

Honeysuckle





"Cock-a-doodle-dooooo!" crows Robert the Rooster. "Wake up, sleepyheads! The sun has been up for hours and you're still snoring away. It's a beautiful day to play outside. Good morning! Cock-a-doodle-dooooo!" Campanula the Cat blinks her eyes and smooths her whiskers. She stretches long and high and lifts her tail straight up in the air. "Where's Dribble?" she yawns. "I don't hear or see him. Strange... he always barks happily in the morning when Robert crows."

"Maybe he didn't hear Robert today?" bleats Grumpybuck the Goat. "Impossible! Look over there, can you see that dust cloud? That's Herbie the Hare – and if he heard it..." clucks Robert. "Well, let's just go wake him up," grumbles Grumpybuck. It's very quiet at Dribble's house. The door is closed, the curtains still drawn. Campanula pushes the latch down with her paw and pokes her little head inside. She jumps in fright. Dribble is still curled up in his basket.

"Dribble, Dribble, wake up," whispers Campanula. But Dribble doesn't even lift his head. She sneaks closer and gives him a gentle nudge. Slowly he opens his eyes. He sees Campanula and the others standing there and sighs deeply. "Are you ill? Have you got a headache?" asks Campanula carefully. Dribble groans a little and sighs again. "You look so sad," says Herbie and he darts to the other side of the room.

"Oh," moans Dribble, "those days, when I still lived with my siblings and my dear mum ... oh, it was such a nice time in my life. We could always play together." "Huh?!" mutters Grumpybuck. "Don't you like us anymore, Dribble? Don't you want to play with us then?"

"Yes, I do, but it's not the same. Oh, Grumpybuck, you should have seen our garden. There were such tall, grand trees, their branches reached right up to the clouds. And the lovely bushes – perfect for hide and seek. And the flowers! Such beautiful colours and scents! And the little brook behind our garden... the water was crystal clear, you could see the sticklebacks swimming, and the ducks paddling along, quacking happily. And... oh..."

"This is really strange," bleats Grumpybuck, scratching his goatee. "Shall I crow you a song?" asks Robert. But Dribble turns his back to his friends and pulls the blanket completely over his head. He just wants his friends to leave him alone!

"Maybe some fresh air and warm sunshine will cheer him up? It will tickle his nose and make him laugh again. Then he'll be happy!" the animals all shout at the same time.

But nothing, nothing helps. Dribble just keeps sighing and turning over in his basket. His friends stand around looking dumbfounded. Herbie can't stand it anymore. He jumps up and rushes out of the room, hurried as ever. "I'm off then! Have a nice day, everyone!" they barely hear him say it.

Through the open window Miss Aurelia flutters into the room. She looks at the friends, then carefully steps towards Dribble. With her long antennae the butterfly touches Dribble's head. She furrows her brows, glances thoughtfully at the animals around her, and ponders. Finally, she nods: "Dribble is homesick. He misses his old home so much that it makes him very sad. I know what to do!" And just as suddenly as she came, Miss Aurelia is gone again.

