hopefully)
 Lemons?

MARNI
 Did I say, "lemons"? Gosh, I always
 get that wrong. I meant, lemmings.

LEO
 Of course you did.

MARNI
 Your turn.

LEO
 (uncomfortable and unsure)
 Oh - kay... Umm, my name is Leo...

MARNI
 Hi, Leo! What are you?

LEO
 (nervously)
 Me? Oh, I'm nothing special. I'm
 a... I'm a, er... A moose?

Marni looks shocked.

MARNI
 A mooses?! Wow! I've never seen a
 mooses before. It was even on my
 Bucket List. Do you realize how big
 you guys get?! That's why I'm told
 foxes don't eat mooses.

NOTE: Marni pronounces it "moo - sez".

MARNI (CONT'D)
 You must be a baby mooses. You
 don't have antlers yet. My daddy
 taught that to me. He said, "Marni,
 baby mooses don't have antlers."
 (beat)
 My daddy teaches me a lot.

LEO
 (nervously looking around)
 Uhh, where is your daddy, Marni?

MARNI
 He's out hunting. Won't be back for
 a while. He told me to practice my
 hunting, although he said I should
 start out only with lemmings.

(MORE)

MARNI (CONT'D)

(beat)

I don't even know what a lemming looks like. My Lemming Lesson isn't until next week.

LEO

(feeling safer)

Well, I'll make you a deal. If I see a lemming, I'll let you know. If you know a way to get to the top of this hill, you let me know.

MARNI

Wow! Thanks, Leo. You're the best mooses I've ever met.

(beat)

I may not know exactly how to get to the top of the hill, but I keep a good stink in.

LEO

What?

MARNI

No, wait, I mean I have good instincts. That always confuses me.

The two new friends walk off together.

58

EXT. SPRING CELEBRATION - DAY

58

A smiling King Lemming sits on a feather-topped chair on stage overlooking the festivities as Victor crosses over to him, tapping his glowing staff.

VICTOR

(sleazily)

Bad news, sire. There is still unrest about that young lad's utter failure. The crowd is very upset.

KING LEMMING

Well, I don't blame them. I would be upset with him too, if I weren't so happy right now.

VICTOR

(sleazily)

Oh, sire, they are not upset with the fumbling young lemming. They are upset with you.

KING LEMMING
(surprised)
Me?

VICTOR
(sleazily)
I am as surprised as you are, sire.

KING LEMMING
I went out of my way to make that
competition fair. I cannot help it
if he chose the wrong leaf.

VICTOR
Uh, yes, sire. Regardless, I do
believe that the crowd could use
some good news right now - to lift
their spirits and get their minds
back on the Spring Celebration and
all of its goodness.

KING LEMMING
Good news? And what good news would
that be?

59 EXT. LEMMING COMMUNITY - DAY - LATER

59

The solemn peasant community gathers around the Main Stage to hear an announcement from King Lemming. King Lemming stands at the front of the stage, with Victor and Hercules off to one side. A depressed Princess Peggy stands in the background of the stage.

KING LEMMING
My loyal subjects, I come to you
with great news. We have just been
informed by our contact at the
Ultimate Lemming Party that they
were able to intercept a falling
young lemming just before he
plunged to his death.

The crowd looks confused.

KING LEMMING (CONT'D)
(fumbling)
The, um, young lemming's name, that
we, uh, were given was, um, Lester?
Landon?...

VICTOR
(whispering)
Le-o...

KING LEMMING
I mean, Leo.

CROWD
(hopefully)
LEO?

KING LEMMING
Yes, Leo, is alive and well and
helping the Queen get ready for the
party.

Silence as the lemmings all look around at each other.

KING LEMMING (CONT'D)
(nervously)
Ha, ha, such a nice, helpful boy...

The crowd suddenly erupts in celebration. Princess Peggy
looks bewildered.

KING LEMMING (CONT'D)
Um, Leo says he can't wait to see
his dad at the party.

The crowd continues to celebrate. Many congratulate Papa and
Mama.

KING LEMMING (CONT'D)
Yes, yes, very good. Now then, in
just one hour, our leapers will get
the party started. Those that will
be participating, please begin to
line up at the gathering area.
(beat)
And I think everyone will agree
with me when I say that the father
of the brave, young Lucius...

VICTOR
(loud whisper to King
Lemming)
Leo!

KING LEMMING
Leo will be allowed to jump first.

The crowd CHEERS. Papa nods graciously to the King, who
returns the nod with a smile. Peggy remains perplexed.

KING LEMMING (CONT'D)
The party needs more food!

The crowd CHEEERS.

PRINCESS PEGGY
 (sotto)
 Something fishy is going on...

60 EXT. SNOW BANK - DAY

60

Leo and Marni are approaching one of the last snowbanks left that hasn't melted.

LEO
 How are we going to find Landsby? I
 have no idea where we are.

MILO (O.S.)
 Psstt... Kid, over here...

Leo and Marni stop in their tracks.

LEO
 Did you say something?

MARNI
 I might have. Sometimes I don't
 realize that I'm talking.

MILO (O.S.)
 Over here... Behind you...

Leo and Marni turn around and look at the white snowbank. Suddenly, two big eyes open up, startling Leo and Marni.

It's MILO, a white snowshoe hare. He hides inside the snow. Leo and Marni do not know that it is a hare.

MILO (CONT'D)
 Did I hear you were lost?

LEO
 Yes, Mr. Snowbank, sir.

MILO
 My name is Milo and today is your
 lucky day.

Milo thrusts his white paw out of the snowbank, holding onto a pamphlet. Leo takes it:

LEO
 "Map of the Stars."
 (to Milo)
 I know where the stars are - in the
 sky.

Marni takes a peek above.

LEO (CONT'D)
 (to Milo)
 I'm trying to find Landsby.

MILO
 This is better. This map will take you to the homes of our most famous residents: Meadowlark Lemming, Jack Lemming, Michael J. Fox...

MARNI
 Ooo, I like him.

MILO
 Hugh Jackman, Ethan Hawke, Roger Rabbit, Peggy Lemming...

LEO
 Peggy Lemming! She lives in Landsby!

A chunk of snow falls off from the top. Milo's big, white ears stick out.

MARNI
 Wow! You have big, white ears like a snowshoe rabbit. Foxes eat snowshoe rabbits.

MILO
 (pointing at Leo)
 But what is he?

LEO
 A moose.

MARNI
 Foxes don't eat mooses, but we do like snowshoe rabbits.

MILO
 Well, then, today is my lucky day. You see, I'm actually a... umm... rhino.

MARNI
 A rhino?! Wow! You're going to be bigger than a mooses!
 (suspiciously)
 Wait a second... Aren't rhinos gray?

MILO
 (nervously thinking)
 Oh, um, I'm a, uh - an albino
 rhino?

MARNI
 Milo the Albino Rhino?

MILO
 Yep. That's me. Milo the Albino
 rhino...
 (to Leo)
 That will be five dollars.

Leo searches his "pocket" and pulls out a dandelion.

LEO
 All I have is this dandelion and I
 was saving it for dinner...

Milo snatches the dandelion.

MILO
 Sold! Nice doing business with you,
 kid.

Milo quickly hops away.

61 EXT. A LAKE - DAY

61

Leo and Marni walk by a lake as Marni tells some jokes.

MARNI
 What did the dog say to the cat?

LEO
 I give up. What?

MARNI
 Bark, bark!
 (beat)
 What did the cat say to the dog?

LEO
 I don't know - "Meow?"

MARNI
 Aww, you've heard that one
 before...
 (beat)
 Hey! How about a swim?

LEO
But I have to get back to Landsby.

MARNI
Aw, c'mon, just a quick dip? The water's really warm. It's like thirty degrees.

LEO
I'm not sure...

Marni jumps in with a SPLASH.

MARNI
It feels great! C'mon!

LEO
What about my clothes?

MARNI
They won't get wet if you take them off.

LEO
Okay. I can do that...
(beat)
Thankfully, I always carry extra underwear in my pocket...

Leo can't find his extra underwear.

LEO (CONT'D)
Oh, no! Where is my underwear? I bet that stupid skunk bear stole it. I hope they give him a wedgie.
(beat)
Oh, well, I guess I'm going commando.
(beat)
Wait a minute. I don't know how to swim.

Marni swims up to the shore.

MARNI
Jump on my back. I'll swim for you.
(beat)
You can do it.

LEO
(cautiously)
Well, okay, but not too deep.

Leo carefully climbs onto Marni's back. Marni swims like a pro.

LEO (CONT'D)
Hey - I'm swimming!

Suddenly, the theme of JAWS begins to play as a dorsal fin breaks the surface behind Leo and Marni. As it draws closer and closer to them, the dorsal fin descends into the water.

LEO (CONT'D)
Actually, I think most moose stand in the water. I don't think they can really swim. You wanna know a great swimmer? A beaver. They can swim like it's nobody's business.
(beat)
A bit rude with the tail, however.

Marni TWINGES in the water.

MARNI
Hey! Quit tickling, Leo.

LEO
I'm not tickling you. I'm holding on for dear life.

Suddenly, a huge PIKE, leaps out of the water right in front of them, then CRASHES back in with a thunderous SPLASH.

LEO (CONT'D)
Shark!

MARNI
My daddy says there is no such thing as sharks where we live.

LEO
Then what was that?!

MARNI
I think it was a pike.

LEO
What's a pike?

MARNI
Kind of like a lake shark.

Leo and Marni's eyes bulge as they see the menacing pike coming towards them. The pike's razor-sharp teeth, sparkle in the sun.

Marni does a 180 and dog paddles as quickly as she can to the shore. Leo turns around to keep an eye on the pike, who closes in.

LEO
Faster! Faster!

MARNI
I'm trying! I need a boost!

Just as the pike is about to clomp down on Marni's tail, Leo BITES Marni hard.

MARNI (CONT'D)
YE - OW! It got me!

The bite sends Marni flying to shore, leaving the hungry pike in its wake.

Marni GASPS on land as Leo dismounts. The frustrated pike keeps swimming back and forth near shore.

MARNI (CONT'D)
Bitten by a lake shark! What if it is poisonous?

LEO
I don't think you have anything to worry about.

MARNI
My stomach is hurting. The poison is racing through my body.

Leo looks under Marni.

LEO
You landed on a rock.

MARNI
Oh.

Marni gets up, picks up the rock with her paw, then tosses it behind her without looking. The rock lands on the pike's head, dazing it as it sinks under the water.

Leo dries himself off using a leaf as a towel. Just as he sets the leaf down, Marni shakes to get dry - soaking Leo all over again.

62

EXT. BELOW THE CLIFF - DAY

62

With Leo dressed, the two friends continue on their journey...

LEO

Whew! Let's take a break.

Leo stops with his back to the cliff. Marni faces it.

LEO (CONT'D)

Wait until they see me back home. I may be the only lem - er, baby moose to ever survive in the Forbidden Valley.

Suddenly, a LOUD SPLAT can be heard.

LEO (CONT'D)

(looking towards the sky)
That's odd. There aren't many clouds in the sky.

Another SPLAT, then another...

LEO (CONT'D)

And me without my umbrella.

Marni looks behind Leo and does a double-take. Her eyes grow big as we hear another two SPLATS. Numerous SPLATS continue...

LEO (CONT'D)

My dad has a saying when it rains real hard: "It's raining, um, turtles and snakes..." No, that's not it.

(beat)

"It's raining squid and mongeese..." Or is it "mongoses"? Silly animal. Oh, I remember: "It's raining cats and dogs."

SPLAT!

MARNI

I think it's raining berries and seeds.

LEO

No, I'm sure he said...

(beat)

Wait! What?!

Leo turns around to see what Marni has been watching. Leo and Marni's heads look up and down as they follow the falling food.

MARNI

Have you mooses ever heard of a pulley system?

LEO

This is the food for the party.

MARNI

An elevator would work really nice, too.

LEO

The Queen is suppose to be waiting for it...

Leo steps slowly towards the food.

MARNI

Well, I don't want to tell you mooses how to cater a party, but smooshed food is a downer.

Leo nears the pile of food, then suddenly stops and digs into the food. Marni notices her friend, then joins in with the digging.

LEO

Oh, my goodness...

Leo pulls out the Queen's bent and dusty crown.

LEO (CONT'D)

Marni, do you know what this means?

MARNI

That I can't make it to your birthday party?

LEO

This belongs to the Queen. She's been working on the party for the past month...

(beat)

But the food they tossed over the cliff must have crushed her. And now my Papa and the others will be leaping onto - nothing...

(beat)

Marni, we have to go!

(MORE)

LEO (CONT'D)

My Papa's about to jump off a cliff
and not have the soft landing he
believes! We need to tell the king!

MARNI

I've always said, "Big mooses
should never jump off cliffs
without a pogo stick."

63

EXT. LEMMING COMMUNITY - MAIN STAGE - DAY

63

Throngs of happy lemmings continue to enjoy the festivities.
King Lemming sits on the stage, smiling and waving as
lemmings pass him by.

Victor and Hercules stand next to him, one on each side.
Princess Peggy approaches King Lemming.

PRINCESS PEGGY

Father, I need to talk to you.

KING LEMMING

Peggy! Darling! Have you and
Hercules set a date yet?

PRINCESS PEGGY

Yes - when pigs fly. I need to ask
you something.

KING LEMMING

Yes, yes, certainly. What is it?

Princess Peggy stares at her father, sending him signals with
her eyes. She wants Victor and Hercules to leave.

KING LEMMING (CONT'D)

Yes, of course.

(to Victor and Hercules)

Privacy, please.

Victor taps his staff, whispers something in King Lemming's
ear, then sneers at Princess Peggy as he motions Hercules to
follow him away.

PRINCESS PEGGY

I need to ask you about Leo...

KING LEMMING

Who?

PRINCESS PEGGY

Leo! The one who beat the hawk and plucked the eyebrow off of the wolverine.

KING LEMMING

Oh, yes, the lucky one.

PRINCESS PEGGY

How did he end up in the party again and who is this contact of yours?

KING LEMMING

Well, I...

PRINCESS PEGGY

And if someone can call you from the party, why can't I talk to mom?

KING LEMMING

(fumbling)

Well, dear, I, um, I have royal privileges. Trust me when I tell you that the young lad is happy and in good health.

PRINCESS PEGGY

But Leo didn't even want his dad to jump. He definitely wouldn't want to stay at the party. He would want to come home to be with his family - and me.

KING LEMMING

You? A Princess and a peasant? A trouble-making peasant at that! He should have known his place and followed the rules of the kingdom. But what does he do? He steals berries from the valley, attacks a poor, blind hawk, awakens an innocent, slumbering wolverine, and worst of all - I'm told he constantly steps out of line.

KING LEMMING (CONT'D)

However, the next time I hear from your mother, I will be sure to ask her to send him back home - and speak to you as well. Satisfied?

Pause.

PRINCESS PEGGY
No. Not really.

Princess Peggy sadly walks away.

64 EXT. OUTSIDE THE ROYAL BURROW - AFTERNOON

64

Leo rides up to the Royal Burrow on Marni while holding onto the Queen's crown.

LEO
We need to be quiet. We don't want
to alarm everybody. I'll tell the
King and he can take care of
everything.
(beat)
Stop here.

Marni stops. Leo slides off her back.

LEO (CONT'D)
This is as far as you can go,
Marni. Most mooses are not as
friendly to foxes as I am.

MARNI
Are you sure you're going to be
okay?

LEO
There's nothing left for me to do
except tell the King. He must not
realize what's happened.

MARNI
Well, you can tell me everything
when I see you again. I'm going to
come back and check on you.

Leo gives Marni a big hug.

LEO
Thanks, Marni. We'll go swimming
again real soon.

65 INT. ROYAL BURROW - AFTERNOON - MOMENTS LATER

65

Princess Peggy paces back and forth as Leo enters.

LEO
Princess Peggy!

PRINCESS PEGGY

Leo!

Princess Peggy embraces Leo in a big hug.

PRINCESS PEGGY (CONT'D)

I can't believe it. My father was right. You landed in the party. I knew you'd come back.

LEO

Yeah, and I've got important news for --

(confused)

What party?

PRINCESS PEGGY

The party! You fell off the cliff and somehow ended up at the Ultimate Lemming party.

LEO

No, I didn't. I ended up hanging on a root, met a fox and snowshoe hare, and I learned to swim...

(sotto)

Stupid lake shark...

(focusing)

Anyhoo, I need to see the King. Something is terribly wrong. You're not going to believe it...

KING LEMMING (O.S.)

Believe what, young lemming?

King Lemming enters with Victor, Hercules, and some Guards.

PRINCESS PEGGY

Daddy, isn't it wonderful? Leo returned!

KING LEMMING

(ignoring her)

Yes, yes, wonderful...

(beat)

You were saying, "Lee-oh"?

LEO

Your majesty, you have to call off the leap into the Ultimate Lemming party.

KING LEMMING

Call off the party? Are you mad?

LEO
No, sir. I was down below the cliff...

KING LEMMING
(amused disbelief)
You were below the cliff?
(chuckles, to Peggy)
You see, my dear, he is not only lucky, but a liar as well.
(to Leo)
No lemming has ever survived below the cliff.

LEO
I know! I saw that with my own eyes. She didn't survive.

PRINCESS PEGGY
What are you talking about, Leo?

LEO
The food that was thrown over the cliff earlier today - it squished -
(seeing Peggy's growing pain)
I'm sorry... Your mom...

Tears stream down Princess Peggy's cheeks.

King Lemming, Victor, Hercules, and the Guards all look at one another, pause, and then LAUGH.

KING LEMMING
(mocking Leo)
First, you survived below the cliff, and now you tell us that the Queen is dead?
(to others)
An active imagination, this one...

LEO
But I have proof!

Leo runs back to the area in which he entered and grabs the Queen's crown. He brings it back to the King.

LEO (CONT'D)
(to King Lemming)
I found this...

Leo sees Princess Peggy's face turn to shock. She slowly walks over to Leo, never taking her eyes off of the crown.

LEO (CONT'D)
I'm sorry, Princess.

Princess Peggy carefully takes the crown from Leo.

PRINCESS PEGGY
(tearfully, to Leo)
My mother? You found this at the
bottom of the cliff?

Leo slowly nods.

LEO
It was buried under the food tossed
over the cliff earlier today.

Victor taps his staff and whispers something into King
Lemming's ear.

KING LEMMING
(angry, to Leo)
Liar! You stole this from the
Queen!

LEO
What? No! I found it. It was
crushed by the food.

KING LEMMING
(to Leo)
Silence!
(to Princess Peggy)
I'm sorry, my dear, I was going to
tell you later. We recently
received a report that your
mother's crown was stolen at the
venue today. I never would have
dreamed that the culprit would be
brash enough to bring the very
crown to us.

PRINCESS PEGGY
What? Leo wouldn't...

KING LEMMING
Hercules! Have your guards arrest
this lying, thieving vermin at
once.

Hercules motions to the Guards, who immediately grab Leo.

LEO
No! Princess, you've got to believe
me!

KING LEMMING
 (to Guards)
 Take him to Willard!

The Guards begin to drag Leo out of the room.

LEO
 Everyone that jumps today will die!
 My Papa will die!

The Guards drag a protesting Leo out of the room.

KING LEMMING
 (to Princess Peggy)
 Oh, the horror you must feel. The
 young lemming that you trusted - a
 young lemming with a dark side.

PRINCESS PEGGY
 But why would he make such a thing
 up? Father, don't you think we
 should error on the side of caution
 and postpone the jump until we
 check it out?

(beat)
 I mean, if he's right and they
 can't land softly in the party...

KING LEMMING
 (raising his voice)
 The party is just fine. The leap
 will take place. Everything is
 working the way we planned.

Growing suspicious, Princess Peggy crosses over to Victor.

PRINCESS PEGGY
 Excuse me, Victor. May I take a
 look at your stick?

Victor slowly hands his staff to Princess Peggy...

VICTOR
 Why, actually, it's a staff. I made
 it myself. Very proud of it.

Princess Peggy abruptly SMASHES the crystal into the ground,
 breaking it into millions of pieces.

VICTOR (CONT'D)
 (shocked)
 What?! What have you done?!

King Lemming begins to come out of a trance.

PRINCESS PEGGY

You have been controlling my father
this entire time with your magical
staff, haven't you, Victor?

VICTOR

Of course I have! I was controlling
your father for the good of the
kingdom.

PRINCESS PEGGY

What are you talking about?

VICTOR

With my staff in control, he tends
to be a little mean, snobbish, and
prejudice. But by himself, he -
he...

A scary, dangerous look comes over King Lemming's face as he
gives an EVIL LAUGH:

KING LEMMING

Muw-ha-ha-ha!

VICTOR

(trembling)
He's far worse.

66 EXT. ON THE WAY TO PRISON - AFTERNOON

66

Two large guards each hold onto Leo as they walk to the
prison.

LEO

(to Guards)
I really think I should be given
one phone call.
(beat)
Can I appeal?
(beat)
I warn you: I don't look good in
orange.

Suddenly, Todd and Pudge appear on the hill above Leo and the
guards.

TODD

(to Pudge)
Is that Leo? It is!
(yelling)
Hey, Leo! Welcome home! Where ya
going?

GUARD 1

(to Leo)
No talking.

LEO

(to Guard 1)
Can I whistle?

The guard nods "okay". Leo starts to whistle the tune of, Pop Goes the Weasel.

TODD

(to Pudge)
Hey! That's one of my favorites!
(beat)
How does it go?
(starts singing)
'Round and 'round the la-la-la-la,
The monkey chased the weasel,
The monkey thought la-la-la-la,
Pop! Goes the weasel.

Silence as the brothers look at one another.

TODD (CONT'D)

Gadzooks! You're right, Pudge.
Weasel! Weasel! They're taking Leo
to Weasel Penitentiary!

Suddenly, Marni appears behind Todd and Pudge.

MARNI

Hi, little mooses! Have you seen my
friend, Leo?

Todd and Pudge look at each other, then look back at Marni and SCREAM.

TODD

(terrified)
You're, you're a fox. And Leo is
your, your - your friend?

MARNI

Yep. My name's Marni. M-A-R-N-I.
Marni.

TODD

No "Y"?

MARNI

No what?

TODD

No "Y".

MARNI

Why what...?

67

INT. ROYAL BURROW - AFTERNOON

67

King Lemming now sports a DEEPER, MENACING VOICE as Victor cowers.

KING LEMMING

Victor, Victor, Victor... Did you really think you could control me forever?

VICTOR

Yes, your Highness, I mean, no, your Highness, er, um, welcome back?

KING LEMMING

(to Victor)

I will deal with you later.

(to Princess Peggy)

As for you, my dear, thank you for freeing me.

PRINCESS PEGGY

Father, you can still stop the leap before innocent lemmings fall to their death.

KING LEMMING

(regretfully)

Tsk, tsk, tsk... You are so much like your mother...

(beat)

That's not a compliment, by the way.

PRINCESS PEGGY

(confused)

What - Daddy?

KING LEMMING

(to Princess Peggy)

You couldn't leave it alone, could you? Always the inquisitive child.

PRINCESS PEGGY
(realizing something)
Leo was right. There's something
wrong with the party.

KING LEMMING
There's nothing wrong with the
party. It doesn't exist. It never
did.

PRINCESS PEGGY
Then why?

KING LEMMING
To rid our kingdom of trouble-
makers. At least, that was Victor's
idea.

PRINCESS PEGGY
(to King Lemming)
You monster! You're just going to
let them leap to their death?

KING LEMMING
Buyer beware. Gullible is as
gullible does.

PRINCESS PEGGY
And mother?

KING LEMMING
Your mother was skeptical of the
whole affair - sticking her nose in
my business. I guess she just had
to find out herself.

PRINCESS PEGGY
You let her leap off the cliff
knowing full well that she would
die?

KING LEMMING
(mockingly taken aback)
Of course not!
(beat)
I pushed her off.

An irate Princess Peggy charges her father, only to be
restrained by the guards.

PRINCESS PEGGY
(angry)
Murderer!

KING LEMMING

Unfortunately, Victor seemed to think I was a little rash in disposing of the Queen and that my future plans for this Hamlet were a bit too - How should we say? - barbaric.

PRINCESS PEGGY

Future plans?

KING LEMMING

Oh, yes. Why stop at just a few peasants? I think it's time for all of them to go.

VICTOR

(to Princess Peggy)

Told you...

PRINCESS PEGGY

When the kingdom finds out what you have done...

KING LEMMING

My kingdom will never find out what I have done because your young friend has been taken to Weasel Penitentiary for execution and you will meet the same fate as your mother.

The guards start taking Peggy away.

PRINCESS PEGGY

(to King Lemming)

You can't do this! You won't get away with it! I'll let everyone know!

The guards drag her out of the room.

KING LEMMING

(to Hercules)

Take your troops and spread the news that everyone of the peasants get to leap into the party today.

(beat)

Spare the servants.

68

INT. WEASEL PENITENTIARY - AFTERNOON - LATER

68

Leo sits in a locked cell made of branches. The jail resides in the back of a shallow burrow.

LEO

(sotto)

Lucky, he says. I'm so lucky. Got by a hawk, lake shark, and a wolverine... Hee, hee, stupid skunk bear.

Suddenly, a shadow appears in front of Leo. It's WILLARD (a weasel), the warden. Willard moves and talks like Gollum from Lord of the Rings.

WILLARD

(singing)

Nobody knowsess da trouble they be in... Nobody knowsess like my dinner...

Willard slithers up to the jail cell. Leo looks unimpressed.

WILLARD (CONT'D)

Well, well, what doesess we have here, Willard? Fresssh meat, yesss, fresssh it iss...

LEO

Do you mind, snake boy? I'm waiting for the warden.

WILLARD

Sssnake boy?! You will wisssh I wasess a sssnake.

(beat)

The furry one waitsses for warden. The furry one waitsses for me.

LEO

No, I don't. I'm told the warden is a really scary dude, not some wimpy, skinny shrimp like you.

WILLARD

(taken aback)

Sssk - Sssk - Ssskinny ssshrimpess? Oh, I asssureth you, I can be a really ssscary dude.

LEO

Listen, hinky-dink, I've dueled
with a hawk, battled a wolverine,
out swam a lake shark, and tamed a
fox. You're more like a silly Care
Bear compared to them.

(beat)

I know. We can call you, "Shriveled
Up Bear".

Smoke comes out of an infuriated Willard's ears.

WILLARD

Oh, Willard isss going to enjoy
crusshing your bonesess between my
teeth!

LEO

Speaking in third mammal is a sign
that you lack confidence, you
booboo head.

(beat)

Now tell me what I have to do to
get out of here.

Willard GASPS in disbelief.

WILLARD

Get out?! Wh-?! Gol-! You-!

Willard takes a couple of heavy breaths to calm down. He then
thinks of an idea.

WILLARD (CONT'D)

So young lemmingsesss wantsss to
get out, eh?

(beat)

Do you like to play gamesess,
fluffy one?

LEO

Sure. I'll warn you. I beat my
brothers and sisters in every game
and they're lemmings. You're a
weasel. You've got the brain the
size of a grain of sand.

WILLARD

We ssshall ssseess, won't we? We
will take turnsess giving each
other a riddle. Whoever cannot
sssolve one, losesss.

LEO
So if I win, I go free. And if you
win...

WILLARD
I eatsess yousess.

LEO
Fair enough. Bring it on.

WILLARD
What iss orange and sssoundsess
like a parrot?

Leo goes into deep thought.

LEO
Hmmm... Give me a minute... Orange
and sounds like a parrot...?
(beat)
Got it! A carrot!

Willard GROWLS in disappointment.

LEO (CONT'D)
My turn.
(beat)
What's the difference between a
duck?

WILLARD
A duck and a what?

LEO
That's the entire riddle. What's
the difference between a duck?

WILLARD
Willard needness more cluesess than
that...

LEO
Are you saying you give up?

WILLARD
No! Jussst give me a little
timesss...
(beat)
A goosssesss?

LEO
Nope. The answer is "both of it's
legs are the same."

Willard stares cluelessly at Leo.

WILLARD
What?! How isss that a riddle?!

LEO
I got it right, didn't I?

WILLARD
I guessss he did, Willardsss...

LEO
Time to let me go.

WILLARD
No!!! You cheated, little
lemmingsess!

Willard grabs the branch bars in his teeth and tosses it
aside, leaving nothing between he and Leo.

LEO
(suddenly nervous)
Did I ever tell you what a nice fur
coat you have? Gorgeous! You'd make
a perfect rug.

WILLARD
Enough! Sssseeing ass I am Judge
and Jury, I ssssentencce you to
death!

CLOMP! Willard's eyes bulge out with pain. In an instant,
Willard flies out of the burrow backwards.

A FIGHT can be heard taking place outside of the burrow. Leo
slowly inches his way to the burrow's opening.

69

EXT. WEASEL PENITENTIARY - AFTERNOON - MOMENTS LATER

69

Leo peeks out of the hole and sees Marni standing over
Willard. Todd and Pudge stand behind Marni.

WILLARD
(to Marni)
You are a disssgraccce to your
meat-eating kin! How dare you
interfere with my asssignment!

MARNI
(to Willard)
If you know what's good for you,
you'll just walk away. You're no
match for a fox and three mooses.

WILLARD
(confused)
Moosesses?

FRANK (Marni's father) appears behind Marni, Todd, and Pudge without their knowledge. Only Leo and Willard see the larger fox. Willard starts shaking.

WILLARD (CONT'D)
(regular voice, without
lispings)
Hey! I think there's been a bit of
a misunderstanding here. No need to
be uptight. We're all friends,
right?

Willard gives two "thumbs up" and starts to back away.

WILLARD (CONT'D)
(nervously)
I really think we've made headway
today. Real good talk. So, anyway,
toodles!

In the blink of an eye, Willard is gone, leaving two very proud lemmings and a proud fox.

Todd and Pudge approach Leo.

TODD
Did you see that, Leo? You're not
the only one who's got game.

Pudge hugs Leo and then turns and sees Frank. Pudge motions for Todd to turn around.

TODD (CONT'D)
(seeing Frank)
Holy Bigger Version!

Marni turns around and sees her father.

MARNI
(happily)
Daddy!

FRANK

Well, well, what do we have here?
Well done, Marni, well done. You
haven't had your first hunting
lesson yet and already you've
caught three meals.

MARNI

(confused)
Huh? What are you talking about?
Foxes don't eat mooses.

FRANK

Mooses? You think these are mooses,
I mean, moose? Honey, these aren't
moose. These are --

LEO

(interrupting)
Excuse me - sir? May I?

Frank stops talking as Leo walks up to Marni.

LEO (CONT'D)

Marni, what your dad is trying to
tell you...

(pause)

I'm not a moose. I'm a lemming. I'm
sorry I lied to you but I have a
thing about wanting to stay alive.

Marni looks at Leo as if she does not know what to do or say.

LEO (CONT'D)

(to Marni)

If I'm going to be eaten by a fox,
I couldn't be prouder than to be
eaten by you.

FRANK

(to Marni)

There you go, honey. You eat that
those two and I'll eat the fat one.

Frank picks up Pudge with his paws and opens his mouth.

MARNI

No.

FRANK

(surprised)
What did you say?

MARNI

I'm not going to eat Leo.

FRANK

But he lied to you. He's not a moose, he's...

MARNI

My friend.

(beat)

We eat lots of stuff, dad. We don't need to eat lemmings. Actually, mom wants us to eat more vegetables and fruit, like berries.

FRANK

Berries?

LEO

(to Frank)

They're very good for you. Lots of ox and ants.

FRANK

Ox and - oxidents?

MARNI

That's what I said.

(beat)

Now, if you don't mind, I've got to help Leo save his dad. Tell mom I'll be home for dinner.

Frank sets Todd and Pudge down. Leo and Todd jump on Marni's back. Pudge hugs Frank.

FRANK

(to Pudge)

Don't push it, Chubbs.

Todd grabs Pudge's paw and helps him onto Marni. Marni takes off running towards the lemming community.

MARNI

See ya, dad!

TODD

(waving to Frank)

Bye!

Frank watches them get further and further away as Pudge continues to wave.

FRANK
Berries? Hmm...

70 EXT. JUST OUTSIDE THE LEMMING COMMUNITY - AFTERNOON - LATE 70

Leo, Todd, and Pudge ride on top of Marni as she slows to a stop. Todd and Pudge slide off.

LEO
(to Todd and Pudge)
Okay, we don't have much time before the final leap. You guys go tell my Papa everything we told you. We're going to find Princess Peggy.

Todd and Pudge salute Leo.

TODD
(like a Marine)
Hoo - rah!

Leo and Marni continue towards the Royal Burrow.

71 EXT. BEHIND THE ROYAL BURROW - DAY - MOMENTS LATER 71

Leo and Marni come to a stop.

LEO
Okay, Marni, we need to find Princess Peggy. Do you think you can find her by her scent?

MARNI
I suppose I could do that - if I knew what she smells like. No offense, Leo, but all of you mooses, I mean, lemmings smell pretty much the same.
(beat)
Is there anything unique about her? Anything make her different?

LEO
She's a world champion lemming figure skater.

MARNI
Ahh, now we're talking.

Marni begins to sniff the ground.

72 EXT. LEMMING COMMUNITY - AFTERNOON

72

Barriers have been set up around lines of excited peasants, with guards stationed throughout the area.

Todd and Pudge approach.

TODD
(to Pudge)
Everything is blocked off!

Pudge motions to Todd that he sees Leo's dad behind the barrier.

TODD (CONT'D)
There he is!
(jumping up and down to
get Papa's attention)
Hey! Hey! Mr. Pedersen! Over here!

Papa, standing with Mama and their children, sees Todd and waves to him. Their family looks happy.

TODD (CONT'D)
No! No! Come over here! We need to
tell you something!

Papa obviously can't hear him as he continues waving to Todd.

TODD (CONT'D)
Don't leap! You can't leap!

A guard steps in front of Todd. He looks at Todd with a surly snarl.

TODD (CONT'D)
(nervously, to Guard)
Yes sirree, he can't leap without
his favorite sneakers. Heh, heh...
(beat)
We'll go get them.

Todd and Pudge turn around to leave only to find themselves face-to-face with two other guards.

73 INT. DUNGEON IN THE ROYAL BURROW - AFTERNOON

73

A sad Princess Peggy sits on a small rock. Suddenly, some dirt begins to crumble off the walls. The SOUNDS of something digging can be heard.

Princess Peggy backs away as an entire wall collapses. Marni sticks her head in, frightening Princess Peggy.

MARNI

Hi! I'm Marni. Leo is my friend.

PRINCESS PEGGY

(confused)

Leo?

Leo pops his head in.

LEO

Did somebody call for a rescue?

74

EXT. LEMMING COMMUNITY - MAIN STAGE - AFTERNOON

74

Trumpets blast as King Lemming struts onto the stage, followed closely by Victor, and Hercules. Todd and Pudge stand in front of two guards, the guards' hands resting on the brothers' shoulders. The crowd below MURMURS excitedly.

King Lemming raises his paws to signal silence. The crowd bows before the King. Victor steps forward to read a proclamation.

VICTOR

Here ye! Hear ye! Your omnipotent majesty salutes you that are about to leap.

CHEERS from the crowd. King Lemming once again raises his paws to silence the crowd.

VICTOR (CONT'D)

(continuing to read)

Will the Pedersen family please step forward.

The crowd parts like the Red Sea. They CLAP and CHEER as Papa, Mama, and the children step forward.

VICTOR (CONT'D)

In tribute to the lucky heroics displayed by young Leo Pedersen - who is currently waiting for all of you at the party - it is with great pleasure that King Lemming decrees that Mr. Kenneth Pedersen and Mrs. Betty Pedersen, along with their multitude of children, be given the honor of leaping into the party first.

Everyone CHEERS. King Lemming steps forward, looks down upon Papa, smiles and nods.

PAPA
 (bowing)
 Thank you, your Majesty.

King Lemming once again silences the crowd. He leans over and whispers into Victor's ear:

KING LEMMING
 You will leaping second, Victor.

A frightened Victor quickly turns to run only to find guards standing directly behind him. They escort him away.

KING LEMMING (CONT'D)
 (to the leapers)
 Ahem.
 (beat)
 Let us recite the Lemming Pledge.

VICTOR
 (while being escorted)
 I wrote that pledge!

KING LEMMING AND THE PEASANTS
 (together)
 Roses are red, we have our
 calibrations. We vow to jump off
 this cliff and into a wild and
 joyful lemming celebration!

KING LEMMING
 Say hello to the Queen for me.

The crowd CHEERS.

75 EXT. LEMMING COMMUNITY - AFTERNOON - LATER 75

Much excitement and joy as guards lead the parade of happy peasants to the designated jumping area. Papa and Mama lead the line, waving to the elites. The children follow close behind.

76 EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF LEMMING COMMUNITY - AT THE SAME TIME 76

Leo and Princess Peggy ride Marni as she rushes through the kingdom.

77 EXT. THE CLIFF - AFTERNOON - MOMENTS LATER 77

The joyful procession has stopped. Guards stand in front of the eager leapers.

Papa hops up and down with excitement. Mama and the children stretch behind Papa. Victor shakes in fear behind Mama.

Todd and Pudge pull up the rear, with guards keeping them quiet.

King Lemming takes his place about five feet from the edge of the cliff. Hercules joins him.

KING LEMMING

My precious peasants - are you ready for the party of a lifetime?

CHEERS.

HANS

Hey, Kenneth, betcha can't do a three quarter somersault with a half-twist.

PAPA

You're on!

Astrid passes by, still looking for Gunnar.

ASTRID

(shrill)

Gun - NAR! Where are you, you good-for-nothing rodent?!

KING LEMMING

We have just received word from our queen that they are ready to receive partyers.

CHEERS.

KING LEMMING (CONT'D)

Kenneth Pedersen, are you and your family ready?

On cue, the Guards step aside, creating an open runway to leap off the cliff.

PAPA

(loudly)

Leo, my son, here we come!

KING LEMMING

Commence with the leaps!

Papa sprints towards the edge of the cliff and then comes to an abrupt stop when Marni slides in front of him.

The crowd SCREAMS at the sight of Marni, with many of them running away in fear.

LEO

Papa! You can't jump! There is no party - there never was one!

PAPA

Leo?

PRINCESS PEGGY

It's true. If you leap, you will die.

King Lemming looks extremely uncomfortable as Leo and Princess Peggy slide off of Marni. Leo continues, pointing at King Lemming:

LEO

King Lemming has known the entire time. He lied and created this leap just so he could get rid of all of the peasants in the kingdom.

The peasants GASP.

LEO (CONT'D)

And any elite who complains.

MRS. GAMMELPLASSEN

My husband!

Mrs. Gammelplassen faints. Princess Peggy holds up her mom's crown to the crowd.

PRINCESS PEGGY

And he pushed my mother - your Queen - to her death because she was trying to protect you.

The crowd's mood turns from fear of Marni to anger towards King Lemming. They begin to slowly make their way towards King Lemming.

KING LEMMING

(nervously)

Are you going to listen to simple peasants, uh, peasants? This is fake news. I certified every one of these leaps myself as safe for all participants.

LEO

Then you jump.

Silence as the peasants stand behind Leo and Princess Peggy, glaring at King Lemming.

KING LEMMING

What? Uh, no, I can't. I am needed here. It is a sacrifice that I humbly give to my kingdom.

PRINCESS PEGGY

Then let Hercules jump.

Hercules looks at King Lemming and shakes his head vigorously.

Desperate, King Lemming grabs a nearby Papa from behind.

KING LEMMING

Don't come any closer or I will push him over!

The crowd stands still.

LEO

Papa!

LEO'S BROTHERS AND SISTERS

Daddy!

KING LEMMING

(to Leo)

You had to go and ruin everything, didn't you, you lucky little lemming? Why didn't you just die several times like you were suppose to?

PRINCESS PEGGY

Father, let him go. It's over.

KING LEMMING

As you wish, my dear.

In SLOW-MOTION, King Lemming lets go of Papa and pushes him over the side.

LEO

Papa!

Out of nowhere, Marni snatches onto Papa's pants and pulls him to safety.

KING LEMMING

Where'd he get the fox?

King Lemming mounts an assault.

KING LEMMING (CONT'D)
 (to Guards)
 Guards! The peasants run amok!
 Attack!

The guards and the peasants rush towards each other and begin to fight. The elites sit in chairs, watching the event unfold.

Several guards jump in front of Marni and GROWL at her.

Marni responds with an actual LION'S ROAR. The guards tremble and then take off.

A NINJA LEMMING jumps in front of Marni. The Ninja Lemming puts on an impressive display of technique and moves. Marni watches him for a few seconds and then flicks him away with her paw, sending him flying.

Meanwhile, King Lemming tries to sneak away, only to find Leo and Princess Peggy standing in his way.

LEO
 I'm afraid you have a few things to
 answer for, your Highness.

KING LEMMING
 Peggy, sweetie. It's me - dada.

PRINCESS PEGGY
 It's over, dada.

King Lemming becomes infuriated.

KING LEMMING
 Not yet, it's not!

King Lemming runs towards Leo, crashes into him, sending the two of them off of the cliff.

PRINCESS PEGGY AND PAPA
 LE - O!

78

EXT. SIDE OF THE CLIFF - AFTERNOON

78

Leo holds onto a root sticking out of the cliff's side. Just below him, King Lemming also holds onto a root.

Princess Peggy, Papa, Mama, Todd, Pudge, Hercules, Victor, and Marni look over the cliff from above. Hercules stands next to Marni.

PRINCESS PEGGY

Hang on, Leo!

Leo slowly begins to climb up his root. King Lemming also climbs up his root.

KING LEMMING

Your luck has run out, boy! If I can't be King, you can't be with my daughter.

King Lemming inches closer and closer to Leo.

PRINCESS PEGGY

Marni, do something!

MARNI

Hey, Leo! Are you able to swing on your root just a little to your left?

LEO

(confused by question)
Yeah...

MARNI

Good.

Marni places her paw on Hercules' back and gives him a little nudge. Leo sees a falling Hercules coming right at him and swings his root to the side. Hercules just misses Leo and ends up hanging on King Lemming's root.

KING LEMMING

Hah! Missed me! Now there are two of us.

King Lemming and Hercules begin to climb up towards Leo. Princess Peggy notices Victor standing next to her. She shrugs her shoulders...

PRINCESS PEGGY

Hmmpphh.

Princess Peggy pushes Victor over. Leo quickly swings to the side as Victor passes him by and heads towards King Lemming.

King Lemming's eyes bulge out of their sockets as Victor smashes into him, sending him into Hercules. The three of them fall...

79 EXT. FURTHER DOWN SIDE OF CLIFF - AFTERNOON - MOMENTS LATER 79

The trio of bad guys fall past a happy Gunnar living on a ledge, complete with a berry patch, flowers, bubbly brook, and live-in cave. A sign reads, HOME SWEET HOME.

Gunnar waves at the trio as they continue down...

80 EXT. TOP OF PARTY HARDY CLIFF - AFTERNOON - LATER 80

Marni lifts up her tail with Leo clinging to it's end. Princess Peggy rushes into Leo's arms as the celebration begins. Todd and Pudge pet Marni.

PRINCESS PEGGY
(kissing Leo)
You did it!

LEO
We did it - all of us.

PAPA
I'm proud of you, son.

Mama gives Leo a big hug.

LEO
(remembering his manners)
Papa, Mama, I'd like you to meet
Marni - my best friend.

Papa, Mama, Princess Peggy, Leo's brothers and sisters, and many of the lemmings crowd around Marni to greet her and join Todd and Pudge in petting her.

81 EXT. NEAR THE GROUND BELOW PARTY HARDY CLIFF - AFTERNOON 81

King Lemming, Victor, and Hercules are snagged on three separate roots only two feet from the ground.

KING LEMMING
(to Victor and Hercules)
Well, my loyal friends, look at it
this way: it can't get much worse.

FERGIE (O.S.)
Well, well, what do we have here?

FERGIE, a beautiful, white adult female Arctic fox, stands right in front of King Lemming, Victor, and Hercules. She smacks her lips in hunger.

KING LEMMING

(nervously)

Would you believe that we're - umm, elephants?

FERGIE

(faking surprise)

Really? Well, isn't that a coincidence? I just came from a den meeting where we decided to not eat lemmings for a while, but no one said anything about elephants.

KING LEMMING

(extremely nervous)

Did I say, elephant? I meant, lemming. Of course, we're lemmings. Just look at us.

(beat)

Right, Victor?

VICTOR

(nervously)

Absolutely!

(beat)

Right, Hercules?

A clueless Hercules makes an ELEPHANT TRUMPET SOUND. Fergie smiles and begins to lean forward to enjoy her meals...

KING LEMMING

(pointing behind Fergie)

Look! Fox News!

Fergie turns around to look. By the time she turns back, King Lemming, Victor, and Hercules have started to run away.

Fergie chases after them as King Lemming and Victor run neck-and-neck with one another in front, with Hercules close behind. Hercules catches up to King Lemming and Victor and picks them both up by the scruff of their necks.

KING LEMMING (CONT'D)

Good idea, Hercules! We'll ride on your back.

Hercules places both King Lemming and Victor behind him and continues to sprint away.

KING LEMMING (CONT'D)

Traitor! I was going to be your father-in-law! At least, Victor is a true friend.

Victor then trips King Lemming and continues to run. King Lemming scrambles to his feet with Fergie gaining ground.

KING LEMMING (CONT'D)
(to Victor)
Benedict Arnold! You are a disgrace
to rodents everywhere!

King Lemming, Victor, and Hercules continue to run, with Fergie hot on their tails.

82 EXT. TOP OF THE CLIFF - AFTERNOON - LATER

82

Princess Peggy addresses the lemming community...

PRINCESS PEGGY
This will be the last time we shall
refer to those around us as elite
or peasants. Whether you are rich
or poor, young or old, or male or
female, we are all lemmings and we
are all one family. Our bounty will
be shared equally, our homes made
safe. And no more lines!

The crowd erupts into CHEERS as CELEBRATORY MUSIC plays. Leo and Princess Peggy hug and greet well-wishers.

Leo notices Todd standing alone on the side and approaches him.

LEO
Hey, Todd, something wrong?

TODD
I don't know. I'm happy everyone is
safe and all, but I was really
looking forward to the party.
(beat)
What can we jump into now?

Leo and Marni wink and smile at each other.

83 EXT. A "CLIFF" - DAY

83

The lemming community gathers together. Leo and Peggy, holding each other's paws, stand facing, what appears to be, a "cliff".

CROWD
THREE, TWO, ONE!

Leo and Peggy race forward, jump onto a diving board, and spring up into the air...

84 EXT. SWIMMING POOL - AFTERNOON

84

Leo and Peggy SPLASH into the gigantic swimming pool, complete with a shallow end and a deep end. Two dozen LEMMINGS enjoy themselves in a huge hot tub set off to the side.

Marni swims in the water, with FOUR BABY LEMMINGS riding on her back. Other lemmings, chubby and lean, SPLASH into the water with swan dives, cannonballs, and more.

Berries, flowers, seeds, leaves, and cups of nectar fill a set of nearby tables as CELEBRATORY MUSIC continues to play...

85 EXT. TOP OF A NEARBY CLIFF - DAY - AT THE SAME TIME

85

Willard, Wolverine, and Gyrfalcon stand together looking down at the pool festivities. Wolverine wears Leo's underwear.

WILLARD

Look at that. Disssgusting.
Sssooness we will be over-run with
lemmingsess.

WOLVERINE

What makes you say that?

WILLARD

Don't you know what happensess when
you get a lemmingsess wet? They
multiply.

WOLVERINE

I think you're thinking of
gremlins.

WILLARD

Oh, sssso I am.

WOLVERINE

Doesn't matter anyway. Their
numbers will grow as long as they
have that enforcer as their leader.

They all SIGH.

WILLARD

Oh well. Who'ssss up for lunch?

The three of them turn and begin to walk away.

WOLVERINE

What did you have in mind?

WILLARD

I hear berries are in season. They're good for you. They have antioxidants.

WOLVERINE

I have the most wonderful recipe for blueberry muffins.

WILLARD

Hawk and I will gather ingredients for salad. Shall we say, dinner at six, your place?

WOLVERINE

Better make it seven. I have to tidy the place up a bit first.

86 EXT. OVERHEAD VIEW OF THE HAMLET OF LANDSBY - DAY

86

ZOOMING OUT.

KIM MCDONALD (O.S.)

To this day, the pool party is known in the lemming communities of the world as the greatest lemming party ever. And the party has continued every day since...

Back to our original shot from the beginning, only this time, the perfectly straight lines have been replaced by INDIVIDUAL DOTS GOING EVERYWHERE in the community. No straight lines.

87 INT. COZY STUDY AT THE NATURE NETWORK

87

Professor Kim McDonald, relaxes in her lounge chair. She still wears an Arctic fox fur stole wrapped around her shoulders.

PROFESSOR KIM MCDONALD

(to camera)

I hope you have enjoyed this week's edition of Animal Tails.

Suddenly, King Lemming pops his head out of a basket.

KING LEMMING
Is the coast clear?

Victor and Hercules also appear.

VICTOR
No feeble-minded fox can outsmart
us, your Highness.

Just then, the Arctic Fox fur stole comes to life. It is
Fergie.

FERGIE
A-HA!

Chaos ensues as Fergie chases King Lemming, Victor, and
Hercules, with Hercules once in a while tossing Victor back
towards Fergie.

PROFESSOR KIM MCDONALD
(aghast)
Now see here! You stop this
nonsense immediately! Do you hear
me?
(beat)
No, no, you can't hide on me!

CLOSE UP of Professor Kim McDonald's horrified face as
something has obviously run up her dress/pants.

PROFESSOR KIM MCDONALD (CONT'D)
(high-pitched)
Mother!

ROLL CREDITS.