The Exquisite Corpse Adventure
Cheat Sheet of Settings, Characters, and Plot Lines

by Geri Zabela Eddins, NCBLA

The Exquisite Corpse Adventure is a progressive, episodic story game created as a fun and entertaining national reading outreach project targeted at readers of ages 9 to 15. The story includes a total of 27 episodes, all of which were originally published digitally on READ.GOV and then published by Candlewick Press in hardcover, paperback, and audio formats in August 2011.

Contributing authors and illustrators to *The Exquisite Corpse Adventure* are:

M.T. Anderson, Natalie Babbitt, Calef Brown, Susan Cooper, Kate Di Camillo, Timothy Basil Ering, Jack Gantos, Nikki Grimes, Shannon Hale, Lemony Snicket, Steven Kellogg, Gregory Maguire, Megan McDonald, Patricia and Fredrick McKissack, Linda Sue Park, Katherine Paterson, James Ransome, Jon Scieszka, and Chris Van Dusen.

The Exquisite Corpse Adventure is a joint project of The National Children's Book and Literacy Alliance (thencbla.org) and the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress (READ.GOV/cfb). You can read more about the history of this project in the article titled "What Is *The Exquisite Corpse Adventure*?" on the NCBLA's website (http://thencbla.org/Exquisite_Corpse/exquisite-corpse-adventure-education-resource-center).

This cheat sheet provides a summary of the settings, characters, and plot lines for all 27 episodes of *The Exquisite Corpse Adventure*.

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The Exquisite Corpse Adventure Cheat Sheet

Episode	Setting	Characters	Plot Summary
1 Jon Scieszka "The Exquisite Corpse"	Train rushing through "dark mountains" and "deep woods" at night—no specific country or time period.	Nancy and Joe Nancy and Joe's parents	Nancy and Joe have run away from the circus. They learn they are not orphans (as they had believed) from a birthday card that reveals they have parents who need their help to rescue them—they must "piece together the Exquisite Corpse." The kids worry they are not doing what they are supposed to to save their parents. Narrator confirms that the kids are going to the right place with the right goal (to assemble a very top secret robot) and invokes the reader to "piece things together yourself." Episode ends with the kids wondering what to do . . . and unaware that their train is approaching a bridge set to blow up in 47 seconds when a ticking clock's alarm ignites dynamite.
2 Katherine Paterson "The Lost Clue"	Begins on the train, but Nancy and Joe leave it and "tight walk" the rails to the other side of the chasm.	Nancy and Joe New: Boppo the Clown	Nancy and Joe encounter the sinister Boppo the Clown. Boppo tells them the train is about to explode. Nancy pulls the cord to stop the train. Joe chases Boppo, but Boppo is gone. Moral dilemma: steal a phone so they can call the police? Joe steals the phone because Nancy agrees that "it's better than letting potential killers get away." Nancy and Joe leave the train. Nancy encourages Joe to "tight walk" across the rails high above the chasm to reach the other side. They discover they have lost the birthday card—their "only clue" about how to proceed. Episode ends with an offer of help from a "frightening" sight.
3 Kate DiCamillo "The Found Clue"	On the opposite side of the chasm from the stopped train. It's still night.	Nancy and Joe Boppo the Clown New: Unknown character who "offers" to take the birthday card from the kids	The "frightening" sight is revealed as Boppo (who, we learn, is narcoleptic). Boppo insists on entertaining Joe and Nancy by juggling two meatballs and a bomb. Nancy worries, but Joe insists that waiting is best—he knows Boppo will fall asleep. Nancy catches the bomb before it drops, tosses it to Joe, who throws it away to explode elsewhere. Joe searches the pockets of the sleeping clown and finds the birthday card. Episode ends with an unknown character insisting on taking the birthday card.

Episode	Setting	Characters	Plot Summary
4 Susan Cooper "Dig That Pig"	The river, woods, clearing. Boxing ring in the clearing. It's still night.	Nancy and Joe New: Talking pig (the unknown character from end of Ep.. 3) New: Roller-skating baby wearing hat with "MAX" written on it New: "Albert Einstein" Boppo the Clown	The character who wants the card is a talking "very large, lean, elegant black pig with a white patch around one eye" (who happens to sport the same birthmark on his right hind hoof, a "small red arrow"). Joe throws a rubber rat at the pig, then dives into the gorge. Nancy follows and the two swim to the shore. Hearing someone splashing not far behind, they run through trees until they reach a clearing. In the clearing is a boxing ring. "Albert Einstein" is encouraging a roller-skating baby to twirl faster. Nancy snatches the whip from Einstein and seizes him. Einstein recognizes Joe and Nancy, referring to them as "The Corpse twins on the trail to piece together my Secret Robot." Einstein indicates that the birthday card is a passport and tells them that "Max" is their clue to the next step on their trail, which they must reach before the sun rises. Ep. ends with Einstein pointing the way as Boppo rides into the clearing on the talking pig.
5 Gregory Maguire "The Exquisite Corpse"	Same setting	Nancy and Joe Boppo the Clown Talking pig (Genius Kelly) Albert Einstein Roller-skating baby (who is discovered to be a version of Professor Alistair Sloppy, Nancy and Joe's father)	Boppo and the pig enter the scene. The pig rejects Boppo's pleas to join him in his villainy. The pig loses his disguise (white eye patch) and the twins recognize him as Genius Kelly, who had danced at the circus. Joe and Nancy had tried to run away from Genius. Nancy uses the whip to bind Boppo and Genius together. Nancy and Joe question Boppo and Genius. The twins learn their real names are Nancy Sloppy and Joe. (Their circus names had been Sloppy Joe and Dancy Nancy.) The Sick and Tired Circus is mentioned, but not definitively noted as the circus from which the twins escaped. We learn that Joe is gullible and that he has been told he is a "sloppy" thinker. We also learn that Joe is 90 seconds younger than Nancy. Einstein explains that an "Exquisite Corpse" is an "exquisite replica," a temporal version of a person or robot created from a minor dead piece of that person, animal, or object (fingernail, feather, or battery) using Einstein's warp-speed regeneration process. Einstein notes that regenerating the "corpse of a slain robot" might enable the twins to rescue their mother. Nancy asks, "Didn't we need to rescue both our parents?" As the episode ends, Einstein reveals the baby as the twin's father, Professor Alistair Sloppy. His regressed state is the result of "glitches in trying to generate an Exquisite Corpse." The previous episode referred to the baby as "Max," so perhaps "Max" is a nickname or the clue to some other mystery?

Episode	Setting	Characters	Plot Summary
6 Patricia and Fredrick McKissack "Surprise! Surprise! Surprise!"	Begins near the boxing ring, but moves into a rocky area in the woods. No indication if it is still night or not	Nancy and Joe Albert Einstein Baby Max Talking pig (Genius Kelly, who is revealed as "Axan") Boppo the Clown New: Leonardo Dubenski (mentioned as a villain to be feared, "even the villains fear him") New: Unknown character who appears at the end (Mother's name is revealed to be Elizabeth Verrie-Sloppy)	Nancy expresses disbelief that the baby is their father, and Einstein answers with a riddle, "In one way, he is, but in two ways, he's not." Einstein cares for the baby and puts hiking boots on him. Nancy and Joe notice that the baby has the same Florida-shaped birthmark that their father has. They also discover a red arrow on the baby's little toe. The twins agree that the red arrows must be a clue because they have also them, and Genius says that he does too. Genius announces, "I want that baby!" and Joe bravely steps in to protect the baby. The pig charges into Joe, and Joe falls. Nancy trips Genius, then Joe gets up, grabs the baby, and runs into the woods. Genius follows. Boppo grabs Nancy and insists that Einstein help him navigate the woods (which Einstein knows "like [his] backyard") so that he can avoid all the "bad guys," especially Leonardo Dubenski. Boppo proclaims that he must "capture that baby" and escape the woods before Leonardo "finds out what's really going on." Nancy recognizes Boppo's deception, then Boppo falls asleep. Nancy starts for the woods. Einstein asks her to wait. He promises "to take" her to the answer to the riddle about the baby and their father. The two discover Joe, Max, and Genius sitting together, laughing, and sharing food from Max's *Star Wars* lunch box. Einstein fades away, and Genius reveals much: • Einstein was a hologram created by Genius to say and do things he could not. • Max is their father because he has his DNA, but not their father because he is a failed experiment – AND because their real father and mother (revealed as Elizabeth Verrie Sloppy) are trapped in a time warp in another dimension. • Genius is not a villain! He is from the same dimension in which the Sloppy parents are trapped, and he crossed to serve as a secret guardian while Nancy and Joe grew up in the Sick and Tired Circus. Genius has many names, including "Axan." Episode ends with an unknown character (whose voice is not "familiar or friendly") interrupting Genius just before he can explain the meaning of the red arrows.

Episode	Setting	Characters	Plot Summary
7 Shannon Hale "The Beast Pit"	They move further into the woods, but the episode ends with Joe, Nancy, Max, and Genius being lowered into a deep pit It is still night when the episode begins, but ends with dawn beginning to break	Nancy and Joe Baby Max Genius Kelly New: Dozens of villains Leonardo Dubenski New: Ferocious, biting, noxious beasts	Nancy instructs Joe to do the Flying Watermelon, then tosses the baby to him. They run away from the unknown character with the "unfamiliar and unfriendly voice." The twins and Max cannot outrun their followers, and they are surrounded by dozens of dagger-wielding villains. Max is enchanted with the knives, believing them to be lollipops. Nancy takes on an offensive karate posture, then Leonardo Dubenski (who is dragging Genius) instructs her "not to be foolish" and introduces himself as "Lord of Thieves" and leader of the villains. He is horribly disfigured, with "his rear where his face should be." Joe giggles at Leonardo's appearance, until Leonardo picks him up by the hair. Leonardo explains that the previous night he found something hidden in the woods. When he touched it, it exploded and disfigured him. He demands to know how to reverse the damage. When Genius whimpers that there's "no way to fix things," Leonardo yells to his followers to take them "To the beast pit!" The villains tie up Nancy, Joe, Max, and Genius and lower them slowly into a deep pit, at the bottom of which await ferocious beasts. On the way down, Genius explains he had hidden the pieces of the Exquisite Corpse in the woods until he could return with Nancy and Joe so they could "reanimate the robot and use it to save [their] parents." The Exquisite Corpse had been "protected" so that only someone with Sloppy DNA could reassemble it. (That is why it exploded when Leonardo touched it.) The original plan had been to create the clone of Professor Sloppy (Baby Max) to reassemble the robot with the help of Einstein, but Max's hands were too small and they couldn't wait for him to grow up. Genius worries that the explosion launched each piece of the Exquisite Corpse to unknown locations, but then realizes the red arrows on their toes might serve as compass points to direct them to each piece. Sure enough, Nancy and Joe see that their "arrows" are both now pointing due east. Although "death by beasts" is imminent, the twins experience a renewed hope that they can still save their parents from the other dimension; they also notice that Max is holding one of the villains' daggers; Nancy takes it from him. Episode ends with "a creature with blood-stained teeth" waiting to leap for Joe's throat in "precisely three seconds" as Leonardo and his thieves watch from above.

Episode	Setting	Characters	Plot Summary
8 Natalie Babbitt “A Possible Solution”	In and out of the beast pit Dawn	Nancy and Joe Baby Max Genius Kelly Dozens of villains Leonardo Dubenski Ferocious, biting, noxious beasts New: Sybil Hunch, the local misfortune-teller	A new voice shrieks from nowhere, demanding that Leonardo and his cohorts run or be transformed into daffodils by the wonder baby in the pit. The villains are duly frightened by this threat, and they all run away. Genius asks the voice to reveal herself. The “bent, old woman” introduces herself as Sybil Hunch, “the local misfortune-teller.” She explains that she was reading her crystal ball and saw trouble waiting for Dubenski, although it did not mention the twins, Max, and Genius. Sybil waves her hand and magically transforms the rope binding them into ivy, allowing them to swing out of the pit and onto the grass. The twins announce that now they can proceed with their project “to rescue our mother and father from some other dimension.” Sybil offers to help by looking into her crystal ball, so they all gather round it in a circle. A fish-like shape appears and a voice proclaims a riddle: “If you’ve lost your A, And you can’t find B, Then you have no choice But to go to C.” Nancy exclaims that it means they should “go to sea” and look there for their parents. When Joe protests that there is no ocean nearby, Sybil retorts that the Saline Solution Sea is only yards away, and “perhaps it holds the answers.” Nancy proclaims that they should go immediately. Sybil wishes them luck. Episode ends with the crystal ball lowly emanating the sound of distant thunder.

Episode	Setting	Characters	Plot Summary
9 Nikki Grimes “In Arm’s Way”	From the woods to the sea The twins swim from one side of the sea to the beach on the opposite side	Nancy and Joe Baby Max Genius Kelly New: Angel, “pirate who wasn’t a pirate” New: Unknown character who appears at the end	Nancy, Joe, Max, and Genius walk to the sea as the sky darkens and thunder increases. The kids bicker briefly, but Joe decides to save his breath. As they approach the sea, Genius Kelly reluctantly admits he is afraid of water. Genius leaves the kids so he can find a place shallow enough to walk across. The three kids arrive at a cliff edge and use a vine to rappel down to the sand. Nancy spies a small reed basket and decides this will help her float Max across the sea with her. Before she can put Max in the basket, she feels a foreign presence and demands, “Show yourself!” The “presence” is Angel, a man who is dressed as a pirate, speaks with a drawl, and avoids answering questions. Nancy knows he is not a pirate because his hands are manicured. When questioned by the kids, he says he is “the Angel Who Sat by the door.” When Nancy asks “What door?” Angel changes the subject. Joe and Nancy decide they are wasting their time with Angel, and Nancy puts Max in the basket and walks into the water. Lightning strikes and Nancy sees the reflection of a man and woman in the sea with their faces pressed to a door; she believes them to be their parents. The distraction causes Nancy to almost lose Max, and she is forced to swim quickly to save Max before he is swept away. The two make it safely to the opposite shore. Joe arrives a few minutes later. The pirate had tossed a bottle to him before he left, which contains a key and a note. The note reads, “Guard this key with your life. Godspeed…When you see your folks, tell them Angel sends his felicitations.” Joe says he doesn’t know what the key opens, but Nancy says she does and suggests they go find their parents. As they get up to leave, Nancy stubs her toe on something. She picks it up and realizes that it is a robot’s arm. Episode ends with a raspy voice asking, “What have you got there?”

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10 Megan McDonald "Wolf at the Door"	Beach	Nancy and Joe Baby Max New: Monster Wolf	Nancy and Joe desperately try to locate the source of the raspy, disembodied voice. Joe tries to be courageous and demands the voice to show itself. The eerie Voice replies that he will show himself if the twins answer a riddle. Max babbles, "Wol-wol-wol." Nancy holds Max close. The Voice speaks the riddle: *Thirty white horses upon a red hill* *Now they champ, now they tramp, now they stand still.* The twins guess at several answers while the Voice laughs and mocks them. At last the two declare "Teeth!" at the same time. Upon their answer the earth cracks and out errupts a massive tree trunk that transforms into a monster wolf. The wolf lunges at the kids and knocks them to the ground. When Nancy recovers, she realizes in horror that the Wolf and Max are both gone. Nancy urges Joe to get up so they can rescue Max. Joe is desperately searching for the key which flew out of his hands when the wolf attacked. He explains that he can't leave until he finds it or "we'll never find our true parents." Agonizing choice: Nancy implies that they must separate. Joe protests. The twins have never been apart. Nancy notices that the arrow on Joe's toe now points south, toward the sea. Joe realizes the key must be in the ocean. He sees the arrow on Nancy's toe for the first time points in the opposite direction, signaling to them that they must indeed separate. Joe leaves to search for the key in the sea. Nancy tends to a bleeding scratch inflicted by the wolf. She picks up the robotic arm, but her own left arm hangs useless. Episode ends with ominous statement: "Nancy herself had no inkling how one menacing scratch had changed everything, to the core of her own Sloppy DNA."

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11 Steven Kellogg “A Second Arm”	In the sea, then back on the beach	Joe New: Robotic arm that transforms into a real arm New: Part-human, part-squid beast	Joe agonizes over having to separate from his sister. “Good sense and his natural bravery” compel him to continue. He swims out to sea to recover the lost key. Joe remembers Houdini’s tips for underwater survival and communication. At the bottom of the sea, Joe sees a serpentine creature moving in and out of a cave. He realizes it is not a snake, but another robotic arm. Joe waves at the arm, and the arm waves back. Joe touches the arm, and it is transformed into a real arm, which shakes Joe’s hand and hugs him. The arm signs “Danger” to Joe and points to the cave. Joe tells the arm that he must find the key, and the arm indicates that the key is in the cave. Joe begins to tell the arm how it can return with him to meet Nancy and the other robotic arm when a part-human, part-squid beast emerges from the cave and declares that the arm had trespassed on its territory and is now his slave. The squid tries to seize the arm, but it clings to Joe. Joe tries to reason with the creature, “Let’s talk this over!...I’m looking for a…lost key.” The squid refuses to give up the key and the arm. Joe tries humor on the squid, but the squid continues to fight for the arm. Inspired by his sister’s moral character, Joe proposes that they settle the dispute “in a fair and sportsmanlike manner” via an arm wrestling contest. The squid accepts. And Joe and the arm combine their strength and work together to overpower the creature and win the match. Joe and the arm grab the key and swim to the surface. Joe and the arm continue to “chat” and get to know each other. The arm helps them reach the shore quickly. The two rest, and the arm tells Joe that he hopes to find “the lost parts of himself,” particularly his brain and his heart. Joe promises that he and Nancy will help him. Episode ends with a “distant, high-pitched and agonized scream” that Joe recognizes as Nancy.

Episode	Setting	Characters	Plot Summary
12 Lemony Snicket "The Shadowy Abyss of Our Own Fates"	On the beach Daytime	Narrator New: Associate of the Narrator (quoted by the narrator) Nancy and Joe Arm	The narrator opens the episode by quoting "an associate of mine" and darkly reflecting on the brevity of life. Joe and the arm stagger over the dunes to reach Nancy, who is screaming. When they reach her, they see what is eliciting her screams—an oversized rocking cradle that contains a mysterious morphing figure that constantly transforms from Baby Max to an old man. Joe asks if that is Max or "something else." The arm shrugs and Nancy shakes her head. The morphing figure talks to them. When it is a man, it speaks understandable English, but as the cradle rocks the figure transforms to the baby which can only say "goo goo ga ga." As the man, the figure tells them he is in the "Cradle of Time" and explains that he is their father and was caught in the mechanics when trying to build an Exquisite Corpse. He "ended up traveling back in time. But now time has caught up with me." He tells the kids the journey is almost over. Nancy declares that they should get the figure out of the cradle, but the morphed figure cries "No!" They are instructed to climb into the cradle and use it to travel backwards or forwards in time. Decision: Which way to go? Joe wants to travel backward to avoid "this whole exquisite mess" but Nancy says they should travel to the future so that "our entire journey will be over and done with." The arm is neutral. Joe ponders their plight, "Who could be behind [this villainous situation]?...Why are all these villains conspiring against us?" Nancy gets philosophical and ultimately concludes, "There may be some reason for this journey, but we might not know it until we find ourselves at the end, descending from the Cradle of Time into the shadowy abyss of our own fates." Joe makes a joke, which prompts the arm to playfully shove him, and the three accidentally fall into the cradle "in the direction the twins had feared most."
13 M. T. Anderson "Out of the Cradle, Into the Fire"	Sloppy family home ten years earlier Night	Nancy and Joe (as themselves) New: Nancy and Joe as babies Arm New: Alistair Sloppy and Libby Sloppy New: "Evil, irascible, destructifying," shape-shifting creatures from another dimension	The twins find themselves in their family's living room of the past, an inventor's lab. A young couple hurries in. They are packing gadgets into duffle bags. The man notices the twins; proclaims them to be "invaders;" says "We'll fight you to the last." The twins recognize he is their father (age 30). Alistair demands that the twins identify themselves. Nancy says they came from the circus and asks the woman if she is Elizabeth Verrie-Sloppy. She confirms that she is Libby Sloppy, then she introduces the sleeping twins on the sofa as Joe and Nancy. continued

Episode	Setting	Characters	Plot Summary
13 (continued) M. T. Anderson "Out of the Cradle, Into the Fire"			Libby insists, "We've got to get the babies out of here." Alistair dismisses the older Nancy and Joe as acrobats from the circus which is in town and tells them that the house is about to be invaded. They have no choice but to flee. Nancy and Joe are overwhelmed by the experience of seeing their parents and their baby selves. Joe asks about the birth order (and personalities) of the babies. Alistair replies in a way that makes the twins know their parents loved them. Alistair explains that he is an inventor; he had invented a doorway to another dimension so he could travel through time, but the evil creatures in the other dimension did not like it. They are angry and looking for him. The parents are anxious to get the babies somewhere safe "even if their mother and I are caught by the monsters." The twins implore them to take the babies with them and "love them." This stops the parents. Libby says they don't know where they'll leave the babies. Joe answers, "You could leave them with the circus…where they could learn all sorts of skills." To which Nancy adds, "In ten years…they could look for you, and try to save you from the other dimension." This stops Libby again as she recognizes her kids. She asks if they will be OK in the circus. They reply that they will be sad, but OK, and describe some of their circus moments. Alistair explains that the babies will be fine because they have an ally from the other world—Genius Kelly—who has agreed to watch over them. Libby pleads with the kids to know that the babies will be OK and asks for advice to give Genius. Joe recounts their experiences with Genius as a suggested plan for how Genius should handle them, by first pretending to be a bad guy and creating the hologram of Einstein. Libby concludes that they will drop the babies off at the circus "so they can learn all about how to fight dangers." Heart-wrenching moment ensues before the parents depart. Libby understands who she's leaving behind (but Alistair, seemingly, does not). Nancy and Joe recognize the lives they've missed. Their reflection is interrupted. The creatures are coming! Nancy and Joe demand that their parents take the babies while they hold off the creatures. Joe asks what the monsters look like, and Alistair declares, "Anything they want to! A tree! A wolf! A clown!" but he has no time to describe their true form. The parents leave. Joe and Nancy have no time for remorse. They must stop the monsters to give their parents time to escape and save their baby selves. Joe enters a bedroom; discovers the metal torso of a body, with holes for legs, a head, and arms. He recognizes this as the body of the Exquisite Corpse—the robot's trunk. Arm is excited. Joe screws him into the torso. Nancy screws in the arm she'd found on the beach. A zap announces the entry of something breathing in the lab. Nancy and Joe look at each other in horror. The legless, headless robot begins to move.

Episode	Setting	Characters	Plot Summary
14 Linda Sue Park “Skills”	Sloppy family home ten years earlier, then back to the beach in the present Night?	Nancy and Joe Wolf New: Newly assembled and animated robot (torso and arms), which Nancy names Roberta	A nearby voice promises “to get” Nancy, Joe, and the robot. Joe recognizes it as the wolf. Joe states that they need to get out of there and back to the cradle, which they had already seen outside through the living room window. But the wolf is between them and the cradle. The robot boots up—hums, flashes, walks. Nancy names the robot Roberta. The twins realize the robot can hear them and can communicate by beeping. Joe misses Max, “who had transformed into an adult while in the giant cradle. Into Dr. Alistair Sloppy.” Nancy is able to sense what the wolf is thinking and comes up with a plan. She insists they go to the kitchen, where she gets meat out of the fridge because she knows the wolf is hungry. She tells Joe they will juggle their way out of the house. Joe and Roberta go into the hall, and the wolf approaches them and tells Joe, “I was just thinking about you.” Nancy returns from the kitchen as the wolf is about to spring; her arms are full of meat. “What about me?” she hollers to the wolf, then begins to toss chicken, salami, and ground beef to Joe using their past juggling routines. The ground beef breaks up, but this helps to distract the wolf, which begins to gobble it up. Roberta quickly opens the door, Nancy tosses the remaining meat at the wolf, and the trio bolt outside slamming the door and the wolf behind them. The cradle is hovering 10-12 feet over the front lawn. Joe shouts that they should form a human chain to reach it. Joe crouches on the ground; Nancy climbs on Joe’s shoulders, and then lifts Roberta on top of Nancy’s head so she can grab the cradle. The wolf bursts out of the house. Joe’s feet are hanging off the ground, and he kicks the wolf as it lunges at them. The cradle lurches, and Roberta increases her sound level so that it causes the wolf excruciating pain. The wolf falls to the ground. Roberta swings so that the “chain” becomes a trapeze, and they swing up into the cradle. The cradle rocks and the three slide precariously to one side, but then the cradle levels and stops. Episode ends when Joe peeks over the edge to discover they are back on the beach in the present.

Episode	Setting	Characters	Plot Summary
15 Katherine Paterson "The Gingerbread House"	Begins at the beach near dark, then ends in the woods at noon near a gingerbread house, which stands in a clearing in the woods	Nancy and Joe Roberta the Robot Genius Kelly (who has rejoined the twins)	Nancy and Joe bemoan their fatigue, hunger, and thirst. Nancy admonishes herself for being jealous of the food shared by Joe, Baby Max, and GK earlier in their quest. Nancy realizes how tired they are when she recognizes she has forgotten a basic fact. She suggests they take shelter at the trees and sleep for the night. They snuggle up with Roberta and sleep. Joe wakes before dawn when he hears snoring. He investigates and discovers it is GK. Joe ponders where they can get food, reminding himself that their priority is to find the robot's head and legs. He decides they should seek food from Sybil Hunch and shares this idea with Nancy and GK when they awake. Nancy agrees that she is hungry too, but she insists that they check the arrows for guidance. Nancy also affirms that finding "the rest of Roberta" is the most important thing. They discover that all their arrows point toward the woods, and they proceed in. In the woods Joe smells food, and they see a house with two chimneys. Joe says, "Food!" then runs for the house, but Nancy stops him with her newly strong arm. Nancy says she thinks the house is made of gingerbread. When Joe replies they can eat it for breakfast, Nancy counters, "…don't you remember the story?" Episode ends when Roberta beeps excitedly and points to the roof of the house. They all see that the second chimney "looked strangely like an upside-down leg."
16 Kate DiCamillo "If I Only Had a Leg"	At the gingerbread house	Nancy and Joe Roberta the Robot Genius Kelly Boppo (who has not been seen since Episode 6) New: Unknown character who appears at the end	Narrator confirms that the second chimney is a leg. Joe and GK ignore the leg and eat the windowsills of the gingerbread house. Nancy demands and pleads that they stop eating the house, reminding them of *Hansel and Gretel*. Joe continues to gobble the gingerbread, then detects the aroma of meatballs from within the house. Hearing Joe's announcement of "meatballs," Boppo steps out of the house and surprises Nancy, Joe, and GK. Joe and GK fall fast asleep. Boppo comments that "if the gingerbread is spiced correctly, wonderful, magical things can happen." Nancy asks if he had drugged the gingerbread, and he confirms that he did. The oven timer goes off, and Boppo goes back into the house. Nancy tries to wake up Joe and GK, to no avail. Boppo returns and points out to Nancy that Roberta is "untended." Nancy looks and sees her reaching toward her leg, which is way too high for her. Nancy and Boppo race toward Roberta. Boppo arrives first, grabs Roberta, and claims her as "Mine." Boppo tells Nancy, "I will disassemble her." Boppo refuses to give the robot to Nancy, and instead suggests they go inside to eat a meatball and read poetry while he disassembles Roberta. Nancy has no choice other than to go into the house. She refuses to eat Boppo's meatballs, thinking they too may be poisoned. Nancy tries to figure out how to get out of this mess while Boppo reads poetry…until he falls asleep. Nancy empties Boppo's pockets and finds Roberta's heart. Episode ends with a shadow darkening the doorway, which is not Joe but "another."

Episode	Setting	Characters	Plot Summary
17 Susan Cooper "Speak, Memory"	From the gingerbread house at sunset to deeper in the woods	Nancy and Joe Roberta the Robot: now with heart and brain, providing feelings and ability to speak NEW: Hathi the Elephant Genius Kelly (sleeping) Boppo (forced to continue sleeping) Sybil Hunch (who has not been seen since she was introduced in Ep. 8) In Sybil's memory search: Sloppy parents, completed Roberta, evil creatures, Joe and Nancy as babies and toddlers, Ringmaster, elephant, escaped creature that morphs into Boppo, GK as piglet.	Nancy gives the heart to Roberta, who puts it inside her chest. Nancy recognizes the purring sound outside the house and runs outside to discover Hathi the Elephant, who we learn had served as foster mother to Nancy and Joe at the circus. Hathi explains that the secret circus support system kept her informed of their whereabouts. Joe wakes up from his drug-induced slumber and is also overjoyed to see Hathi. GK continues to sleep, and Hathi makes disapproving comments about him. Hathi also says she knows where the twins need to go next. Hathi smells danger, which she recognizes as Boppo. Nancy says they should leave, but remembers Roberta is still in the house. She goes to get her, but Roberta is sleeping with her arms around Boppo. Roberta won't leave, and Nancy explains it's because she now has a heart; she has feelings. When Joe says he wished she'd found Roberta's brain instead, Nancy takes another look through Boppo's pocket contents, finds the brain, gives it to Roberta, who slides it in next to her heart. Roberta begins speaking in an Oxford English accent. When Boppo begins to wake, Roberta gives him drugged gingerbread to keep him asleep. When Hathi swings Roberta up to her back, Roberta reaches for the chimney leg, but she finds that it is only gingerbread. Nancy and Joe join Roberta in the howdah and discover Sybil Hunch there, who says her friend Hathi had called for her. Nancy tells her they are doing what the birthday card instructed—hunting for all pieces of the Exquisite Corpse so they can rescue their parents. As Hathi begins walking away, Sybil executes a "Memory Search" on her crystal ball, which shows their father finishing Roberta, his dimension-doorway finder, the evil creatures on the other side, their parents fleeing, Roberta turning a key in the door, Alistair giving the babies to the ringmaster, and an escaped monster morphing into Boppo. The ball shows the parents moving between time and place to hide "bits of Roberta…so that nobody would be able to seize the little robot and open the dimension door." Roberta does not remember where her legs are hidden and notes that "only the whole can breach dimensions and turn the key." In the crystal ball, the kids also see GK as a piglet playing with them as toddlers. Sybil tells them that after they have found their parents, they will need to get GK back to his own dimension before he dies. This prompts them to realize they have left GK behind at the gingerbread house. Episode ends with Hathi announcing, "We're here!" They see a blaze of light ahead. Nancy asks what it is, and Sybil answers she has no idea, "Which is a very good sign."

Episode	Setting	Characters	Plot Summary
18 Gregory Maguire "The Regional Conference"	In the woods at night at the aliens' Regional Conference	NEW: Plenty Sassy, alien-elephant secretary Hathi Nancy and Joe Sybil Hunch Roberta NEW: Dozens of egg-shaped aliens, including: Eggy Senior (self-declared boss and dictator), Agent 17 (whose disguise is Boppo), alien whose disguise is a poison butterfly, Agent 24 (whose disguise is the Squid), alien whose disguise is Leonardo Dubenski. imprisoned Einstein (not seen since Ep. 6, when he vanished)	Hathi and the others on her back (Nancy, Joe, Sybil, and Roberta) enter a stand of birches in which an elephant named Plenty Sassy is working as a secretary at a 40's style desk and office setup. Plenty Sassy grumbles about her technologically deficient working conditions and does not recognize Hathi from the Sick and Tired Circus. Hathi commiserates and gets directions and access to the conference. Plenty instructs Hathi to "sling [her] disguise" on the nearest broken tree branch." Hathi walks to the "little alien's room" to find a spot from which the fivesome can observe the meeting in secret. Sybil asks where they are, and Hathi says she thinks it's the Aliens' Regional Conference, which is held once every ten years. Hathi suggests they listen in. Nancy proclaims eavesdropping to be "sneaky and morally dubious." Joe counters and Sybil says that "leaves-dropping" is OK. Nancy concedes that they might learn something helpful. Hathi walks closer to the meeting, and they see light glowing in the clearing. They also see "dreadful pelts" draped across the shrubbery, including the disguises of antagonists they've encountered: wolf-skins, a squid, Leonardo Dubenski. They also see what looks like three to four dozen poached eggs floating in a circle in mid-air; they are referred to as "Eggy-Things." A distinguished Eggy-Thing announces they can no longer wait and calls the Regional Conference to order. Two egg-aliens gripe about Plenty Sassy's incompetence and how easy her assignment of watching over Hathi at the circus was. Eggy Senior requests a report from Agent 17, the agent who goes as Boppo the Clown. Someone announces that Boppo is not there because he is asleep. Other aliens gripe about Boppo's narcolepsy, to which another states that Boppo's problem is not narcolepsy but a liking for his drug-infused gingerbread. Eggy Senior requests a report from Agent 24, the squid. Agent 24 complains they had not been warned about touching the pieces of the Exquisite Corpse; doing so forced a human head on his body. This disfiguration caused him to lose concentration when arm-wrestling Joe. The alien Leonardo commiserates. Someone asks why Boppo did not suffer a "terrible ugliness" by carrying the robot's heart and brains. Another jokingly answers that Boppo is "already defaced enough." This causes the aliens to laugh so hard they are "dangerously close to scrambling themselves." Eggy Senior explains Boppo has earned immunity. He adds that Boppo brought in the prisoner. The crowd of aliens cry, "Bring Out the Prisoner!" *continued*

Episode	Setting	Characters	Plot Summary
18 (continued) Gregory Maguire "The Regional Conference"			Plenty Sassy carries in a smaller Einstein hunched in a birdcage. Eggy Senior says that Boppo "severed this aerial projection" from Genius Kelly. He demands that Einstein tell them the location of the Corpse's memory. Einstein replies, "The children have found Roberta's heart and her mind." Eggy Senior and the others roar, and Senior presses on, saying that her memory "is the knowledge of where all the remaining pieces must be. If we can find her memory…we can keep Roberta from being fully rehabilitated." Einstein tells them it's too late--Roberta has her memory, "Memory is the sum of what is generated between the heart and the mind. It's the Exquisite Corpse of a human life." Einstein also says he left the secret ingredient out of $E=mc^2$. Einstein shimmers, proclaims his love for Baby Max and his thanks to Genius Kelly, then says, "…the missing ingredient is found in the joke book….in the drawer with the *eggbeater*!" Einstein disappears. Hathi backs away in silence.

Episode	Setting	Characters	Plot Summary
19 Shannon Hale "Legs on the Run"	From the woods into the center of a village at sunrise The village is where the Sick and Tired Circus raised its big top 10 years earlier	Nancy and Joe Hathi Sybil Hunch Roberta Genius Kelly Wolf-Alien Aliens "galloping mass of creatures"	Nancy, Joe, Sybil, and Roberta ride in Hathi's howdah as they leave the forest in the direction of the red arrows on their toes. Nancy and Joe acknowledge their need to find Roberta's legs before the aliens do. Joe remembers that Roberta had said her legs could run through time. They follow the arrows to the center of a village and wonder about its lack of inhabitants and its familiarity. Hathi says this is the site where the Sick and Tired Circus set up ten years ago. The twins see Genius Kelly under the tree. Nancy's scar burns with warning and she says, "Go!" Hathi runs toward Genius as the Wolf comes running after them. Hathi stops at the tree and faces the Wolf. Nancy instinctively knows that the Wolf plans to tear Roberta apart. Joe reminds Nancy that she still has the knife from their encounter with Dubenski, and Nancy throws it at the Wolf's throat and hits him. "You can never defeat us," Nancy tells the Wolf. The eggy alien rises out of the Wolf pelt and floats in front of them. Nancy asks Genius how he got there, and he answers that he also followed his arrow to that spot. Nancy, Joe, and Genius use their arrows to pinpoint the exact location their arrows are directing them. They see nothing and wonder why their arrows point at that spot. Roberta insists that something is "nearly here." The twins realize that Roberta's legs could be there, but running through time. Sybil gazes into her ball and announces that doom is coming; they all look in her ball to see the alien creatures racing toward them. Nancy grabs Joe's hand and begins to grab Roberta's, but pulls back because it feels wrong. Nancy realizes the injury she'd received from the Wolf was changing her and wonders how and what the long-term effects will be. Nancy insists that Joe hold Roberta's hand so the trio can grab the legs as soon as they appear. Time is NOT on their side, so they distract themselves with visions of a real home. Their fantasies are interrupted by the sounds of the approaching creatures. Hathi and Sybil insist they will buy them time. Genius agrees to assist "hold off the rabble." As Nancy insists they can't let Hathi, Sybil, and Genius fight alone, Roberta insists that they "Watch with all vigilance." The air turns cold and "wobbly," the legs appear, and the trio pounce on the legs. The sensation of grabbing the legs is a tremendous, high-speed, frightful tug. Nancy, Joe, and Roberta recover to find themselves in the same spot but at a different time and alone. Their friends and enemies are gone. Roberta stands up with legs now attached, and announces, "Now is the time to find a door."

Episode	Setting	Characters	Plot Summary
20 Steven Kellogg “An Angel Descends”	Starts in the village center in morning, moves to the boxing ring, to the Cradle of Time, back to the village center BUT in the same time frame as Nancy, Joe, and Roberta	Nancy and Joe Roberta Genius Kelly Hathi Sybil Hunch Onslaught of pursuing aliens NEW: Alien Leader, revealed as Leonardo Dubenski ANGEL the pirate	In Episode 19 Hathi, Sybil Hunch, and Genius Kelly agree to confront the approaching aliens so they can buy time for Nancy, Joe, and Roberta as they try to catch Roberta’s legs. The previous episode ends with the disappearance of the twins and Roberta as they grab the legs. This episode tells the story of what happened to the three friends left behind. Genius wrestles with uncertainty, but finds his courage as he assesses the spirit and strength of Hathi and Sybil. The aliens charge at the trio to begin the battle, and Genius Kelly uses JUDO attacks to hold them off. Sybil uses her magic to entwine the enemies in ivy, and Hathi uses her strength to wield a park bench against the onslaught. The three hold strong for some time until alien reinforcements arrive armed with electronic pitchforks, lances, and prods. GK, Hathi, and Sybil are herded to the Aliens Command Post, the boxing ring discovered in Episode 4, but now located near the village center. There they meet the alien leader, “a huge, hulking, cloaked and masked figure” with a gorilla body covered in tattoos. The leader removes his mask to reveal himself as Leonardo Dubenski and declares himself “Villain of Villains.” “Invaders, this is your Day of Doom!” Dubenski says. Dubenski begins to issue a challenge, but Hathi—outraged at his reference to Joe as a punk—pounds his head in. Dubenski falls over and is rushed away, leaving the aliens at first stunned then calling for vengeance. Vengeance reenergizes the aliens, who ooze and flow into one “vile, pulsating meringue” that begins to engulf the three friends and render them helpless. A voice comes from the sky announcing, “Angel’s here!” Angel arrives in the Cradle of Time and dismisses the alien blobs, which depart the scene. Angel lifts Hathi, Sybil, and GK into the cradle and they sail away. Angel presses the “naptime button” to put the three to sleep. In their slumber they all revert to younger selves. When Angel wakes them, the cradle delivers platters of gourmet food for each. When Angel asks what’s next, GK says, “We’ve got to find Nancy and Joe!” Angel says they are approaching their timeframe now. They see them in the distance, and the cradle’s sound system magnifies Roberta saying, “Now is the time to find a door.”

Episode	Setting	Characters	Plot Summary
21 Linda Sue Park “Anything at All”	Landing site of the Cradle in the village center where the twins and Roberta had “caught” Roberta’s legs	Joe and Nancy Angel Sybil Genius Kelly Hathi Roberta	Angel, Sybil, Genius, and Hathi experience a happy reunion with Joe, Nancy, and Roberta. Roberta reminds them that they need to find the door, then ponders if she’ll find her head. Nancy assures Roberta that they will find her head. Roberta explains that she needs to find her head soon because without it her hard drive might blow. The twins express their hunger, and Angel offers them “anything” they want from the cradle’s computer food replicator. Nancy orders homemade oatmeal (to Joe’s disgust), and Joe orders pizza. Roberta is provided with a can of fresh air to clean her circuitry. Roberta “shuts” down to rest her circuits while Nancy and Joe continue to eat. Nancy continues to choose healthy foods, while Joe chooses junk foods. Nancy pushes Joe to eat something healthy. He orders a banana, but disgusts Nancy by shoving it down. A light-hearted moment among good friends ensues. Nancy’s happiness is overcome by a sense of emptiness as she wonders how she can miss her parents so much even though she and Joe had never really known them. Nancy’s sadness escalates to worry. Empathetic Hathi strokes Nancy’s hair. With full stomachs and a bit of rest, Hathi asks Nancy if she is ready. Nancy says she is ready to find “a head and a door.” And Joe agrees.
22 Lemony Snicket “Meanwhile, Near a Meadow”	A train accident in a remote location bordered by woods and mountains. The train accident is the one caused by Nancy when she pulled the emergency cord to stop the train in Episode 2	NEW: Pirandello, Railway Safety Officer NEW: Orlando, a girl who had been a passenger on the train and who has escaped from her parents Multiple passengers from the train	The narrator reflects on the “sad truths of the world,” which include the circumstances of Pirandello, a melancholy young man in charge of railway safety who lives alone in a small tin shack where he is in charge of railway safety. No trains or passengers had ever required his assistance during his tenure and no foods or goods had ever fallen from a passing train until “last night’s train accident.” The accident was “good news” for Pirandello. The sounds of the accident woke Pirandello, and he left his shack to investigate and assist. He found the passengers leaving the train and the accident site. No one could tell him exactly what happened, although people mentioned “two children, a bomb, and a clown.” Most of the passengers camped in the woods, and Pirandello returned to his shack. At dawn there is a knock on Pirandello’s door. It’s a “tall, strong-looking girl with hair so short she was practically bald” asking if Pirandello is in charge of railway safety. Her name is Orlando. She had been a passenger on the train. Orlando tells him that she had escaped from her parents who were raising her for her long, silken hair to weave into a blanket. The parents had planned to kill her after they had shorn her hair. Orlando leads Pirandello to a meadow where there are three unclaimed objects that had been tossed from the train: a sack of gummy bears, a shiny wood door with a round silver knob, and a head.

Episode	Setting	Characters	Plot Summary
23 Patricia C. and Fredrick L. McKissack "Promises, Promises, and More Promises"	Begins at the landing site of the Cradle in the village center where the twins and Roberta had "caught" Roberta's legs Nancy, Joe, and GK travel north through the woods where they encounter the wolves Nancy, Joe, and GK arrive at Pirandello's shack Ends back at the village center	Joe and Nancy Genius Kelly Angel Sybil Hathi Roberta NEW: Wolf Pack NEW: Granite, the alpha wolf Pirandello Orlando	This episode picks up where Episode 21 left off. Genius Kelly and Joe admit they are confused about how and where to find Roberta's head and the door to the other dimension. Nancy insists they can't give up; otherwise, Roberta's systems will blow and the twins won't find their parents. We learn that Nancy has been changing since the wolf attack—she is stronger, faster, hungrier, and has a better sense of smell. Genius announces that his red arrow is spinning. Nancy and Joe notice their arrows are also spinning—counter-clockwise. Genius suggests it means they should go back to the beginning, which Angel suggests might be the beginning "of this drama." Nancy realizes they should go back to the site of the train accident (from Ep. 2) in current time. Sybil says she foresees only Joe, Nancy, and Genius going. Roberta agrees that she, Sybil, Hathi, and Angel should stay behind since they were not with them. Nancy sees that the arrows are pointing north, and Sybil says the way seems clear. Nancy, Joe, and Genius depart. Sybil says she and the others will wait at their current location for them to return. The three walk through the night and stop at dawn to eat and sleep. Joe wakes up to find Nancy is not there. Genius wakes too and he and Joe discover Nancy surrounded by a pack of wolves. The wolves are licking Nancy and wagging their tails. Nancy encourages Joe and Genius to come over. Nancy explains the wolves are angry that the aliens have been using their bodies and damaging their reputation. She further explains that Granite (the alpha wolf) told her the wolf bit put wolf DNA in her system, so she can communicate with them, but for a limited time. Nancy promises she will speak for the wolves as a human ally. The wolves promise to help the twins find the head and the door. Granite tells Nancy about a path that leads to a railroad employee's shack where they had seen a man and woman take a door and head. The trio arrive at Pirandello's shack, which has a door that Nancy says looks "out of place." They knock, and Pirandello greets them, explains he has been expecting them, knowing they are there for the head or the door or both. Pirandello says he "had a feeling" that the head and door had value, and he plans to "cash in." Pirandello's greediness shows itself again when he refuses to give Genius any gummy bears and says that Orlando rejected his marriage proposal because he would not share them with her. Pirandello demands $500,000 cash for the head, but Genius negotiates and offers to include Pirandello in a book about their adventure. Pirandello agrees to give them the head, but not the door. The trio rush back to the village and get the head on Roberta just in time. Episode ends with Joe stating they need to go back for the door. Sybil notes that it is probably "well hidden," but Nancy says it is "in plain view."

Episode	Setting	Characters	Plot Summary
24 Natalie Babbitt "When Is a Door Not a Door?"	Into the woods, then into a store that sells objects made of wood	Nancy and Joe Genius Kelly NEW: Doris the Dormouse NEW: Voice, like a giant's voice	Nancy, Joe, and Genius Kelly set off to find the door. As they walk Nancy talks more about the wolves and says they told her they must have a door, "…a door would be grand for opening the way to finding our own family." The wolves also told her they would see a NEW STORE in the woods that sells doors and other stuff made of wood, which is operated by a dormouse. They walk deeper into the woods and discover the store with a sign that says "GRAND OPENING" and a picture of a human foot with a red arrow pointing toward the building's door. There is also a poster that says, "This Is The Place." Nancy wonders if this is the real place where they can find the real door to their parents. An oversized dormouse opens the door and invites Nancy, Joe, and Genius inside. The dormouse explains they are having a sale on wooden shoes with "souls." She introduces herself as Doris. Joe introduces himself, Nancy, and Genius to Doris. Doris talks about her inventory: truth-picks, close-pins, trunks, dog carvings. Doris suggests they leave their names and addresses so she can send them a card to order birthday presents. When Joe says their names are "Joe and Nancy Sloppy," "a thundering racket burst from the back of the store." Doris goes back then returns to explain that the doors have "all gone crazy." The doors keep opening and shutting, except the big blue one. A voice is yelling at the blue door telling it to shut up. Doris says the blue door seems to be forced shut with close-pins in the hinges. Nancy goes to investigate and sees many different doors all opening and shutting, except the blue door. Nancy discovers the letters "A.S." on the blue door and hollers to Joe that it is their father's door (Alistair Sloppy), but the voice says the "A.S." stands for "Always shut." Nancy reaches for the doorknob, but the voice warns her, "If you touch that doorknob, it will be the end for you." The blue door makes a "yearning, groaning noise," then all becomes quiet and the doors become still. The episode ends with Nancy standing helpless, "…trying her very best to keep from weeping."

Episode	Setting	Characters	Plot Summary
25 Jack Gantos "Que Sera, Sera."	Begins in Doris' store, then proceeds into the woods	Doris the Dormouse Genius Kelly Nancy and Joe NEW: Advance scouts for the Eggy-Thing Invasion Force	The silence makes Doris nervous, and she begins singing "Que sera, sera!" Genius Kelly joins her, and the twins ask what they are singing about. Genius says they are singing about fate, "About not knowing what the future will be, yet having to accept without disappointment what the future will offer each one of us." Joe suggests they open the blue door and "embrace [their] fate," but Genius explains that "fate is not always your friend." Nancy protests; they should open the door because their parents might be behind it. Joe agrees, and the twins explain they would be happy to live in the circus again if they could only be reunited with their parents. Doris declares that the twin's lives are changed forever and explains there is no going back to the past. Joe agrees and reaches again for the door, but Genius knocks his hand away. Nancy becomes suspicious of Genius' motives, but he assures them that his duty is to protect them. Genius tells Nancy and Joe to look at the ooze coming out of the door's mail slot. Genius explains that the oozing drips are the "…advance scouts of an Eggy-Thing invasion force." Genius knows this because, as a pig, he has been taught to "…know the smell of an egg means doom for our porcine breed." The ooze develops "phlegmy tendrils which seemed to reach for their legs," and Genius declares the worst will happen if they do not completely seal the door. Nancy argues that sealing the door will prevent them from rescuing their parents. Genius retorts that not sealing the door will cause the death of the twins. Choice: have the parents find the twins dead, or have the children find the parents dead? Nancy rejects both options. Then Doris suggests they use the coffins from her store to block the mail slot. The foursome works together to stack the coffins to seal the door. When Doris tells Genius to get some wood glue, the twins notice Genius is not there. They see him running into the woods. Joe quotes Sir Isaac Newton, "For every action there is a reaction." Then adds, "…and for every front door there is a back door." Nancy says that Genius is heading for Pirandello's' door. The twins follow Genius but lose track of him, and both Nancy and Joe each recite a quote about loneliness. Joe worries that they are doomed, then Nancy dismisses that notion and points out a clue—a toe impression in the dirt with an arrow on it. Episode ends with a renewed sense of hope as the twins follow the toe to run after Genius.

***The Exquisite Corpse Adventure* Cheat Sheet**

Episode	Setting	Characters	Plot Summary
26 M. T. Anderson "The Final Scramble"	Multiple locations in the woods, including Pirandello's shack and Doris' store	Nancy and Joe Sybil Hunch Angel Roberta Hathi Eggy-Thing Invasion Force Costumed Eggy-Thing's (gorillas, elephants, wolves, clown) Genius Kelly Pirandello Orlando Alistair and Libby Sloppy Wolves, including one named Virginia Sick and Tired Circus (lions, elephants, and clowns)	Nancy and Joe continue running toward Pirandello's shack. Simultaneously, their friends Sybil, Angel, Roberta, and Hathi are searching for them. AND, the advance scouts of the Eggy-Thing invasion are thrashing against the now sealed door in Doris' store, trying to break through. AND, the costumed aliens (gorillas, elephants, wolves, and "one angry clown") communicate with the alien scouts by walkie-talkie as they march to the store to set them free. **"**For years [the Eggy-Things] had prepared to invade through the holes that Alistair Sloppy had opened up. And now, this very night was the moment for the grand attack." As Nancy and Joe approach Pirandello's shack (having followed the marks left by Genius), Nancy proclaims she is convinced that their parents are behind the door at the shack. The twins arrive at the shack to see Genius arguing with Pirandello, who demands $10,000 for the door. The two argue back and forth. Genius becomes exasperated and declares the need for the door, "There's no time to lose." Pirandello agrees with the urgency to close their "deal" because he has to flag the conductor on the oncoming train to stop before it hits the demolished bridge. After more bargaining, Joe says it's "too bad" because the door does not belong to Pirandello, and Joe pulls out the key. Pirandello backs down but asks for $10 so he can buy a train ticket to find and reunite himself with Orlando. Joe inserts the key into the door. It fits. He grabs Nancy's hand so they can unlock the door together. They open the door, but alas, all they see is the inside of Pirandello's shack. Disappointment ensues, then Joe recalls Sybil's vision of Roberta turning the key in the door. Then, Roberta shows up, "I believe you're looking for me?" Joe hands the key to Roberta, who says, "And so, ten years later, I fulfill my purpose." Roberta inserts the key and opens the door. "And the door opened while staying closed." Inside are Alistair and Libby Sloppy. The family is reunited with joyous embraces! The friendly wolves arrive and report to Nancy that the costumed aliens have opened the door in Doris' store and freed the Eggy-Thing invasion force. The aliens will be there any minute. A wolf named Virginia also reports that Orlando is still in the woods. Regarding the impending invasion, Alistair says, "If life gives you eggs, make an omelet." Pirandello remarks that he needs to stop the approaching train, which is carrying the Sick & Tired Circus. Episode ends with night falling. The train and the eggy aliens are both nearing the side of the forest where the reunited family stands with their friends: "…a few friends stood between an invasion of eggs and the fate of the world."

Episode	Setting	Characters	Plot Summary
27 Katherine Paterson “Over Easy”	In the woods by the site of the exploded train tracks	Nancy and Joe Alistair and Libby Sloppy Angel Genius Kelly Hathi Sybil Hunch Roberta Pirandello Orlando Eggy-Things (without costumes) Boppo Sick and Tired Circus: ringmaster, lions, elephants, clowns, headless woman, monkey.	Nancy takes charge and tells Pirandello to stop the train and ask the ringmaster to set up the circus tent to lure in the approaching aliens. Upon Angel’s suggestion, the family and friends rush to help set up the tent. The train is stopped just in time, and the tent is raised in time for the Eggy-Things to stream in from the woods. The ringmaster announces the “greatest little show on earth.” The aliens yell that they would prefer extraterrestrial jokes. Angel suggests they need the aliens’ help for that, and the aliens reply “the yolk” with be on them, followed by deathly salmonella. The aliens begin a series of punning jokes and knock-knock jokes, and the friends “egg” them on and refuse to laugh. One alien proposes a “yolk off,” and the yellow Eggy-Things begin to swirl and scramble themselves, while the “whites” watch. Nancy tells everyone to begin their circus acts, and their frenzy “whips” the white aliens into a giant meringue. Joe executes his fire juggling act to toast the meringue. Angel and the elephants pile the scrambled yolks and meringue into the Cradle of Time. Just when Angel is ready to ship off the loaded Cradle, Boppo stops them all by announcing he has hypnotized Mr. and Mrs. Sloppy. He announces his plan to rescue his fellow aliens, thrust the Sloppy parents into the Cradle, and bomb the place. Nancy suggests they all sing, and Boppo falls fast asleep to their joint lullaby. Angel throws Boppo and his bomb into the Cradle with the other aliens and ships them all off “toward the creation of the universe.” With the crisis averted, the Sloppy family and their circus friends say their good-byes. Pirandello seeks out Orlando. Angel and Sybil go off together. Roberta undoes the hypnotic spell cast on the Sloppy parents, and Professor Sloppy thanks her for all her services. The professor urges Roberta to return to her own dimension along with Genius Kelly as a companion. Before departing, Genius Kelly announces the twins’ real names, Josephus and Natochka. The parents apologize and agree the kids can continue to be called Joe and Nancy. Genius asks for one last joke before he leaves, and Joe complies with a sentimental knock-knock joke. The pig and Roberta leave through the door. Joe remembers the birthday card that started their adventure, and Nancy remembers how they had received it at the Elephant Clown Party. Hathi announces the tent is set up to complete the party now. When the party ends and it’s time for the Sloppys to depart, Hathi invites the reunited Sloppy family to live with the circus. Alistair, Libby, Joe, and Nancy all agree this will be a wonderful home for them, and thus they all lived “happily ever after.”

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