## CAST OF CHARACTERS

(In Order of Speaking)

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<th>Character</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<td>DONKEY</td>
<td>decidedly pessimistic about life so far</td>
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<td>harried; trying to pull it all together at the last minute</td>
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<td>SQUIRE SQUIRREL</td>
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<td>ARTFUL</td>
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<td>CLOAK</td>
<td>whining robber; wants the easy way out; not particularly bright</td>
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SETTING

TIME: Today.
PLACE: A stage in the process of being set up for a production. There is a ladder or step stool, a sawhorse, some planks of wood, several burlap sacks seemingly full of sand or seed and other items lying around the stage randomly. There should also be a trunk full of ropes, scarves, hats, vests, etc.—anything that could become part of an improvised animal costume. You may use the suggestions in the script and production notes or feel free to construct a prop or set piece from any makeshift item, much as children do at play.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES
Scene One: A lonely road near a farm.
Scene Two: The robbers’ house.
THE BREMEN TOWN MUSICIANS

Scene One

A few minutes before the show is about to start, DONKEY, HOUND, CAT, ROOSTER, SQUIRE, DINELLE and DIZZY ENTER from backstage in the midst of rehearsing, costume fittings, etc. They do not wear costumes, but rather everyday street clothes. They look at the AUDIENCE in surprise.

DONKEY: Dizzy! Look! What are they doing here?

DIZZY: I don’t know—we have a week till opening. Let’s ask them.

(Moves DOWNSTAGE and addresses an AUDIENCE MEMBER in the first row.) Pardon me, but you wouldn’t be an audience member, would you? We do this, of course, for an audience—but we were not expecting you. May I see your ticket?

(Leans over front of STAGE and peers at AUDIENCE MEMBER'S hand as if it held a ticket.) Oh, my. It has today’s date on it, doesn’t it? (Returns to CENTER STAGE.) All right, cast—it seems we’re going to do a show today!

HOUND: But... but... the costumes aren’t here!

CAT: The set’s not ready!

ROOSTER: And I’m not sure I know all my lines.

DIZZY: (Indicates AUDIENCE.) They have tickets for today. We can’t let them down. (Addresses the AUDIENCE.) You are here for “The Bremen Town Musicians,” correct? (Waits for response.) Then you shall see “The Bremen Town Musicians”! Just give us a moment. All right, cast—set the stage! We have a show to do!

DONKEY: But we need a tree!

DIZZY: Use a ladder! (DINELLE does so.)

HOUND: What about the robbers’ home?

DIZZY: Find a box. A flat. You’re all artists! Be creative! (ACTORS scramble for items.)

CAT: Oh, I wish I had my elegant tail and my soft, fuzzy ears.

DIZZY: Improvise, everyone!

DINELLE: The ladder’s ready.

CAT: Our tree! (Addresses the AUDIENCE.) What do you think of our fine tree? I rather fancy it. Where shall we put it? (Moves it around.) Can you see if I put it here? What about over there? If I make it too close to you, it will block everything that goes behind it. Oh, dear, I am not a scene designer. I shall never figure it out.

SQUIRE: Back farther. Yes. I like that. Maybe more to the right. (CAT moves it RIGHT.) No. I don’t like that at all. Try the left. (CAT moves...
it LEFT.) Now everything is off-kilter. Try the center. (CAT moves it CENTER.) Oh! Now it blocks everything! The audience will never see! Upstage, please. Upstage! (CAT is growing impatient but moves it UPSTAGE.) That’s too far away! The audience will never see anything.

CAT: Then do it yourself! I need to find a costume! (Leaves the ladder UPSTAGE and searches for a costume in the trunk. Some rope may be a tail. Hair in pigtails could be ears or whatever else you can find. SQUIRE tries to move the ladder, but it is heavy, so it barely budges.)

SQUIRE: That’ll do, don’t you think? Yes, I like it there. I think. Maybe. We shall see. (Meanwhile, the ANIMALS find assorted ears and tails in the trunk. All costume items should be made with ropes, scarves, ribbons and other “found” items. DIZZY, possibly with help from OTHERS, is getting the stage set: a sign indicating “BREMEN TOWN 10 Miles” is placed in view of the AUDIENCE, filled burlap sacks are set CENTER STAGE, other items are cleared to the side. When every ANIMAL has some costume piece and the stage is set, CAT, HOUND, ROOSTER and DIZZY EXIT. To AUDIENCE.)

Greetings to you all! Thank you for coming to our woods! I am—well, you know what I am, correct? (SQUIRE may give the AUDIENCE hints—“I collect acorns,” “I usually have a big bushy tail,” etc.—if they can’t guess. The show can continue when the AUDIENCE is sure of who SQUIRE is.)

We start the story on the morning of an ordinary day. The sun was shining on the farm, and Dinelle was getting ready for the planting season. The farmer piled up sacks of seed on his loyal donkey. (DINELLE keeps handing DONKEY sack upon sack of seed. DONKEY has some on his arms, in his teeth—however many can be piled up.)

DONKEY: (Through clenched teeth.) This is getting ridiculous.

DINELLE: What’s that you say?

DONKEY: I was just wondering if we should be doing this today. Looks like rain.

DINELLE: Nonsense! It’s a grand day to plant! Not a cloud in the sky. Must make hay while the sun shines. Otherwise my arthritis kicks in, and the work will never be done!

DONKEY: No, I see a cloud forming—way yonder. Definitely rain. All the seeds will be washed away. No. I wouldn’t plant today. Your bones will really ache.

DINELLE: My bones always ache. But I am surprised at you, Donkey! I think you are getting old. Why, just last year you carried twenty sacks and all my tools over acres of land. Now look at you. I can hold more than you can!
DONKEY: I hate to complain, but it’s my back. I felt it crack when I woke up this morning. And I think another tooth is about to fall out. And I’m losing some hair—

DINELLE: I wonder if you are getting too old to serve me anymore. I wonder if I shouldn’t think of getting a younger donkey. One with more spring in her step.

DONKEY: (Under her breath.) So you can work her to death and make her old before her time?

DINELLE: Did you say something?

DONKEY: Not a thing, Dinelle. I am here to do your bidding. Born to serve. Born to serve!

DINELLE: Can’t you carry any more?

DONKEY: I’m one donkey, not an entire mule train!

DINELLE: You’ll never make it across the farm.

DONKEY: I know. I know.

DINELLE: You really have aged, haven’t you?

DONKEY: That’s what I keep trying to tell you.

DINELLE: Let me get my tools. We’ll see how it goes. (EXITS.)

DONKEY: (Puts a few bags down.) I need a new job. Something in an office maybe. I can no longer be a beast of burden. Maybe I can be a librarian. Or maybe I could cook. Forage for nuts and berries and make up some nice hot cereal for the cool mornings. (To the AUDIENCE.) What do you think? (Banters with the AUDIENCE about possible jobs.)

DINELLE: (ENTERS with a mop and other “tools.”) All right. Let’s go.

Pick up the sacks!

DONKEY: A mop? You’re bringing a mop to plant?

DINELLE: (Aside.) We’re improvising, remember? (Proclaims loudly to the AUDIENCE.) What’s that you say? You say our hoe looks different? Yes, our hoe looks different but it works, see? (Uses the mop like a hoe.) Off we go! (DONKEY struggles to balance the sacks and tools.) I said, off we go! (DONKEY starts to limp.) This is not good. I wonder, Donkey, if you are good for anything besides good old-fashioned donkey meat!

DONKEY: (Drops everything.) Donkey meat?!

DINELLE: It may be time to turn you into donkey-burgers.

DONKEY: (With a gulp.) Donkey-burgers?! (Collapses.)

DINELLE: Wait here. (EXITS.)

DONKEY: (Quickly gets up. To AUDIENCE.) Did you hear that? You did, didn’t you? Donkey-burgers?! Is that any way to treat a loyal and faithful worker? It isn’t, is it? Help me! Do I hide? What do I do?
(Discusses the merits of hiding with the AUDIENCE. [NOTE: DONKEY could even try hiding in the AUDIENCE but finds that pieces of him can still be spotted.] Hey, maybe I should just run away. That's what I'll do. I must move to the city. I'll be safe there. Yes—do not tell—but I shall make a new life in the city! [Runs OFF as DINELLE ENTERS.]

DINELLE: Donkey? Oh, Donkey! [To the AUDIENCE.] Where'd she go? Come on, you can tell me. [Once she cajoles the AUDIENCE into telling that DONKEY ran away to the city... ] Oh, the city is far away. It's not worth my energy to go after that old donkey. I need to go plant. Too bad. I rather fancied having a donkey-burger for dinner. Oh, well. Time to do the planting. [Packs up all the sacks left behind.] Whoa, this is heavy. I think I need a new donkey! [EXITS.]

SQUIRE: [ENTERS. He may have a few acorns or peanuts. To AUDIENCE.] Excuse me. You came unexpectedly, and—well—I missed breakfast. [Nibbles on a nut. Refers to DONKEY'S situation.] That was a close one, don't you think? Oh, the hardship of aging! [SQUIRE adds some woody touches to the set—a branch for the tree, a bed of flowers under the tree, etc.] That's better, don't you think? Gives a woodier look to the area. Now, where was I? Oh, yes! At the same time Donkey ran away, there was an old hound—[HOUND ENTERS.][—complaining to his master.]

HARPER: [ENTERS, wearing an outdoorsy outfit.] Good morning, Hound! Today we shall hike 10 miles! Might even scare us up a squirrel for dinner!

SQUIRE: Yikes! I’m out of here! [EXITS fast.]

HOUND: [Lies down.] I need a nap! Breakfast tired me out!

HARPER: Got to have some exercise! Can't sit around by a fire all day.

HOUND: Oh, but I could. I really could.

HARPER: Need to get those muscles pumping. Let's warm up! [Does stretching exercises.]

HOUND: That looks silly.

HARPER: Come on! What are you waiting for?

HOUND: I'm waiting for you to open the door so I can go inside and lie down!

HARPER: Stretch those biceps! Get the blood running in the triceps!

HOUND: Do dogs even have triceps?

HARPER: Keep those muscles warm so glycogen isn't stored in the muscles!
(HOUND: (To AUDIENCE.) Harper’s been reading those exercise magazines again! (Lies down.)
HARPER: Come on, man’s best friend, let’s go for a romp!
HOUND: If you were really my best friend, you’d let me sleep.
HARPER: And after our morning run, we can play fetch and then go swimming!
HOUND: What is this, a triathlon? Running, fetching and swimming? Gee, what about doing a few miles on the bicycle?
HARPER: And after lunch, I’ll do 20 miles on the bicycle.
HOUND: Be my guest!
HARPER: With you at my side!
HOUND: I don’t think so.
HARPER: Okay, jumping jacks! Let’s get the heart going! (Does jumping jacks and HOUND makes a feeble attempt.) Come on, Hound! One-two! One-two! There you go! Stretch your knee out! Look right, look left! Now turn your toes out and stretch your neck! Lift up both your eyes to the sky! And turn, and turn, and shake out those pecs! (HOUND collapses.) Again!
HOUND: I’m done.
HARPER: Aren’t you going to run with me?
HOUND: No.
HARPER: Aren’t you going to stay by my side as my faithful companion?
HOUND: Only if you’re standing still.
HARPER: Do you have any idea how old I am in dog years?
HARPER: I don’t know, Hound, I’m going to have to start looking for a replacement for you. You’re not as jolly as you used to be. (Jogs OFF.)
HOUND: (To AUDIENCE.) Jolly? Not as jolly? I’m loyal, sweet—aren’t I sweet? But jolly? That was not in my job description. I was supposed to sit by the fire and warm my mistress’s toes and fetch her slippers. Nowhere did it ever say I must be jolly. And then what did she say? Replacement? I don’t know if I like the sound of that.
(DONKEY runs ON.) Oh no! Another exercise addict!
DONKEY: I’m not out of shape! I’m old! Is anyone following me?
DONKEY: Whew, that was a close one. My mistress wants to turn me into donkey-burgers.
HOUND: That’s not good.
DONKEY: Tell me about it!
HOUND: My mistress wants a new jolly dog. Who knows what they’ll do with me?
DONKEY: So, are you just going to take it lying down?
HOUND: Yes.
DONKEY: You can’t do that!
HOUND: Why not? Lying down is all I wanted to do in the first place.
DONKEY: You can come with me. I’m heading into the city—Bremen Town. I’m going to live out my days there.
HOUND: What sort of life can we have in the city? I don’t fancy begging for scraps on every street corner.
DONKEY: We can do something else—make ourselves useful—and not be a burden on society.
HOUND: I don’t know how to do that.
DONKEY: Neither do I. (To the AUDIENCE.) Anyone have ideas? (Ad-libs about occupations with the AUDIENCE. If they do not come up with any musical ideas, DONKEY or HOUND can introduce the notion.)
My mother used to sing me to sleep!
HOUND: So did mine!
DONKEY: We used to listen to the fiddle being played in the house.
HOUND: Oh! I love the fiddle! A penny whistle’s nice, also.
DONKEY: Yes, a most agreeable sound. You know…
HOUND: Are you thinking what I’m thinking?
DONKEY: That it would be wonderful to be a musician?
HOUND: Yes!
DONKEY: It would be grand!
HOUND: Yes!
DONKEY: We would spread cheer wherever we go!
HOUND: Yes! Why, I would almost be… jolly!
DONKEY: Yes! Jolly good, Hound! Standing ovations! Encores!
HOUND: Food!
DONKEY: Only… I don’t play.
HOUND: Neither do I.
DONKEY: We could take lessons.
HOUND: We could.
DONKEY: And practice and practice!
HOUND: We could do that! We’re not too old to practice.
DONKEY: Are we on our way to Bremen Town?
HOUND: We are! We certainly are!
DONKEY/HOUND: (To the tune of “London Bridge is Falling Down,” they sing a ditty.) We’re on our way to Bremen Town, Bremen Town, Bremen Town. We’re on our way to Bremen Town To be musicians.
DONKEY: (Sings.) I can’t play an instrument—
HOUND: (Sings.) Nor can I, nor can I—
DONKEY: (Sings.) But I can work and study hard—
HOUND: (Sings.) Learn some new tricks!
DONKEY: Hey! That’s pretty good!
HOUND: I know! We’re not too bad!
DONKEY: You know what we need?
HOUND: An instrument?
DONKEY: Percussion. We need a beat.
HOUND: How do we do that?
DONKEY: We’ll get them to help us. (To the AUDIENCE.) If we tell you when to stomp, will you join in?
HOUND: Stomp?! I want to clap!
DONKEY: Why don’t we work together? I’ll stomp and you’ll clap.
HOUND: Can we have them help us?
DONKEY: But of course! (To the AUDIENCE.) All right—it’s like this. We are going to sing: “We’re on our way to Bremen Town, Bremen Town, Bremen Town”—and after every Bremen Town, you stomp—like this. (Stomps.) Shall we practice? All right.
DONKEY/HOUND: (Slowly sing the ditty again with the “stomps.”) We’re on our way to Bremen Town, (Stomp.) Bremen Town, (Stomp.) Bremen Town, (Stomp.) We’re on our way to Bremen Town (Stomp.) To be musicians! (Stomp-stomp.)
HOUND: I like the two stomps at the end.
DONKEY: So do I.
HOUND: Now, in the second verse, we will clap. And we’ll make it really fancy—a double-time clap. I’ll show you!
DONKEY: We can’t play an instrument, (Clap-clap.) Instrument, (Clap-clap.) instrument, (Clap-clap.) But we can work and study hard, (Clap-clap.) Learn some new tricks! (Clap.)
DONKEY: Ohh! Tricky! Just one clap at the end.
HOUND: So it’s the opposite of yours! (You may practice again if you wish or just go through it with the AUDIENCE. DONKEY and HOUND can split the AUDIENCE.)

DONKEY/HOUND: All right! All together now! (Sing.) We’re on our way to Bremen Town. (Stomp.)
Bremen Town, (Stomp.) Bremen Town. (Stomp.)
We’re on our way to Bremen Town (Stomp.)
To be musicians! (Stomp-stomp.)
We can’t play an instrument. (Clap-clap.)
Instrument, (Clap-clap.) instrument. (Clap-clap.)
But we can work and study hard. (Clap-clap.)
Learn some new tricks! (Clap.)

DONKEY: Not bad, Hound!
HOUND: And our friends—weren’t they good?

DONKEY: (To the AUDIENCE.) You should all be musicians. (With a new spring in their steps, DONKEY and HOUND check out the Bremen Town sign and EXIT.)

SQUIRE: (ENTERS, wearing an additional costume piece—a vest, country hat or bushier tail.) Do you like this? It gives me a certain air of nobility, don’t you think?

FLINCH: (ENTERS. He has one feather attached.) When are you going to bring me on?

SQUIRE: I beg your pardon?

FLINCH: How long must I wait in the wings?

SQUIRE: You’re not in this show.

FLINCH: Of course I’m in this show! I’m in every show! (To AUDIENCE.)
Who would you rather spend time with? An acorn-chewing squirrel or a bird with magnificent feathers—

SQUIRE: You only have one feather!

FLINCH: I’m working on it, okay? (To the AUDIENCE.) Imagine if you will—a feather here... and three there... and a whole mess of them back here! My colors are exquisite—ecru, pink flamingo, sunshine yellow, blueberry blue—

SQUIRE: They didn’t come to listen to a costume report—

FLINCH: I know that! If my costume had been ready, I would be able to show it to them. But you can imagine, can’t you?

SQUIRE: Flinch! Get off the stage! You are not in “The Bremen Town Musicians”!

FLINCH: Don’t be ridiculous! It’s in my contract. Flinch is in every show!

SQUIRE: Take it up with the director.
FLINCH: I shall! Dizzy! Come out here!
SQUIRE: Not now!
DIZZY: (ENTERS) Yes, Flinch? Oh, hello, Squire. How’s it going?
SQUIRE: It was going very well— (To AUDIENCE) Don’t you think? (To DIZZY) —until Flinch here interrupted the proceedings!
FLINCH: I’m in every show, Dizzy, right? Didn’t you say I could be in every show?
DIZZY: Well, you see, there’s been a mix-up. You see, this story has a rooster—
FLINCH: I can be a rooster. (Instantly becomes a rooster and struts.)
DIZZY: Cock-a-doodle-doo! Cock-a-doodle-do!
DIZZY: That’s very good. Very good indeed. But you see... we already have a rooster for the show.
FLINCH: You have a—what?
DIZZY: A rooster—over there—waiting to enter. (FLINCH looks over; ROOSTER sticks his head out and waves from the sidelines.)
DIZZY: Soooo, you thought you’d pull a fast one on me, did you? Thought you’d hire a rooster. Well, I don’t think so. I was born to be center stage, and I will have my time in the spotlight! (Stomps OFF.)
DIZZY: Oh, dear. Flinch’s feathers—or rather feather—is ruffled! I must smooth it down. Excuse me. (EXITS.)
SQUIRE: Sorry, folks. A bit of backstage mix-ups. Life on the stage can be most surprising. You never know what will happen next. Now, back to the story. We have many characters waiting in the wings. Who is next? (The AUDIENCE may suggest ROOSTER, having just seen him, but SQUIRE must get ready for CAT.) Donkey and Hound continued on their journey.
DONKEY: Sorry.
HOUND: Flinch was making an awful racket backstage. Couldn’t hear a thing.
SQUIRE: Oh! I like the additions to your costumes.
DONKEY/HOUND: Thank you.
SQUIRE: And as they neared the end of town, they came across a cat— (CAT ENTERS) —sobbing quietly by the roadside. (CAT sobs loudly and punctuates each sob with a “meow.”) That was... sobbing quietly by the roadside.
CAT: My loud sobs are more realistic.
SQUIRE: Nevertheless, you must stick to the script! (CAT sobs quietly, adding the "meows.")

DONKEY: Why, look, Hound! There's a cat! Sobbing quietly by the roadside! (SQUIRE smiles and EXITS.) Cat, why are you sobbing quietly by the roadside?

CAT: (Sobs.) Nobody loves me.

HOUND: Would you like me to chase you? I used to be rather good at chasing cats.

CAT: (Abruptly stops sobbing.) I don't think so!

DONKEY: Is there anything we can do?

CAT: Can you make me younger?

HOUND: Uh-oh. It's the age thing again.

CAT: Yes, it's the age thing. I have grown older! I wish to sit on a blanket and purr. Is that so wrong?

DONKEY: Of course not.

CAT: But my master tells me to chase mice all day. Look out! Here he comes! And he looks mad! I'd hide if I were you! (HOUND and DONKEY scramble for hiding places—in the AUDIENCE, if possible—as CLACKNEY ENTERS.)

CLACKNEY: There you are! Sleeping as usual. You are useless! Useless! My home is overridden with mice. There were even three blind ones scampering about! I had to cut off their tails with a carving knife! I've never seen such a sight in my life! You can't even catch three blind mice!

CAT: But my teeth are old. I need something soft to chew on. Mice are crunchy. (ROOSTER ENTERS and goes squawking across the stage, followed by ROAMING.)

ROAMING: Come back here, you poor excuse for a chicken potpie! (And with a squawk, they EXIT.)

CLACKNEY: He didn’t even stop to say hi. Now, where was I? Uh-oh. I really mean it. Dizzy! Where was I? I don’t think the rooster was supposed to make his cross then.

DIZZY: (ENTERS.) Shh! He got impatient waiting to come on. Just continue, please. (EXITs.)

CLACKNEY: All right. We did the "Three Blind Mice" thing—gee, I really didn’t think I needed to learn my lines until tomorrow! (ROOSTER ENTERS—again squawking across the stage and again followed by ROAMING.)

ROAMING: Wait till I get my hands on you! We're having chicken soup tonight! (They EXIT.)
CLACKNEY: How rude! How can an actor concentrate if people don’t mind their Ps and Qs? As I was saying, Cat—you need to get on the job and scare away some mice. Do your chores! What do you think I pay you for?

CAT: Who gets paid?

CLACKNEY: Why, you do! Do you think catnip is free? Do you think a warm home costs nothing? In exchange, I expect you to rid my home of mice!

CAT: I purr for you. I lovingly rub against your legs. I curl into a little ball and make myself as small as possible. I keep my end of the bargain.

CLACKNEY: I’m done feeding you! If you want to eat anymore, catch your own food! And you can sleep outside tonight! I’m done sheltering you. In fact, I’m done with you! (Stomps OFF.)

CAT: (Lets out a long, mournful ‘meow.’) Woe is me! Woe is me!

DONKEY/HOUND: We are underappreciated—

DONKEY: Wait a minute. We want to be unappetizing! Don’t want to be anyone’s dinner!

CAT: That’s true.

DONKEY: You need to hit the road, Jack!

CAT: It’s Cat. The name’s Cat.

DONKEY/HOUND: Where?

DONKEY: We’re on our way to Bremen Town. (Stomp.)

DONKEY/HOUND: (Sing.)

We’re on our way to Bremen Town,

Bremen Town,

Bremen Town.
We're on our way to Bremen Town (Stomp.)
To be musicians. (Stomp-stomp.)
We can't play an instrument, (Clap-clap.)
Instrument, (Clap-clap.) instrument, (Clap-clap.)
But we can work and study hard, (Clap-clap.)
Learn some new tricks! (Clap.)

DONKEY: Care to join us?

CAT: Meow! (Sings.)
I'm on my way to Bremen Town, (Snaps fingers.)
Bremen Town, (Snap.) Bremen Town, (Snap.)
I'm on my way Bremen Town (Snap.)
To be a musician. (Snap-snap.)

DONKEY/HOUND/CAT: (Sing.)
We can't play an instrument, (Snap-snap.)
Instrument, (Snap-snap.) instrument, (Snap-snap.)
But we can work and study hard, (Snap-snap.)
Learn some new tricks! (Snap. ROOSTER runs ON, chased by ROAMING.)

ROAMING: I'll catch you yet, you tough, old bird!

SQUIRE: (ENTERS, wearing even more costume pieces.) Wait a minute!
Just wait a minute here! I have some narration! And I learned my lines!

ROOSTER: (Aside.) But I'm here now.

SQUIRE: (Aside.) But you shouldn't be.

ROOSTER: (Aside.) But I am!

ROAMING: (Catches ROOSTER.) Gotcha! Into the soup pot you go!

ROOSTER: Wait a minute! You don't catch me in the script.

ROAMING: You were standing still. I had to follow my motivation as an actor, and my motivation is to catch you. (To AUDIENCE) Don't you agree? (AUDIENCE answers. Back to ROOSTER.) See? They agree.

ROOSTER: I didn't hear them agree.

SQUIRE: Dizzy! (Loud.) Dizzy! Will you come out here?

DIZZY: (ENTERS.) I am trying to set lights and sew costumes. The director should not be seen in front of the audience.

SQUIRE: But they skipped over the narration.

DIZZY: Just go with it!

SQUIRE: But they want to hear what I have to say. (To the AUDIENCE.) Don't you? (AUDIENCE answers. Back to DIZZY) Well, most of them want to!

FLINCH: (ENTERS, with a lot more feathers.) As long as the show is stopped, I would like to make my entrance!
SQUIRE/DIZZY/ROAMING/ROOSTER: (Loud and stern.) You're not in this show!

FLINCH: (Exits, murmuring to himself.) You’re not in this show… You’re not in this show…

SQUIRE: Everybody off! It’s my turn! (All but SQUIRE exit, murmuring about how bossy Squire has become. To AUDIENCE.) As I was trying to say… Oh, by the way, do you like my costume? It’s finally finished. (Turns around.) Or as finished as it’s going to be. I look rather squirrelly, don’t I? Now—to continue, Cat decided to join Donkey and Hound in their journey to become musicians in Bremen Town. (Pause.) I said, “Cat decided to join Donkey and Hound!” Donkey? Hound? Cat?

DONKEY: (From Offstage.) Didn’t you just tell us to get off the stage?

SQUIRE: Yes. But now I am telling you to come back on.

HOUND: (From Offstage.) You sure are one bossy narrator!

SQUIRE: Come on! (Donkey, Hound and Cat enter and pose together.) Much better. And the Donkey, the Hound and the Cat set off to Bremen Town.

DONKEY/HOUND/CAT: To become musicians!

SQUIRE: And on their way they ran into a rooster! (Rooster runs on and literally runs into them. All fall. Rooster hides in the pile.)

ROAMING: (Enters. To Squire.) Did you see a rooster come by?

SQUIRE: He went that-a-way! (Points.)

ROAMING: Funny. I could have sworn he came here. (To the AUDIENCE.) Did you see him? (The AUDIENCE may say “yes” or “no” or both.) Roaming decides to not listen to them. (Exit.)

SQUIRE: I’ve done my good deed. See you later. (Exit.)

ROOSTER: (From under the pile.) Save me! (All get up.)

DONKEY: I thought we just did.

ROOSTER: He’ll be back.

HOUND: And you’ll be gone.

ROOSTER: I will? Where will I be?

CAT: You’re coming with us! We’re going to Bremen Town to become musicians.

ROOSTER: But I don’t know how to play an instrument!

DONKEY: Neither do we!

DONKEY/HOUND/CAT: (Sing.) We’re on our way to Bremen Town, (Stamp.) Bremen Town, (Stamp.) Bremen Town.
We’re on our way to Bremen Town (Stomp.)
To be musicians. (Stomp-stomp.)

ROOSTER: (Sings.) I can’t play an instrument. (Clap-clap.)

DONKEY/HOUND/CAT: (Sing.)
Nor can I. (Clap-clap.) nor can II (Clap-clap.)

ROOSTER: (Sings.) But I can work and study hard. (Clap-clap.)

DONKEY/HOUND/CAT/ROOSTER: (Sing.)
Learn some new tricks! (Clap.)

SQUIRE: (ENTERS. To AUDIENCE.) So the four friends got on the path
to Bremen Town. And they walked.

DONKEY: And they walked.

SQUIRE: And they walked some more.

HOUND: I think I had my exercise for the day.

SQUIRE: And they continued to walk.

CAT: Are we there yet?

SQUIRE: And then they came across a squirrel.

ROOSTER: We did?

DONKEY: Hey! Are you adding lines?

SQUIRE: Just a few.

FLINCH: (ENTERS.) Wait a minute! If Squire can add lines, then so

SQUIRE: You’re not even in the show!

FLINCH: I’m here on stage. I’m in a costume. Therefore, I am in
the show. (To the AUDIENCE.) Right? (Back to OTHERS.) See? They
agree.

ROBBERS: (From OFFSTAGE.) We’re mean, unclean—
The worst you’ve seen.
We scheme supreme
To make you scream!

FLINCH: Help! Robbers! The robbers are coming! Oh, dear! Oh, dear!

ROBBERS: (From OFFSTAGE. Get louder.)
We’re mean, unclean—
The worst you’ve seen.

SQUIRE: Gotta go! (EXITs.)

ROBBERS: (From OFFSTAGE. Even louder.)
We scheme supreme
To make you scream!

DONKEY: (Yells.) Hide! (The ANIMALS leap into various hiding places as
the ROBBERS ENTER, literally seeming to jump ONSTAGE. They carry
large sacks and should have masks. CLOAK has the largest sack.)
BARONE: Success! Beyond our wildest dreams!
ARTFUL: I do love being a robber. I do! I do!
CLOAK: Can we rest now? Gold is heavy. Nobody told me gold would be so heavy.
BARONE: We’re rich!
ARTFUL: We’re mean!
CLOAK: Yeah, yeah, yeah. I am also tired. Can someone carry my sack?
BARONE: Cloak! It is an honor to carry the gold.
CLOAK: Really?
BARONE: Absolutely.
CLOAK: Then... here. I’m honoring you with it.
BARONE: This did not turn out the way I hoped.
ARTFUL: We have gold! We have silver! We have lines of credit! Tapestries! Brocade! What else would you like?
BARONE: Dinner.
CLOAK: And a warm fire. The sun’s going down.
ARTFUL: One more mile to our home and we shall have a fine meal to celebrate. Are you with me?
ROBBERS: We’re mean, unclean— The worst you’ve seen. We scheme supreme To make you scream! (They EXIT, and the ANIMALS emerge from hiding.)
DONKEY: Whew! That was a close one!
HOUND: I didn’t like the looks of them!
ROOSTER: And I certainly didn’t want to wind up in their sacks!
CAT: What do we do now? The sun’s going down. (Pause.) Hello? Lighting! I said, “The sun’s going down.”
DIZZY: (From OFFSTAGE) I’m working on it! (The LIGHTS DIM or DIZZY can come ON and climb the ladder holding a poster board sun and make it go down.)
CAT: That’s better.
DONKEY: I’m getting cold.
HOUND: And tired.
ROOSTER: And hungry.
CAT: I could catch a bird for you.
ROOSTER: No! What are you thinking?
CAT: Sorry. How about a rodent?
SQUIRE: (From OFFSTAGE) That’s a definite no.
CAT: Oh, dear. Nothing's working out. And we're still at least... how many miles from Bremen Town? (DIZZY runs ON and changes the sign to Bremen Town to five miles, then EXITS.) We'll never make it to Bremen Town before nightfall.

DONKEY: We could all huddle together for warmth and sleep in the woods. (The ANIMALS come close to one another and try to figure out a huddling pose, but cannot.)

HOUND: Don't put those claws near me!

CAT: Well, don't swipe my eyes with your tail!

DONKEY: Rooster! Your feathers are itchy!

ROOSTER: This will never work. We need shelter.

DONKEY: Well... you heard the robbers. They have a house one mile from here.

HOUND: Yes, but do you want to sneak into a house full of robbers?

CAT: Not really. We didn't leave our mean masters behind so we could find other mean masters.

ROOSTER: You know how humans are afraid of the dark?

DONKEY: What do you mean?

ROOSTER: Well, I've noticed that when the sun goes down, the humans all go into hiding.

CAT: And that's when the cats come out to play.

ROOSTER: We could take advantage of that fact. I have an idea! Come close, friends. (They huddle. We might hear delighted brays and barks and meows and cock-a-doodle-dos as they plan their scheme.)

DONKEY: That's brilliant!

ROOSTER: I know!

HOUND: Impossibly clever!

ROOSTER: I know.

CAT: But will it work?

ROOSTER: Who knows? Follow those robbers!

HOUND: I have their scent!

DONKEY: Then lead the way!

DONKEY/HOUND/CAT/ROOSTER: (Sing.) We're on our way to Bremen Town, (Stomp.) Bremen Town, (Stomp.) Bremen Town, (Stomp.) We're on our way Bremen Town (Stomp.) To be musicians. (Stomp-stomp.)

ROOSTER: (Sings.) I can't play an instrument. (Clap-clap.)
1 DONKEY/HOUND/CAT: (Sing.)
Nor can I, (Clap-clap.) nor can I! (Clap-clap.)
ROOSTER: (Sings.) But I can work and study hard, (Clap-clap.)
2 DONKEY/HOUND/CAT, ROOSTER:
(Sing.) Learn some new tricks! (Clap. Can form a line and do the conga, the bunny hop, the Mexican Hat Dance. LIGHTS begin to FADE TO BLACK. In dim light we hear DIZZY.)
3 DIZZY: (From OFFSTAGE.) Set-up! Come on! Set-up for Scene Two! Get the robber's house!
4 CLOAK: (From OFFSTAGE.) It's not done!
DIZZY: (From OFFSTAGE.) Well, get the table and the food! Come on! Don't keep the people waiting!
FLINCH: (From OFFSTAGE.) I signed on to be the star, not a stagehand!
5 BARONE: (From OFFSTAGE.) This is theatre—you do everything!
6 ARTFUL: (ENTERS along with DIZZY, FLINCH, CLOAK and BARONE. They carry a table, food, tableware and perhaps ladders.) It's coming together! It's actually coming together! (There is a lot of scurrying about as a table is set with grand food and tableware. More ladders or "trees" can be added, as well as an optional window frame. Remember, improvise!) DIZZY: Beautiful! Places for Scene Two! Everyone get ready for Scene Two! (FADE TO BLACK.)
End of Scene One
Scene Two
LIGTHS UP: Makeshift costumes have been embellished. Both the stage and the actors should look a bit more put together as more time progresses in this production. It is now late at night, and the ROBBERS are enjoying a feast.
BARONE: Yo, ho, ho and a bottle of—
ARTFUL: Barone! We're robbers, not pirates!
BARONE: I think of us as land pirates!
BARONE: This dinner is delicious! You sure can cook, Cloak.
CLOAK: Don't tell my mother that! She thinks I'm an accountant.
BARONE: This dinner is delicious! You sure can cook, Cloak.
CLOAK: I always wanted to be a cook. Maybe open up a little trattoria some day.
ARTFUL: You can do that now!
CLOAK: I can?
ARTFUL: Cloak! We're rich! We can do anything we want! (The ROBBERS continue to enjoy their feast as the ANIMALS sneak ON.)
DONKEY: (Whispers to OTHER ANIMALS.) Are you sure this is a good idea?
ROOSTER: Foolproof. Almost.
DONKEY: Then why don’t you go first?
ROOSTER: I’m scared.
HOUND: So the plan is we all climb on Cat’s back—
CAT: Donkey’s back!
HOUND: And then what?
ROOSTER: We scare them!
DONKEY: What if it doesn’t work?
ROOSTER: We run! Really fast.
HOUND: I don’t know—
ROOSTER: The wind’s beginning to pick up. Looks like rain.
DONKEY: Oh! My fur will get all frizzy!
CAT: I hate being wet!
ROOSTER: Are you done complaining?
DONKEY/HOUND/CAT: Yes.
ROOSTER: Then we go to work.
SQUIRE: (ENTERS. To AUDIENCE.) Now we come to the fun part.
DONKEY: (To SQUIRE.) So you say.
SQUIRE: Now the donkey went just below the ledge of the window and placed himself so his forefeet were on the window ledge.
HOUND: See anything, Donkey?
DONKEY: There’s a table set with great food.
HOUND: Don’t make me hungry!
DONKEY: And plenty of drink!
CAT: I’m so thirsty.
SQUIRE: The hound was to jump on the donkey’s back.
DONKEY: Just climb on—you don’t have to jump on me.
HOUND: Whoa! Hard to balance.
SQUIRE: Now, the cat was to climb onto the dog—
HOUND: Retract your claws, please.
CAT: How else can I hang on?
HOUND: This wasn’t well thought out.
SQUIRE: And the rooster was to fly up and perch himself on the head of the cat.
CAT: I have a bad feeling about this.
ROOSTER: Don’t worry, I’m very light.
CAT: I’m a cat! I never expected to have a bird balance on my head!
ROOSTER: Desperate times call for desperate measures.
SQUIRE: Finally everyone was in place.
DONKEY: Can we move it along? I’m starting to get uncomfortable.
FLINCH: (ENTERS.) I want to play, too!
ALL: (Loud and stern.) Get off the stage, Flinch!
FLINCH: Wait till my agent hears about this! (EXITS.)
DONKEY: My back is giving out!
SQUIRE: Meanwhile, inside the home the robbers started sensing something was wrong.
CLOAK: Do you two get the feeling there’s someone watching us?
BARONE: Don’t be ridiculous! Who could be watching us?
ARTFUL: There’s nothing but squirrels and birds out there.
DONKEY: That’s what you think! Ready? One… two… three… go! (The ANIMALS bray and bark and meow and cock-a-doodle-doo, which builds and builds. One of the ROBBERS may fall out of his chair. Two may jump up and run into one another. It should be chaos. The noise continues until the ROBBERS flee.)
BARONE: Haunted! We are haunted!
CLOAK: We are being punished for stealing!
ARTFUL: They’re coming to get us! (The THREE ROBBERS run OUT. The ANIMALS are overjoyed.)
ROOSTER: It worked! My plan worked!
CAT: Don’t waste any time. Let’s get in there!
HOUND: Get off of me!
DONKEY: And me! Oh, I am creaky!
SQUIRE: And the animals entered the home and filled themselves up with good food and drink. (The ANIMALS do so as SQUIRE joins them.)
DONKEY: What are you doing?
SQUIRE: I’m hungry.
HOUND: You can’t join us for dinner. It’s not in the script!
SQUIRE: Don’t you have a few nuts to spare?
ROOSTER: No. Sorry. Back to your narrating post. The audience wants to see the end.
SQUIRE: A little milk?

CAT: I drank it!

SQUIRE: Well, if you’re going to be like that, I will continue. (To AUDIENCE.) The animals, then feeling very tired after a long day, proceeded to find a place to sleep.

HOUND: Hey! I’m not done eating yet!

SQUIRE: Too bad. That’s what you get for not sharing! Go on, find a place to sleep.

CAT: I am pretty tired.

SQUIRE: So the animals found a resting place that suited their nature. (ANIMALS act out the following narration.) The donkey went outside and found some hay and promptly fell asleep in it.

DONKEY: So comfortable!

SQUIRE: The hound found a good watchdog spot behind the door.

HOUND: My favorite place to sleep!

SQUIRE: The cat lay down upon the hearth.

CAT: It’s still warm!

SQUIRE: And the rooster flew and perched himself upon the roof.

ROOSTER: (Climbing the ladder again.) Here I go!

SQUIRE: And all slept. Meanwhile the robbers—

ROBBERS: (ENTER but don’t go near house.) Enter!

CLOAK: Look how dark our house is!

BARONE: And quiet.

ARTFUL: I believe there is no one there. I think it’s safe to return.

BARONE: I agree.

CLOAK: I don’t know. Something fishy is going on in there.

ARTFUL: We certainly need to check it out.

BARONE: I agree.

CLOAK: I’m staying here.

BARONE: Barone, go inside the home and see if all is well.

BARONE: Me? But… no… can’t… ohhhh! Got a cramp! A cramp in the leg. Can’t walk… ohhhh! I’m in pain! Doesn’t anyone care that I am in pain?

ARTFUL: No! Cloak! You go!

CLOAK: But… but… but—

ARTFUL: Go! Or I’ll turn you in for robbery!

CLOAK: You’re a robber, too!

ARTFUL: I said go!

SQUIRE: And so Cloak quietly and on tiptoe—
CLOAK: Tiptoe?

SQUIRE: That’s what I said... sneaked back into the house. (The action now follows the narration.) Finding all still, Cloak lit a candle. The eyes of Cat flew open wide, and Cloak thought that they were two live coals burning brightly. So Cloak went to look closer. Cat did not like that and flew into Cloak’s face with a hiss and a meow. Cloak was terrified and ran into the back door and tripped over Hound, who swiftly bit his leg. Cloak screamed and jumped outside and fell into Donkey, who promptly kicked him. The Rooster, having been awakened by the screams, began to cry “Cock-a-doodle-doo!”

Cloak ran as quickly as possible back to the waiting robbers.

CLOAK: Help! Help! There is a horrible witch in the house who scratched me with her claws. And by the door is a wicked man with a knife. He stabbed me in the leg. And in the yard there lies a dark giant who threw me into the sky! And on the rooftop, there stands a judge who was calling for me. I got away as fast as I could! We can never go back.

BARONE: But our gold!

ARTFUL: Our silver!

CLOAK: I’m done with robbing! I’m going to get a job in Bremen Town and open a restaurant.

BARONE: Need a cook?

ARTFUL: And a waiter?

CLOAK: I will need all of that! But first—I need something else!

ARTFUL: What?

CLOAK: I need to get out of here! (EXITS.)

BARONE: Wait for me! (EXITS.)

ARTFUL: Hey! Hey! Don’t leave me here alone! (EXITS.)

SQUIRE: The animals now had their own home to live in for the rest of their lives.

ANIMALS: Hooray!

(Sing.) We now live near Bremen Town, (Stomp.)
Bremen Town, (Stomp.) Bremen Town, (Stomp.)
We now live near Bremen Town (Stomp.)
And we will be musicians. (Stomp-stomp.)

ROOSTER: (Sings.) We can’t play an instrument! (Clap-clap.)

DONKEY/HOUND/CAT: (Sing.)
But we sing, (Clap-clap.) but we sing! (Clap-clap.)

ROOSTER: (Sings.) We will learn some harmonies. (Clap-clap.)
DONKEY/HOUND/CAT/ROOSTER: (Sing.)
Learn some new tricks! (Clap. They may do a celebratory dance
amid animal noises.)

SQUIRE: And they all lived—

ALL: Happily ever after! (LIGHTS FADE TO BLACK. During the curtain
call, the CAST may address the AUDIENCE and express they are
happy they could do the production after all and thank them for
coming.)

END OF PLAY
PRODUCTION NOTES

PROPERTIES

ONSTAGE, Scene One:
- Ladder, step stool, sawhorse, planks of wood, filled burlap sacks
- Trunk of assorted scarves, ribbons, rope, vests, etc.
- Sign indicating Bremen Town 10 miles away (the 10 needs to be easily changed to reflect a 5 later in the play)

BROUGHT ON, Scene One:
- Mop, possible other tools (DINELLE)
- Acorns, peanuts, a branch or flower bed for woody touches (SQUIRE)
- Bulging sacks (CLOAK, BARONE, ARTFUL)
- Plank painted with a 5 to change Bremen Town sign, optional cardboard sun (DIZZY)
- Table, food, tableware, ladders (DIZZY, FLINCH CLOAK, BARONE)

ONSTAGE, Scene Two:
- Table set with food and drink, three chairs, three settings
- Candle and matches

ABOUT THE PROPS

The fun in the play is the use of “found” objects—so none of this is set in stone. Ladders, step stools and wooden boxes can all be used for trees. For Scene Two, you will need a table with food and drink, a candle and three chairs. There could be a signpost pointing to various areas in your town, to New York, to China—whatever is your whim. It could also point to Bremen Town, or that can come on at the end of Scene One.

FLEXIBLE CASTING

Either male or female actors can play most of the characters with just minor changes to the dialogue. In the original production, all roles were played female, which is why many parts are written with feminine references. Feel free to change these to fit your cast!
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