

THE BREMEN TOWN MUSICIANS AND OTHER CREATURES

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The Bremen Town Musicians and Other Creatures

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by Sarah Hearn

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Character Profiles

- John McDonald: The old cranky farmer who wants to replace all his old animals because he thinks they are not useful anymore.
- Hilda McDonald: The wife of old McDonald. She is a little daffy and wants to keep all the old animals and let them live out their lives in luxury.
- Chanter/The Donkey: The donkey is overweight and very slow but it has a good mind. He/she is very tone deaf and loud when it sings. He/she is the leader of the Bremen Town musicians.
- Anciano/The Dog: The dog is very lazy and falls asleep often. It usually gets discouraged and lies down on the ground looking dejected. He/she is easily encouraged, by the other musicians. The dog howls off-key when it sings.
- Songe/The Cat: The cat has arthritis and would rather not chase mice anymore. He/she does not like to be dirty and is fearful about everything. The cat sounds like someone is stepping on its tail when it sings.
- Belemente Chanticleer/
The Rooster: The rooster still struts his stuff even though he forgets to crow in the morning. He knows when its time to run if trouble is around. When he crows he sounds like a rusty door hinge.
- Ivan the Woodsman: He is a laid back guy with very few worries. He is more concerned with eating snacks and napping than hunting.
- Henry the Woodsman: Ivan's twin brother. He acts and thinks just like his brother.
- Tiger Lily/The Fairy: A feisty fairy with attitude. She's always ready for a fight and takes her role as guardian of the forest way too seriously. She prefers a quiet forest.
- Lady Slipper/
The Fairy: A small but bossy creature with no rhythm. When she dances, she usually trips or runs into things. She hates noise and also prefers the forest to be quiet.
- Wise Owl: A levelheaded creature that sets things right by asking questions and finding answers.
- Hungry Wolf: The wolf is flamboyant but talks with a very pronounced lisp. Its favorite pastime is eating anything it can forage in the forest. Has a secret about grandmother's whereabouts.
- Heathcliff the
Horrible: He is the leader of the robbers. He has very bad table manners and

is the loudest one.

Stephan the Stinky: This robber is constantly scratching himself. He never bathes. They keep him around because he is Heathcliff's brother.

Thor the Giant: This robber is the tallest but certainly not the brightest. He usually does anything anyone tells him to. He follows the pack. He has the largest appetite.

Milchor the Midget: This robber is ornery and impatient. He hates to be down wind of Stephan. He usually gets stuck doing the dirty work. Because of his size, he can sneak up on things better than the other robbers.

Narrator: An adult plays this character.

THE BREMEN TOWN MUSICIANS
AND OTHER CREATURES

Act 1 Scene 1

Set: The farm of John and Hilda.

NARRATOR:

Once long ago, in a land far away, there lived an old farmer and his wife. One by one, the animals that had faithfully worked on the farm, began to get old and become feeble.

(Curtain Opens: *Peer Gynt Suite #1 Morning Song*—John and Hilda are standing in the yard. ENTER the donkey carrying a small bundle of straw. It sits down every couple of feet and rests.)

JOHN: Hilda, I think our donkey is getting old.

HILDA: What shall we do?

JOHN: Any creature that cannot pull its weight on the farm must be sent away. We cannot afford to keep idle things around here.

HILDA: But John, Chanter has been with us for fifteen years! Can't we just put the donkey out to pasture?

JOHN: Now Hilda, we've talked about this before. The donkey would just eat and eat and become too fat. Our grass would waste away and we would have nothing for the younger animals to eat.

HILDA: Surely there's a better way.

JOHN: I will call the village butcher in the morning.

NARRATOR:

The donkey, Chanter, was listening to the conversation the whole time. Fearing for his life, he sneaked off to hide in the forest, when everyone had gone to sleep.

(ENTER the Farmer and his wife the next morning)

JOHN: I can't imagine what has happened to that old beast.

HILDA: Well I'm glad he's gone. I just couldn't bear the thought of Chanter being made into glue.

JOHN: Hum...(forgetting about the Donkey he fixes his eyes on the old dog) have you noticed how sluggish that old blue dog has become?

HILDA: Now, John...Anciano has been a fine hound all these years.

JOHN: The other day we were out hunting in the forest. Anciano had the scent of a fat rabbit in his nostrils, so I let him go.

HILDA: See I told you he's still useful.

JOHN: Useful! I found him asleep not 20 yards later. And dinner was nowhere to be found. I still have a stomachache from that turnip soup you made last night.

HILDA: Sorry! (indignant) What will you do with old blue?

JOHN: I think I'll just lead him into the forest tomorrow and let him go. He'll be on his own and I won't have to deal with him anymore. I don't have time for hounds that can't hunt.

NARRATOR:
Anciano was pretending to be asleep the whole time. When the farmer and his wife left, he hobbled away into the forest. Before too long he met the old donkey.

CHANTER: Anciano! What are you doing here. It is so good to see you.

ANCIANO: I ran away from the farm. Farmer John didn't want me anymore because I'm so old. (He begins to sob)

CHANTER: I know the feeling. I was almost made into a pot of glue myself.

ANCIANO: What are we going to do? We're so old and feeble.

CHANTER: I have been thinking about that all night. I am going to Bremen Town. I have a pretty fair voice, for a donkey, and I'm going to be a musician. Care to join me?

ANCIANO: That's a great idea! I can sing bass and you can sing tenor!

CHANTER: That's the spirit! Do you know "Mary Had a Little Lamb?"

(EXIT donkey braying and dog barking together. ENTER John and Hilda)

HILDA: John, have you seen old blue? I packed a nice bag of bones for him. At least he'll have something to eat for a little while in the forest.

JOHN: No, I haven't seen that old hound. He's probably sleeping in the barn.

HILDA: Speaking of the barn, have you noticed that the mice population is increasing in there?

JOHN: Don't tell me that lazy, good for nothin' cat isn't taking care of things!

HILDA: Oh! I wish I hadn't said anything. (spoken nervously)

JOHN: Where is THAT CAT?

HILDA: Uh...maybe she's in the barn now doing her job?

JOHN: She's probably sitting on that fluffy pillow you gave her near the fire.

HILDA: You leave Songe alone!

JOHN: Here Kitty, kitty! (pushes Hilda aside)

NARRATOR:
Songe heard the farmer coming and scurried out the back door and into the forest. Songe was a mangy old tabby cat with arthritis. She barely managed to make it under a fern before running out of

breath.

HILDA: See, I told you she's out in the barn.

JOHN: We'll see....

(John and Hilda walk out outside toward the barn. They notice the rooster walking back and forth in the yard scratching in the dirt).

JOHN: Hilda, have you noticed that old rooster has stopped crowing in the morning? I believe it's time for chicken and dumplings.

(Instantly the rooster starts crowing madly—John and Hilda walk by looking at it like its crazy.)

HILDA: Well, I guess you were mistaken.

JOHN: Are you sure it's all right? Looks deranged to me.

(EXIT John and Hilda. The rooster stops crowing, looks around and makes a break for the forest).

Scene 2

Set: On the Edge of the Forest

ROOSTER: Oh, my! It's so dark in here. How will I ever know when its time to crow?

SONGE: Look at this dirty ground. I can't sleep here my fur will get soiled.

(Chanticleer and Songe are walking backwards and bang into each other)

ROOSTER: Ouch! Watch where you're going!

SONGE: You banged into me!

ROOSTER: Say, don't I know you? You look familiar. My memory isn't what it used to be, so I could be wrong.

SONGE: Your voice sounds familiar to me too. (Looking skeptically)
Aren't you farmer John's rooster? You aren't here to spy on me
are you?

ROOSTER: No! I'm running for my life. Farmer John was going to make
me his next meal—chicken and dumplings!

SONGE: I am running away too. I just can't take chasing mice anymore.
I need some rest. My bones are rickety.

ROOSTER: What are we going to do?

(ENTER the donkey and the dog)

CHANTER: Well look at this! Songe and Belemente Chanticleer. What are
you doing here?

SONGE: Fleeing for our lives!

ANCIANO: We can relate to that.

CHANTER: Say Chanticleer, you can sing can't you?

ROOSTER: Of course I can sing. In my day, the hens all said I
had a golden voice.

ANCIANO: Are you thinking what I'm thinking?

CHANTER: Yes! Why don't the two of you join us? We're on our way to
Bremen Town to become musicians.

SONGE: How will we get there? We won't have to sleep in the forest
will we?

ROOSTER: Songe, what have we got to lose?

Cat/Rooster: We'll do it! (spoken together)

CHANTER: It's all settled then. Let's go. I saw the trail just up yonder a
little way.

(EXIT all exit deeper into the forest)

Scene 3

Set: Deep in the Forest

NARRATOR:

(*Norwegian Woods* excerpt) A couple of woodsmen enter the woods hunting turkeys. Neither one is very good at hunting and has never shot anything. They quickly become discouraged and decide to rest.

(The hunters are twin brothers and their movements are mirrored. Both sit down, open their nap sacks and begin eating twinkies)

IVAN: Henry, I think we're lost again and my stomach is protesting with hunger.

HENRY: Ivan, my stomach protests as well. Perhaps a rest would do us good.

IVAN: I don't believe hunting is everything father said it would be.

HENRY: Perhaps we have chosen a forest that is empty.

IVAN: Don't be silly. There's no such thing as an empty forest. The animals are just hiding or asleep.

(Various animals peek out from behind the trees and make faces at the hunters).

HENRY: Why don't we take a nap? When we awaken, perhaps we will see a wild turkey out and about.

IVAN: Good idea. All this hunting really makes me sleepy. It's funny, I'm not hungry anymore and we haven't caught a thing.

(The woodsman lay down to take a nap. ENTER the musicians)

ANCIANO: Stop! I smell danger. (The hound stops in its tracks and points toward the hunters.)

SONGE: Danger! (The cat looks around terrified and hides behind Chanter. She runs behind a tree when he leaves.)

CHANTER: Wait here. I'll go check it out. (The donkey sneaks up behind a tree and sees the two hunters. He tiptoes back to the others.)

ROOSTER: What did you see?

CHANTER: It looks like two hunters napping in the forest.

ANCIANO: I wonder if they have just had a fine meal and are sated? Perhaps they didn't eat it all and they would share with us.

ROOSTER: Yes. Let's sing to them for our supper.

CHANTER: Great idea! 1, 2, 3...

(The four musicians begin to bark, bray, meow, and crow all at once making a large horrible noise. The hunters awaken in terror.)

IVAN: Me thinks we are under attack brother!

HENRY: Perhaps it's a wild beast that is injured. It would be easy prey.

IVAN: That beast must be nearly dead if it sounds like that.

HENRY: We should flee this place in haste.

(EXIT the hunters quickly taking their nap sacks with them. ENTER the musicians)

ROOSTER: Where have they gone?

SONGE: Who cares? Let's see if they left anything behind.

ANCIANO: They didn't even leave a dry bone. (lays down dejected)

CHANTER: Cheer up my friends. Bremen Town is just down the road.
Once we are hired as musicians, we will have the finest food
you've ever tasted.

SONGE: I wonder if we'll live that long.

CHANTER: Let's be off to Bremen Town.

(EXIT the musicians)

Act 2 Scene 1

Set: Deeper in the Woods

NARRATOR:

The musicians have unknowingly stirred terror all over the forest with their unearthly singing. The fairies, which guard the small things in the forest, decide to go speak with the wise owl.

(ENTER fairies dancing to *Waltz of the Flowers*. They collide and get into an argument).

TIGER: Hey, watch it!

LADY: You watch it!

TIGER: That's gonna leave a mark (looking at her eye in a mirror).

LADY: Look what you did to my hair! (looking at her hair in a mirror).

TIGER: Say, did you hear that awful noise a few minutes ago?

LADY: Yes, I simply don't know what has happened to our quiet forest.

TIGER: I think we have been invaded by a monster!

LADY: Let us go see the wise owl, he can tell us what to do.

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