

# The Loneliest Troubadour

By D. M. Hermitton

'The Loneliest Troubadour' is an illustrated book for early readers about a disconnected musician in search of recognition. When the masses don't seem to show interest in her arts, she does everything she can to gain the attention of the crowd. After disastrous consequences, the troubadour finds her match in an unlikely equal.

This is a book intended to be read by parents for/or by kids between the ages of 5 and 7.

# The Loneliest Troubadour

*In a land of great mountains and lakes  
Of tiny gnomes and flying snakes  
A land that is as wondrously old  
As the winters are so very cold*

*At night, the sky gets buttoned up  
And the sea will drain like a tub  
Then the fish are pulled ashore  
To sleep a lot and wake once more*

## Chapter I

In that land, there stood a hill. On that hill stood a tiny house. And from that house resounded a beautiful, but sad song. In that tiny house on the hill, with the sad music, a young Troubadour played on her lute.

*"I'm so lonely", sang the Troubadour,  
"So lonely and alone  
Who do I play music for  
With no one in my home?"*

She stared joylessly out the window. On her hill, every animal had a pal. Goose was friends with Moose. Ox had her partner Fox. Cricket was the most popular in the whole thicket. But the Troubadour did not have a pal. She only had her lute and her tiny house on the hill.

Far down, at the foot of the hill, the Troubadour could see a beautiful garden. Many flowers, plants, hedges and trees grew here. There, many people from all over the land came to admire the garden. Above the flowers and the people, hundreds of colourful banners and flags reached for the sky. These flags danced happily in the wind, as though alive and enjoying the sunny day.

In the middle of the garden, there stood a big palace. This was the palace of the Banner King. The King was beloved by the people because they were allowed to visit the garden whenever they wanted.

"I have an idea!" yelled the Troubadour. "If I play my music for the people in the garden, surely I will *also* make a pal!" She packed all her stuff: two fiddles, a drum and her trusty lute. Full of courage, she stepped out and turned back one final time. "Bye-bye house" she whispered. With all her possessions on her back, she started the journey down.

### Chapter II

A short while later, she arrived at the garden of the Banner King. All the flowers were in bloom and all the hedges were neatly trimmed. Flags in every colour of the rainbow fluttered in the wind. The garden was incredibly beautiful, but also incredibly busy!

"Jeez, there are so many people here!" said the Troubadour. "From up the hill, the people look just like tiny ants, but from up close everyone is *busy busy busy*." Troubadour has never seen so many people in one place. People were laughing and having picnics and running and shouting.

Regardless, she looked for a good spot to play her song. She found one that was surrounded by pretty flags and hedges. She sang her sad song as loud as she could. Nobody seemed to hear her through the hustle and bustle.

"Maybe there's too much noise here", thought the Troubadour. She walked further into the garden, where merchants with little stalls sold all kinds of pretty and useful thingies. After browsing around for a bit, she yelled: "I have an idea!" She sold one of her fiddles for a loudspeaker, a neat little invention that would make her music extra loud. "Now the people will *have* to listen!"

Again she looked for a good spot, on a crowded street this time. But even with the loudspeaker, the people did not seem to notice her at all. Nobody even looked at her. Nobody... except for a single jolly clown.

The clown approached her and merrily said: "I think the people would prefer to hear something more cheerful, little Troubadour. This garden is so beautiful! Doesn't that just make you jump for joy?" The Troubadour thought for a minute. "Maybe you're right, clown" she responded.

And thus, the Troubadour returned to the market of merchants. She traded in her other fiddle without enthusiasm. She came back with a sparkly costume and a colorful feathered hat. She ran back to her spot. This time she played a cheerful melody, about flowers and bees and your favorite food and playing outside in the sun.

*"I'm so happy", lied the Troubadour,  
"I have nary a frown  
I could cry from laughter  
With this many people around!"*

A few folks turned around and smiled kindly to the Troubadour. But still, most people just walked right past her. On the other side of the street, however, a big crowd formed. She passed through the crowd and saw what everyone was looking at.

### Chapter III

An acrobat was performing an impressive show! She did somersaults from a trapeze, juggling on a highwire, fire breathing and anything else you can imagine. The audience howled and applauded so loud it could turn you deaf. People came from all sides to shake her hand and ask for an autograph.

The Troubadour was amazed, but puzzled. "Maybe my show isn't spectacular enough..." thought the Troubadour. Once more, she went back to the marketplace. This time, she bargained her drum away for a bag full of stuff. She got a trampoline, a unicycle and an armful of torches to juggle.

The owner of the little market stall, a smiling old man with a burly mustache, was starting to become curious now. "Say, what are you using all that stuff for?" he asked the Troubadour. "I'm going to perform a spectacular show! A show that all the people would want to see!" she answered. "You know what", said the merchant, "you provided me with so much trade today. I'll let you use my stall as a podium!" The Troubadour thanked the merchant so much for his kindness.

After they set up the podium, evening settled. The little gnomes who button up the sky every night climbed up the ladders to snuff out the sun. For the first time, the Troubadour was a little nervous. For the first time, she had been away from home for such a long time. For the first time, the people seemed interested in what she was about to do.

"I might not be an acrobat", she thought to herself, "but if this is what the people want..." Many people, young and old, began to gather in front of the stage. Dressed in her glitter suit, the little Troubadour started juggling. The audience erupted in roaring applause.

"Why do the people like this, but not my music?", the Troubadour thought in her head. She hesitated, but the cheering of the crowd eventually won her over. Gently, she lit the torches on fire. One torch in the air. The crowd cheered. Two torches in the air. The crowd cheered louder. The Troubadour felt the heat of the flames near her face.

Troubadour had a hard time concentrating. "Why am I doing this?", she thought, "Didn't I come down here to make a pal?" The third torch reached the sky but did not return to her hand. She heard a scream behind her. "Fire!" the voice shouted.

### Chapter IV

Indeed, something was burning behind the podium. A single bush caught fire and it was rapidly spreading to nearby hedges! The whole garden, full of flowers, plants, hedges and trees was now one big bonfire. The flames streaked up the banners and it did not take long before even the highest of flags were burning.

People were fleeing to the one place of safety: the palace of the Banner King. The Troubadours noticed her sparkly costume was also smoldering. She quickly took it off, grabbed her lute and ran after the crowd. "Oh no!", she cried softly, "What have I done?"

At the gate of the palace, two soldiers addressed the crowd. "The King wants to know who set fire to the garden!", one boomed. The people didn't hesitate long before someone yelled: "It was her!" The little troubadour was pushed to the front with a heavy hand. The soldiers lifted her up, lute and all, by both her arms.

It was quite a change, from the smoke of the garden into the polished corridors of the palace. But Troubadour had no time to marvel at the lovely palace. She sobbed and wailed, but the soldiers paid her no mind. They dragged her, feet dangling, all the way to the throne room.

There, the Banner King sat on his throne. He was a giant of a man, with a golden sceptre and a velvet robe. His bushy eyebrow seemed to be locked into a frown. "So you are the scoundrel who set fire to my garden", growled the King. He stood up from the throne, revealing his towering figure. "I ought to lock you up in prison!", the King yelled. The Troubadour cried: "It was an accident, mister the King! I only wanted the people to hear my music. I mean no harm, I swear..."

The King's single eyebrow raised in curiosity. "You make music?", he asked. "Yes", the Troubadour replied, "but I only have my lute left... The rest went up in flames." The tall King sat back on his throne and waved his hand. "Well then, play me a tune, music maker."

### Chapter V

The throne room was completely silent as everyone held their breath. The Troubadour grabbed her lute and sang, loudly and with all her heart:

*"I'm so lonely  
So lonely and alone  
Who do I play music for  
With no one in my home?"*

Another silent moment passes... And then she played another verse.

*"Woe is me, woe is me,  
I've searched the land and all the sea,  
I've asked the animals and asked the trees,  
But still, I've found no pal for me!"*

Her song echoes through grandiose halls for a second...

Then the King burst into tears. "How beautiful! How very beautiful! I've never heard something so beautiful!", cried the King. "You think it's beautiful?", the Troubadour asked, full of surprise, "Everyone else thinks it's too sad!" The King replied: "I think it's stunning! I'm deeply moved. I also feel so lonely and alone."

The Troubadour couldn't believe her ears. "You feel lonely? But you're the King! You're beloved by the people!", she said. "Yes, but I don't have any real pals. Everyone is always *busy busy busy* in the garden. Nobody comes to visit me in the throne room", sobbed the King.

"I can be your pal!", said the Troubadour. The King bawled a response: "Would you really? I have nothing left! The garden turned to ash and the people have no reason to come back anymore..." The King suddenly seemed awfully small on his big throne. "Really!", said the Troubadour. She thought long and hard for a moment.

And for the last time that day, she yelled: "I have an idea!"

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### Chapter VI

Next to the palace of the Banner King, there stands a hill. And on that hill stands a tiny house. And from that house, you can hear beautiful, happy music. In that tiny house on the hill, with the happy music, a no-longer-lonely Troubadour practices her lute playing.

Every evening, when the sun gets snuffed out, she makes the journey down to the palace. Every evening the King invites people from all over the land to come and watch. Then, the throne room is full of all different kinds of people; sad people, glad people, fabulously dressed or naked for but a vest.

Every evening, the Troubadour plays her lute there. She plays happy songs, sad songs, songs to eat to, and songs to move your feet to. Every song gets listened with attention, by all the people as well as her new pal, the Banner King.

**The End**

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### Todo:

- Pace out the ending.
- Spend more time on building friendship between the King and Troubadour.
- Break into chapters
- Illustrations
- American version vs UK version