

# The Musicians of Bremen

Once there was a donkey who lived with a farmer. The donkey was very old. Before, he had worked every day in the fields and carried many heavy things. Now he was old, and he found it hard to carry heavy things. One day, the donkey was carrying a very heavy bag of food and fell down.

'Now this is bad,' said the farmer. 'I need a strong animal who can work for me. If the donkey can't carry things, I don't need him. I will have to kill him tonight.'

The donkey heard this and was very afraid. He didn't want to die! But what could he do? If he went to another farm, they would not want him, because he could not work.



But the donkey had heard of a city called Bremen. In Bremen, there were lots of musicians, and if you played good music, you lived well.

'I have always wanted to learn to play the guitar,' said the donkey. 'I think I would play it very well.'

He did not have a guitar, but that did not matter. So the donkey left his master and started going to Bremen.

The road to Bremen was long. After walking for an hour, the donkey saw a dog on the road. The dog looked old and sad, and had lots of grey hairs.

'Why are you so sad, old boy?' said the donkey.

'My master wants to kill me! Before, I ran through the forest and killed pigs, but now I am old, and the pigs are too fast for me.'

'Don't worry, old boy!' said the donkey. 'I'm going to Bremen to become a musician. I'm going to play the guitar. Come with me!'

'Wow!' said the dog. 'I have always wanted to learn to play the drum. Yes, I'll go with you to Bremen!'

So the donkey and the dog started going to Bremen.

The road to Bremen was long. After walking for two hours, they saw a cat on the road. The cat looked old and sad, and had lots of grey hairs.

'Why are you so sad, you old cat?' said the donkey.

'My master wants to kill me! Before, I killed all the mice in the house, but now I am old, and the mice are too fast for me.'

'Don't worry, you old cat!' said the donkey. 'We're going to Bremen to become musicians. I'm going to play the guitar, and the dog is going to play the drum. Come with us!'

'Wow!' said the cat. 'I have always wanted to learn to play the violin. Yes, I'll go with you to Bremen!'

So the donkey, the dog and the cat started going to Bremen.

The road to Bremen was long. After walking for three hours, they saw a chicken on the road. The chicken looked old and sad.

'Why are you so sad, Mr. Chicken?' said the donkey.

'My master wants to kill me! Before, I cried every morning at the same time. But now I am old, and some days, I forget to cry in the morning.'

'Don't worry, Mr. Chicken!' said the donkey. 'We're going to Bremen to become musicians. I'm going to play the guitar, the dog is going to play the drum, and the cat is going to play the violin. Come with us!'

'Wow!' said the chicken. 'I love singing! Yes, I'll go with you to Bremen.'

So the donkey, the dog, the cat and the chicken started going to Bremen.

The road to Bremen was long, so night came, and they decided to sleep inside a forest. The donkey, dog and cat lay down by a tree, and the chicken flew into the tree. They had no food, and they were very hungry, and it was cold.

'I see something!' said the chicken. 'There is a house in the forest, and there is light inside. Do you think they have comfortable beds and food?'

'I think they might!' said the donkey. 'Let's go.'

So they went to the house and looked inside. Inside, there were five men. These men were very bad men—they were thieves. They liked to steal from people. But the

musicians were not interested in the thieves, because in the house there was a table, and on the table there was lots of food and drink: bread, cheese, nuts, cake, wine and beer. And in the corner, there were comfortable beds.

'Wow!' said the donkey. 'We must get inside and eat all that lovely food and sleep in those comfortable beds.'

'But what can we do?' said the cat.

'Hmm,' said the dog. 'Usually, if you play music, people give you money and food, right?'

'Right!' said the chicken. 'Let's give them a show.'

So the dog jumped on the donkey's back, the cat jumped on the dog's back, and the chicken flew onto the cat's back.

'Ready?' said the donkey. 'One, two, three!'

The animals jumped through the window. The donkey 'played the guitar', the dog 'played the drum', the cat 'played the violin', and the chicken 'sang'. But really, the donkey brayed, the dog barked, the cat meowed, and the chicken cried.

The thieves were very afraid, and thought it was a monster. They ran outside and through the forest.

'Hooray!' said the donkey. 'Our first show went very well!'

They ate all the lovely food and drank all of the beer and wine, and then went to sleep in the comfortable beds.

The thieves ran and ran, but then the leader of the thieves said, 'Stop! That was no monster. I don't believe that monsters exist. And that is our house! I will go back and kill them.'

So the leader of the thieves went back to the house and very quietly went inside. It was dark, and the musicians were all sleeping. But then the leader of the thieves put his foot on the cat.

'MEOW!' screamed the cat. She jumped up and scratched the thief's leg.

'OW!' screamed the thief. He fell on the dog.

'WOOF WOOF!' cried the dog. He bit the thief on the leg.

'Augh!' screamed the thief. He ran outside and ran into the donkey.

'HEE-HAW!' cried the donkey, and kicked the thief in the stomach.

Finally, the chicken woke up and flew onto the thief's head. 'Buck-caw!'

The leader of the thieves screamed and ran away. 'It is a monster, it is a monster!' he cried. 'I will never come back to this forest again!'

So the musicians went back to their home and slept. In the morning, they spoke.

'Shall we go to Bremen, then?' said the dog.

'I don't know,' said the cat. 'It is such a long way, and we have no musical instruments.'

'I don't need a musical instrument,' said the chicken. 'I can sing.'

'Maybe we don't need to go to Bremen,' said the donkey. 'We have a nice little house here, and we can probably find food in the forest.'

And it was true. They were very happy in their little house, and they found nuts and fruits in the forest to eat. So in the end, the musicians of Bremen never actually went to Bremen, but that does not matter, because they were the best of friends.

THE END