

RABBIT TALES

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Characters:

Auntie Remus: A wise old narrator

Brer Rabbit: A selfish trickster

Brer Fox: A frenetic and frantic wannabe trickster

Brer Bear: A slow but kind bear

Miss Gator: A ill-tempered reptile

Tarrypin the Turtle: A nervous and kindly turtle

Miss Meadows: A motherly and refined cow

Scene 1

#1. Overture

#1b. Auntie Remus

A briar patch, behind it, rolling woodlands. Off to one side is a rocking chair. Enter AUNTIE REMUS, whistling to herself and smiling. She stops, noticing the audience.

REMUS

Well, hello there! Mighty fine day, innit? How y'all doin'?

Wait for audience response.

That's what I like to hear! What are y'all doin' out here at the old briar patch? Oh, I 'spect you're wantin' to hear about my friend Brer Rabbit, huh?

Wait for audience. REMUS has room to play and engage.

What's that? You don't know who Brer Rabbit is? Well, you stay right there and let ol' Auntie Remus tell you about that tricky old rabbit. You see, long ago, before your daddies and mommies were born, and before *their* daddies and mommies were born, way down south, there was a forest. And in this forest, there was a briar patch, and in this briar patch there lived a certain rabbit.

#2. Good Mornin', Briar Patch!

Now, back then animals weren't as thick as they are now. No, they could walk and talk and sing – though they spent most of this time hollerin' at one another. And out of all the animals, there was one who was smarter, faster, and trickier than all the rest, and his name was –

BRER RABBIT

Brer Rabbit!

WHEN I WAKE UP IN THE BRIAR PATCH,
AND I FEEL THAT MORNIN' SUN
I SAY BOY, OH, BOY BRER RABBIT,
TODAY IS GONNA BE FUN!

I GOT ALL MY FRIENDS AROUND ME,

ALL OF US AS THICK AS THIEVES,
AND WE LAUGH AND PLAY, EACH AND EVERY DAY
JUST AS WELL AS YOU MAY PLEASE!

AND WE SAY GOOD MORNIN' BRIAR PATCH!
GOOD MORNIN' FRIENDS!
TODAY IS SUCH A GOOD ONE,
I HOPE IT NEVER ENDS!

REMUS

There were other animals, too, like big ol' Brer Bear!

(The big, kind hearted bear lumbers in.)

BRER BEAR

GOOD MORNIN' THERE, BRER BUNNY!
TODAY IS GUNNA BE SUNNY.
NOW WOULD YOU BE SO KIND AS TO HELP ME FIND
SOME MORE DELICIOUS HONEY?

REMUS

And Miss Meadows the cow –

(A motherly cow dressed in gingham enters.)

And lil' Tarrypin the Turtle –

(A well-dressed, nervous looking turtle enters. TARRYPIN is BRER RABBIT's best friend. BRER RABBIT greets them like a gentleman, and they dance.)

There was Sister Gator, the most ill-tempered and hungry critter in that part of the wood.

(Enter SISTER GATOR, sleek and mean.)

GATOR

GOOD MORNIN' SISTER GATOR,
I THINK IT'S TIME TO EAT
LOOK AT ALL THESE TASTY MORSELS,
I THINK I'LL HAVE A TREAT!

(She snaps at TARRYPIN, who squeals in fear.)

REMUS

And of course, there was Brer Fox. He was Brer Rabbit's best friend and worst enemy. Those two were always either laughin' away or goin' at each other like – well, like foxes and hares.

(Enter the suave yet frazzled BRER FOX.)

BRER FOX

I GOT PICKIN'
I GOT WAT'RIN'
I GOT CHORES TO DO,

BRER RABBIT

SOUNDS LIKE YOU PLAN ON BEING
BORING, TOO!

BRER FOX

I GOT A THOUSAND THINGS TO DO EACH DAY!

BRER RABBIT

AH, RELAX BRER FOX, JUST COME AND PLAY!

ALL

COME AND SING
GOOD MORNIN' BRIAR PATCH,
GOOD MORNIN' FRIENDS!
TODAY IS SUCH A GOOD ONE,
I HOPE IT NEVER ENDS.

YES, WE SAY
GOOD MORNIN' BRIAR PATCH,
GOOD MORNIN' FRIENDS!
TODAY IS SUCH A GOOD ONE,
WE HOPE IT NEVER ENDS!
HOPE IT NEVER ENDS!
HOPE IT NEVER ENDS!

(The animals all exit, and the scene shifts to BRER FOX's Goober Patch.)

SCENE 2

#2a. Transition #1

REMUS

Now, Brer Rabbit was a happy feller, always hoppin' along and greetin' his neighbors all friendly like. But! He could get on their bad side, too, 'specially when he was hungry. And there was nothin' that could top off that hunger like a bushel of Brer Fox's special, home grown goobers...

(BRER FOX is toiling away in his garden with a hoe. He stops, panting, wiping sweat from his brow. Enter BRER RABBIT. Upon seeing his friend, he chuckles and sneaks up on the FOX.)

FOX

Whoo-ee! Sure is a doozy of a day to be picking goobers, but it looks like this just might be my best crop yet! Let's see – I've watered 'em, weeded 'em, fertilized 'em – what am I forgetting?

(His stomach growls, loud.)

Oh that's right – eatin' 'em!

(He picks up a bushel piled high with goobers.)

And look at all them goobers, ripe for the eatin' – all of them for me! I don't gotta share one, not even with that nosy little, goober gulpin' cottontail –

RABBIT

Mooooornin', Brer Fox!

FOX

(Letting out a high pitched shriek)

Brer Rabbit?!?

(Hides the bushel behind himself.)

What are you doin' here?!

RABBIT

I was just stoppin' by to say hello, when I noticed you were out in your goober patch, and I thought to myself: Say, I bet good ol' Brer Fox is pickin' goobers! And you know how I love me some goobers! *Are you pickin' goobers, Brer Fox? Are ya are ya are ya!?*

FOX

Nope! I ain't pickin' no goobers!

RABBIT

Oh no? Then – what's that in that there bushel?

FOX

What bushel?

RABBIT

That bushel!

FOX

I don't see no bushel!

RABBIT

Right there!

FOX

Nope!

RABBIT

It's –

FOX

No bushel!

RABBIT

Would you just –

FOX

Brer Rabbit, there ain't no bushel here, and even if there were, it most certainly would not be full of delicious goobers I was gonna eat all by myself! All. By. My. Self!

(He reveals the bushel and shakes it at RABBIT.)

YOU CAN'T HAVE NONE OF THESE GOOBERS, BRER RABBIT!!

(Thinks.)

Dangit.

RABBIT

Not even one?

FOX

No!

RABBIT

Oh Brer Fox look quick!

FOX

What?!

RABBIT

It's a distraction!

FOX

Where?!

(He ducks, dropping the bushel. BRER RABBIT dives for it.)

RABBIT

Goobers!

(BRER FOX tries to stop BRER RABBIT. REMUS freezes the scene.)

REMUS

Now – for those of you who don't know what a goober is, well, you sure are missin' out. A goober is another name for a peanut, and there ain't nothin' like a basket of freshly shelled peanuts on a hot summer day.

(The scene unfreezes. BRER FOX snatches the bushel back.)

FOX

Brer Rabbit, you stay away! These goobers is mine, I grew 'em all by my lonesome, and I'm gonna *eat* them all by my lonesome!

RABBIT

Gee, Brer Fox, that ain't none too neighborly of you. You still got a whole patch of prime peanuts to pick, can't I just have a few?

FOX

I said what I said, these goobers is mine, not yours!

RABBIT

But –

FOX

You – you just get outta here Brer Rabbit, ‘fore I get hungry for somethin’ *other* than goobers!

RABBIT

Well, fine then! See if I share any o’ my carrots next time you’re makin’ a nice salad! Good *mornin’*, Brer Fox!

(He starts to hop off, but darts back and hides behind a tree.)

FOX

(Calling after him)

Foxes don’t eat salads!

(Thinking)

Hmm. Brer Rabbit mighta left, but he sure ain’t gone for good. I know I been tricked by that rascally rabbit before. Maybe I outta share my goobers – but I said no, and they’re mine anyway! He’s got no right! I know what I’ll do – I’ll set me a trap for that bunny. I’ll wait here –

(He produces a cartoonishly large butterfly net, and hides.)

And when he comes back to steal my goobers, I’ll hogtie him up good and tight! Hoohoo! Here we are – now, just to wait ‘til he comes back...

(RABBIT sneaks back on, not seeing FOX.)

RABBIT

I think he left! Whoeee, time to get me some goobers!

#2a. Decision #1

REMUS

Brer Rabbit!

RABBIT

Auntie Remus! What’re you doin’ here?

REMUS

You sure you want to go and just take Brer Fox's goobers?

RABBIT

Yeah, but Auntie Remus, he wan't gonna share with me!

REMUS

That doesn't mean you go and take his things!

(To the audience:)

Do you all think it's right to steal someone's stuff?

(Wait for response.)

Wouldn't it be kinder to just ask him nicely?

(Wait for response.)

RABBIT

I *did* ask nicely!

REMUS

Well, then you know he don't want to share, and that's that. They *are* his goobers, Brer Rabbit!

RABBIT

Well someone's gotta teach him a lesson about sharin'! That grumpy ol' fox is gonna get what's comin' to him.

REMUS

Brer Rabbit –

(The scene resumes, and BRER RABBIT goes to the bushel.)

RABBIT

Ah, here we are, a nice juicy bunch of –

(FOX leaps out and catches BRER RABBIT in the net.)

FOX

GOTCHA!

RABBIT

Eep!

FOX

Brer Rabbit, I could scold you for not leavin' well enough alone, but now, I get to eat you! Whoeee, you stay right there and I'll go and get my cooking things, and we'll have a nice bite to eat – well, I will anyway! Heeheeheehee!

(He bounds off.)

RABBIT

Well. Certainly didn't see that comin'.

(Offstage, we hear BRER BEAR approaching, humming.)

But! I do think I see the solution to my problem comin' down the road right now...

(Enter BEAR. A simpleton by nature, good-hearted and dull.)

REMUS

Along down the path comes Brer Bear. Now, Brer Bear was a likeable enough feller, always eager to share in a laugh or an adventure with friends, but what he really loved to do – was *eat*. That boy could eat a whole berry patch before noon and still have room for seconds at lunch. And as he sauntered down the path...

BEAR

Well, helloo there, Brer Bunny!

RABBIT

(Aside)

An idea comes to me.

(To BRER BEAR)

Quiet, Brer Bear! Can't you tell when a fella's tryin' to get some work done?

BEAR

Work? What kinda work you doin' in a net, Brer Rabbit?

RABBIT

Net? This ain't no net, my jocular gent! Your eyes do deceive you! This here is a camouflage net!

BEAR

Like – the thing you use for hidin’?

RABBIT

That’s the bunny, Brer Bear!

BEAR

You sure are silly, Brer Bunny. You don’t need to hide from goobers, they ain’t gonna bite you none!

(REMUS freezes the scene.)

REMUS

Now, you may have noticed that while Brer Bear was the biggest critter in the wood, he may not have been the brightest. In fact, he was about as sharp as a sack of wet mice, if’n you ask me.

(The scene unfreezes.)

RABBIT

Oh, I ain’t hidin’ from the goobers, Brer Bear.

BEAR

Well, what’re you doin’ playin’ around in a camel floss net?

RABBIT

I am *protectin’* the goober patch!

BEAR

(Letting out a low, slow laugh)

What, you? Protectin’ Brer Fox’s goober patch?

RABBIT

Sure as the sun come up in the west!

BEAR

But don’ it –

RABBIT

Shoo, crows, shoo! Brer Bear, you are *distractin’* me! You get outta here and let a feller do his job! I ain’t getting’ paid a BUSHEL of GOOBERS an HOUR just to sit here yappin’ at you!

BEAR

A bushel?

RABBIT

Mmhm.

BEAR

Of goobers?

RABBIT

That's right!

BEAR

An hour!?

RABBIT

Brer Bear, you hear an echo?

BEAR

Oh, I sure would love me some goobers! Do – do you think Brer Fox might let me guard the goober patch a while?

RABBIT

Hmm... I dunno. Takes a lot of hard work and skill to watch a goober patch all proper...

BEAR

Oh, please, Brer Rabbit, you gotta let me try! I'll do whatever it takes!

RABBIT

Well... you gotta be *real* strong!

(BEAR strikes a strong pose)

And real smart!

(BEAR strikes a smart pose)

And real, real good at hiding!

(BEAR starts to try and make a sneaky pose, but -)

BEAR

Oh, but Brer Rabbit, I'm too big to be good at hidin'!

RABBIT

Hm, I suppose so. Shame you ain't got one of these nets to disguise you...

BEAR

Do – do you think I could use *yours*?

RABBIT

You know, I *am* getting' mighty hot out here... I could use a break...

BEAR

Please, oh please please please Brer Rabbit!

RABBIT

Alright, you win! Just help me outta this net and it's all yours!

BEAR

Whooo-ee! Thank you, Brer Rabbit!

(He pulls the net off RABBIT, who quickly hops out and helps lower it over BEAR.)

RABBIT

Now you take good care of this here goober patch. I'll just be takin' my wages –

(He picks up the bushel.)

And headin' home to cool off. Whoo, what a day for goober watchin'!

(Snickering as he hops off.)

Keep them eyes *wide* open, Brer Bear!

BEAR

Thank you, Brer Rabbit! You're a real friend.

(To himself)

Wide open. Eyes wiiiiiiiiide open...

(He bugs his eyes, barely blinking.)

FOX re-enters with cooking things.)

REMUS

But of course, it wouldn't be *that* day. Soon enough, all those critters had put the goober patch incident behind them and were all friends again. Friends, at least, until Brer Rabbit done decided all this peace and quiet was just *too* quiet for his liking...

SCENE 3: A Pond

#2c: Transition 2

(BRER RABBIT and TARRYPIN sit on a log, fishing, passing back and forth a big bottle of soda.)

RABBIT

Lil' Tarrypin, I have come to the conclusion that things are too quiet in this part of the wood.

TARRYPIN

Too quiet, Brer Rabbit? Things just settled down from your antics at the goober patch.

RABBIT

Yeah, but I just can't get over the feelin' that if I don't go rilin' things up soon, somebody else will, and I'll end up getting' the sour end of it!

TARRYPIN

But every time you do, someone else ends up feelin' the heat!

RABBIT

But not you, Tarrypin! You're my friend, and our sort of critter has to stick together. Now take a sip of this!

(TARRYPIN drinks some soda, and lights up.)

TARRYPIN

Brer Rabbit, what is this?

RABBIT

It's called soda pop, it'll be the next biggest thing to sliced bread, I'll reckon.

TARRYPIN

Don'chu mean best thing *since* sliced bread?

RABBIT

Nu-uh. I mean what I says, Tarrypin, and don't forget it.

#2d: Sister Gator Entrance

REMUS

Now just then, along came Sister Gator, lookin' for something to chow on.

GATOR

Mm, look at that two tasty morsels, just sittin' there, ripe for the takin'.

(She swims up to them.)

Mornin', Brer Rabbit. Tarrypin.

RABBIT

Mornin' yourself, Sister Gator! It's nearly half past noon, if'n I'm right!

GATOR

Is that so? Well, that means it's just about time for *lunch* innit?

TARRYPIN

L-l-l-unch?

RABBIT

(Worried)

I 'spose you're right, Sister Gator. Well, we won't keep you, come along, Lil' Tarrypin...

GATOR

Now, not so fast, Brer Rabbit. I was hopin' you two would stick around and have a *bite*.

RABBIT

Oh, is that so?

GATOR

Quite.

TARRYPIN

Brer Rabbit?

RABBIT

What are you supposin' we eat? I don't think you've got any carrots down in your pond there, and no lettuce either.

GATOR

Don't suppose I do. Should be getting' in some nice rabbit soon, though. Turtle, too.

TARRYPIN

I think I need to change my shell.

RABBIT

(Ignoring TARRYPIN)

Yeah, I suppose that sounds alright, Sister Gator.

TARRYPIN

What?!

RABBIT

Yeah, it might make a decent meal, just might. But iffing you got some lean, dry, stringy rabbit, and some crunchy ol' turtle as a side dish, aren't you forgetting somethin'?

TARRYPIN

I resent being just a side dish.

(BRER RABBIT elbows her.)

RABBIT

I MEAN, aren't you missin' somethin' to wash it down with?

GATOR

I got plenty of water right here.

TARRYPIN

That's true.

RABBIT

I suppose that'll do alright. Fine! Go ahead, you win. EAT ME!

(He spreads his arms wide, surprising GATOR.)

GATOR

Well, that's mighty decent of you, Brer Rabbit.

RABBIT

Eat me, and wash me down with your mucky pond water you been swimmin' about in all day, never knowin' what could truly be called an excellent and complimentary beverage for your feast.

GATOR

Wait – what was that you said just there?

RABBIT

I said EAT ME!

GATOR

No, the other thing.

RABBIT

Oh, just some wish-wash about the darn tootin' best thing you ever done gone and drank!

(He takes the soda bottle from TARRYPIN and dangles it in front of GATOR.)

GATOR

What is that? Here, let me try some!

RABBIT

Uh uh uh, you got plenty of *pond water*, let me savor my one last drink!

GATOR

I say let me try some!

(She snatches the bottle from RABBIT and chugs it down. When finished, she lets out a big belch.)

Whoo-ee! That *is* mighty fine, Brer Rabbit! What is this?

TARRYPIN

It's called soda pop, and it's the next biggest thing to –

(RABBIT claps a hand of TARRYPIN's mouth.)

RABBIT

It's *called* Fox Juice, on account of how it's made from boiled down fox fur!

GATOR

You're pullin' my tail, Brer Rabbit!

RABBIT

I would never! It's boiled down fox fur, alright, sure as I hatched from an egg!

TARRYPIN

But you didn't –

RABBIT

(Hushed)

Lil' Tarrypin, I ain't gonna tell you again, let me do the talkin'!

(To GATOR)

Now, Tarrypin and I, we struck a deal with ol' Brer Fox up the hill, and he's givin' us a whole *load* of his fur to make Fox Juice out of! We got *cases* of the stuff up at my place. Why don't we go get you some?

GATOR

Well! I'd be mighty obliged, Brer Rabbit!

(RABBIT and TARRYPIN start to exit.)

But hold on a second! How do I know you're gonna come *back* once you got the Fox Juice?

RABBIT

Sister Gator! You doubt my word? Don't you know what happens iff'n a rabbit should e'er tell a lie?

GATOR

No, I don't. What *should* happen to you should you be lyin' to me?

RABBIT

You don't know – uh, Lil' Tarrypin, why don't you tell Sister Gator what'll happen to me if'n I'm lyin'.

TARRYPIN

I should tell Sister Gator what'll happen to you if you're lyin'?

RABBIT

Yes, *you* should tell *Sister Gator* what'll happen to me iff'n I'm lying!

TARRYPIN

(Frantic, whispered)

But Brer Rabbit, I don't *know* what's gonna happen to you if you're telling a –

(It dawns on her.)

Oh! OH! Oh, uh uh, yeah, if a rabbit tells a lie, well, uh, then –

GATOR

I wait to be amused.

TARRYPIN

Uh, then their ears fall clean off.

GATOR

Is that so.

TARRYPIN

(Getting progressively more manic)

Yeah! Their ears fall clean off their scruffy little bodies. And – and then their tails frizzle right up!

GATOR

(A little nervous)

Is that so?

RABBIT

Yeah, is that so, Lil' Tarrypin?

TARRYPIN

Sure is, but that's not all, since because they ain't got no tail or ears, their feets don't know which way's up, so their *left* foot goes sideways and their *right* one goes *left* and they's just a jumble plumble bumble of a mess after that. And you wouldn't want to eat that, would ya?

GATOR

(Scared)

Is this true, Brer Rabbit?

RABBIT

Sure is, saw it happen to my Auntie Bugs once. Cryin' shame, that was.

GATOR

Well, if that's the case, you two run along and grab that Fox Juice. I'mma going to rest up here.

(She sinks out of sight below the water.)

TARRYPIN

You do that! Wonderful Wonderful I think I need to lie down, now.

(She faints away, retreating into her shell.)

RABBIT

(Laughing)

Suuuuure was some quick thinkin' you did there, Lil' Tarrypin!

REMUS

Now, you can say what you like about that critter Brer Rabbit, but he sure did have an awful lot of luck, for right at that very moment, down the path came ol' Brer Fox and Brer Bear, all set to start themselves a-fishin', carryin' a big net between the two of 'em.

RABBIT

Tarrypin? You there? We sure did trick Sister Gator good, didn't we?

REMUS

I can't help but feel somebody's gonna be sour afore this is over, Brer Rabbit. You lyin' and trickin' your friends left and right...

RABBIT

Auntie Remus, you don't know what its like, always someone tryin' to eat you!

#3: *Me, Myself, and I*

RABBIT

WHENEVER I'M IN TROUBLE
AND I START TO GET THE HUNCH,
THAT MY LITTLE BUNNY SELF
IS 'BOUT TO BE SOMEBODY'S LUNCH,
I KEEP MY WITS ABOUT ME,
LOOK MY FEAR IN THE EYE,
AND SPEAK THE SPEECH I PRAYETH,
IN THE FORM OF A WHITE LIE!

ME, MYSELF, AND I
ARE THE ONLY TEAM I TRUST,
IF I WANNA SAVE YM FLUFFY TAIL,
SELF ASSURANCE IS A MUST!

ME, MYSELF, AND I
ARE THE CLEV'REST FOLKS AROUND
IF YOU WANT SOMETHING DONE RIGHT
YOU DO IT YOURSELF I'VE FOUND.

REMUS

YOU, YOURSELF, AND YOUR LIES
GONNA GET YOU IN TROUBLE SOME DAY
THINK ABOUT YOUR FRIENDS, AND HOW THEY FEEL,
YOU'RE GONNA PUSH THEM AWAY!

RABBIT

AW, AUNTIE REMUS DON'T SPOIL MY FUN.
MY TRICKS AND GAMES HAVE JUST BEGUN!

(Calling out)

Brer Fox, Brer Bear! Come quick! Brer Sun's gone and fell in the pond!

FOX

Brer Rabbit, what're you talkin' about?

BEAR

Silly rabbit, that's just a reflection!

RABBIT

Nu-uh, I saw him fall allll the way down, and right into that there pond! And I don't think he knows how to swim! If only someone could fish him out!

FOX

Well, we got a net –

BEAR

And we's the best fishermen in the whole wood! Move aside, Brer Rabbit!

RABBIT

Be my guest. Heh heh heh...

REMUS

YOU, YOURSELF AND YOUR LIES
YOU NEVER LEARN FROM YOUR MISTAKES.
WHEN YOUR FRIENDS ARE MAD AT YOU, YOU'LL SEE
THE TOLL THAT IT TAKES...

And so, Brer Bear and Brer Fox, not knowing they was about to get fooled, they went a-draggin' their net back and forth and back and forth and back and forth across the pond, getting' all worked up until finally –

BEAR

Brer Fox, I think we got sum'fin'!

REMUS

And lo, they had, but it wasn't no sun. Instead, the pair pulled up –

BEAR & FOX

Sister Gator!?

(They pull up a grumpy looking GATOR)

REMUS

Ooh, those two were just a shakin' in their britches. E'ry one in those parts was mighty scared of the hungry, mean ol' Sister Gator. And heaven forbid you ever woke her up from a nap in her pond!

GATOR

What're you fools doin' draggin' that dang net across my –

(Seeing FOX.)

Well, hooooowddy Brer Fox!

FOX

(Knees clacking)

Howdy yerself, Sister Gator. Hope we didn't disturb you –

BEAR

No mam, we was just fishin' for the sun, ya see –

FOX

(Hushed)

Brer Bear, best let me do the talkin'! Y' see, we was just fishin' for the sun, and –

GATOR

Brer Rabbit, you outdone yerself this time.

RABBIT

How's that, Sister Gator?

GATOR

You skipped right over the Fox *Juice*, and brought me the whole fox for dinner!

FOX

What?!

RABBIT

Suuuure did! *Bon appetite!*

GATOR

C'mere, you! Now. What does a *tasty* little fox say!?

FOX

BRER RABBIT!

#3b. Pond Chase

(GATOR tries to pull FOX under the water. Begin a comical escape routine, with FOX and BEAR being pulled under and then escaping, the two comically helping each other escape, with RABBIT laughing all the while. TARRYPIN leaves her shell to watch. Finally, FOX and BEAR escape, with GATOR hot on their heels.)

GATOR

You two ruffians get back here and let me eat your proper!

TARRYPIN

Brer Rabbit, that wasn't very nice...

RABBIT

Whadaya mean, Tarrypin?

TARRYPIN

You got all those friends of yours all worked up! Your trick playin's really gonna get you in trouble one of these days, Brer Rabbit!

RABBIT

They try and eat me!

TARRYPIN

But they're still your friends, and love to laugh and play with you. We all do, Brer Rabbit, but sometimes you're just so mean...

RABBIT

I'm just *jokin'*, Lil' Tarrypin!

TARRYPIN

Sometimes that jokin' hurts.

RABBIT

Well, if you're so sensitive you can't take a little joke, well, then you're just a big sissy!

TARRYPIN

(Holding back tears)

I – I think I'm gonna go home now, Brer Rabbit –

(She leaves.)

RABBIT

Hmph. Some critters just can't appreciate a joke.

REMUS

But those other critters knew their comedy just fine, and found Brer Rabbit about as funny as a sliver in the in finger. Brer Rabbit began to find himself invited places less and less often. Soon enough, Brer Rabbit was out when he saw all the other critters havin' a big party – without *him!*

SCENE 3

#4: *Southern Hospitality*

(A picnic party is going down, hosted by MS. MEADOWS.)

MISS MEADOWS

EVER SINCE I WAS A LITTLE CALF
MY MOMMA SAID TO ME
BEIN' MEAN CAN HAVE ITS PRICE
BUT BEIN' NICE IS ALWAYS FREE

SO I'VE MADE IT MY LIFE'S PURPOSE
TO BE KIND WHEN'ER I CAN
IT NEVER COSTS ME NOTHIN'
TO HELP OUT MY FELLOW MAN

SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY
IS PROMISE TO BE KIND,
FROM YOU TO ME
IT HELPS OUT TO HELP OUT
IT'S THE WAY TO BE!
AND SO I LIVE BY SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY!

REMUS

The party was thrown by Miss Meadows, and everybody in the whole wood knew she was the best cook around. Why, just a whiff of her fresh cow pies could leavin' you floatin' high for days!

RABBIT

Howdy Auntie Remus. What's goin' on?

REMUS

Looks like Miss Meadows is havin' some sort of party.

RABBIT

A party? Nobody told me about no party! How come I wasn't invited, Auntie Remus?

REMUS

I'm sure I don't know, Brer Rabbit.

TARRYPIN

LOOKING OUT FOR ONE ANOTHER
MEANS WE DON'T MAKE FUN OR TEASE.
WE ALWAYS MIND OUR MANNERS,
SAY "YOU'RE WELCOME", "THANKS", AND "PLEASE"!

BEAR

WE KNOW THAT WE'RE NOT PERFECT
BUT WE TRY NOT TO YELL OR FIGHT,
AND THEN WE FIND WE SEE EACH OTHER
IN A BETTER LIGHT!

ALL

SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY
IS A PROMISE TO BE KIND
FROM YOU TO ME!
IT HELPS OUT TO HELP OUT
IT'S THE WAY TO BE,
AND SO I LIVE BY SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY!

MISS MEADOWS

Who, you children have got it down! Now, who wants some pie?

BEAR

I do!

FOX

I do!

GATOR

I do!

FOX

ONE SLICE, TWO SLICE,
THREE SLICE, FOUR!

GATOR

ONE HALF, ONE WHOLE
ONE PIECE OR MORE!

MISS MEADOWS

TAKE A SMALL SLICE
THICK SLICE
PICK A SLICE OR TWO

NEED MORE LYRICS HERE...

TARRYPIN

STRAWBERRY, APPLE, PUMPKIN PIE
CROSS MY HEART AND HOPE TO DIE

BEAR

I NEVER EVER EVER NEVER WANNA TRY
A SLICE THAT'S NOT MISS MEADOWS' PIE!

ALL

ONE SLICE, TWO SLICE
THREE SLICE, FOUR!
EATIN' PIE AIN'T NE'ER A BORE!

BEAR

TAKE THE CRUST AND BAKE IT
AND MARK IT WITH A B,

ALL

AND PUT IT IN THE OVEN
FOR OUR FRIEND PARTY!

SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY
IS A PROMISE TO BE KIND
FROM YOU TO ME!
IT HELPS OUT TO HELP OUT
IT'S THE WAY TO BE,
AND SO I LIVE BY SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY!

MISS MEADOWS

Now, who wants some more pie?

FOX

I sure would!

TARRYPIN

Me too!

BEAR

Me four! You sure do make some wonderful pie!

MISS MEADOWS

Why thank you, Brer Bear. Too kind, really.

RABBIT

They're eatin' pie! Oh, if only I knew what kind it was –

BEAR

Yessir, you make some mighty fine pie, but this rhubarb-berry-custard-and-cream-with-lemon-on-top pie has got to be my favorite, for sure!

RABBIT

Oh, noo! Miss Meadow's rhubarb-berry-custard-and-cream-with-lemon-on-top pie is *my* favorite, too! Auntie Remus, it's just to *die* for! I gotta get me a slice!

REMUS

You ever stop to think why they haven't invited you?

RABBIT

Yeah, cuz they can't take a little joke and go gettin' offended at the slightest!

REMUS

Gettin' offended is one thing, Brer Rabbit. But sometimes, something *you* think is funny, just ain't so to other people.

RABBIT

But they *know* I'm jokin'! I'm their friend, I'd never mean them no harm!

REMUS

Maybe if you went up and apologized, they'd give you a slice.

RABBIT

But I ain't got nothin' to be sorry for! It's *them* who should be apologizing to *me*! I just need a plan to make them see it... Let's see...

TARRYPIN

If you all excuse me a minute, I'll go and grab my banjo from home!

GATOR

Perfect! This party could use a little music!

(TARRYPIN begins exiting, towards RABBIT.)

RABBIT

An idea occurs to me...

(Acting sick and weary.)

Ooooh! OooOOOoooh!

TARRYPIN

(Scared)

Who's there?!

RABBIT

Oh, my stomach! My back! My ears! My aching cotton tail!

TARRYPIN

Brer Rabbit, is that you?

RABBIT

Who – who's there? Is that you, Lil' Tarrypin? My poor eyes can't see so well no more...

TARRYPIN

Brer Rabbit, what's happened to you?

RABBIT

Stay away, Lil' Tarrypin! I'm in a real bad way – I gone and got me a bad case of *grumpitis!*

TARRYPIN

Oh no! Not *grumpitis!*

(She thinks.)

What is *grumpitis*, Brer Rabbit?

RABBIT

Y'see, Tarrypin, if a rabbit don't laugh enough, he unvariably comes down with a case of *grumpitis*, and I ain't laughed in three whole weeks!

TARRYPIN

Three whole weeks? Why, you poor thing!

RABBIT

And so, I'm on my way to my laughin' place!

TARRYPIN

Your laughin' place?

RABBIT

That's right, my laughin' place. Every rabbit's got his laughin' place! When I'm there, I can't help but laugh! So, I'm trekkin' to my laughin' place, hopin' I don't just drop dead from grumpitis on the way.

TARRYPIN

Oh, you poor rabbit! Wait here, I'll be right back!

RABBIT

Oooh, hurry Lil' Tarrypin!

(TARRYPIN teeters back to the party)

Hehehe, I got him good...

TARRYPIN

Miss Meadows! Brer Fox, Brer Bear, Sister Gator, come quick!

MISS MEADOWS

What's wrong, Lil' Tarrypin?

TARRYPIN

It's Brer Rabbit! He looks a whole seven shades of awful.

FOX

Hmph. I bet it's another one of his tricks.

BEAR

Y-y-yeah! He's always goin' on and trickin' us!

MISS MEADOWS

That's right! Why, just last week he stole a pie from my windowsill after getting me stuck in a tree!

BEAR

And fishin' mishap –

FOX

And my goober patch!

TARRYPIN

And callin' me a sissy...

GATOR

If you were to ask me, I'd say it's high time somebody went and ate that critter right up!

MISS MEADOWS

Be that as it may, Sister Gator, Brer Rabbit is still our friend.

TARRYPIN

Yeah, and he ain't lookin too good right now –

#5. Grump-it is

(Enter RABBIT, limping and moaning)

RABBIT

WOE!
POOR ME!

LISTEN CLOSELY TO ME FRIENDS,
I GOT A TALE TO TELL
ABOUT A LITTLE COTTONTAIL
WHO DOESN'T FEEL SO WELL!

MY BACK, IT HURTS
MY KNEES, THEY QUAKE,
I CAN'T STOP SHIVERING!
I THINK THIS IS THE END FOR ME
AND THAT IS WHY I SING –

I GOT GRUMP-IT IS,
AND IT MAKES ME SAD!
I GOT GRUMP-IT IS!
AIN'T IT JUST TOO BAD!

FOX

BRER RABBIT, LET US HELP YOU!

MISS MEADOWS

LET US HELP YOU FEEL ALRIGHT.

RABBIT

I'M SORRY FRIENDS,
THIS IS THE END,
I'M GOIN' TO THE LIGHT!
I'M GOIN' TO THE LIGHT!

ALL

HE'S GOT GRUMP-IT IS,
AND IT MAKES US SAD.
HE'S GOT GRUMP-IT IS!

GATOR

AIN'T IT JUST TOO BAD.

MISS MEADOWS

QUICK, CALL FOR DOCTOR BUZZARD
AND THIS ILLNESS HE'LL ERASE!

RABBIT

JUST ONE THING CAN HELP ME NOW,
SO GET ME TO MY
LAUGHIN' PLACE!

GATOR

Your laughin' place.

BEAR

Uh, what's a laughin' place?

TARRYPIN

Brer Bear, e'erybody knows a rabbit's laughin' place is a place where they just can't *help* but laugh!

BEAR

Uh –

FOX

(Covering)

Uh, yeah! Shame on your for not knowin'! We gotta get Brer Rabbit to his laughin' place before he dies of grump-it is!

MISS MEADOWS

Brer Bear, you carry him, you're the strongest!

BEAR

Uh, is it safe for me to be carryin' him? Be all con-ta-guo-ous and all?

MISS MEADOWS

Well, then let Lil' Tarrypin carry him, she's got a protective shell!

TARRYPIN

I'm too slow to get him there in time!

GATOR

Y'all are a bunch of fools. That rabbit's gonna trick you again, mark my words. I'm goin' back to my pond.

(She goes.)

MISS MEADOWS

Mighty fine friend you are! Lil' Tarrypin, perhaps if Brer Bear had something to carry Brer Rabbit *on* –

RABBIT

Brer – Brer Fox, ain't you gonna let me ride on you?

FOX

What?

RABBIT

Y-you are the fastest one here (cough cough).

FOX

As a matter of fact, I suppose I am!

(He puts a saddle on himself)

Climb aboard, Brer Rabbit! Let's get you to your laughin' place!

(RABBIT climbs on FOX's back.)

RABBIT

Mighty obliged.

SCENE 5

(The group journeys. Sun and moon circle the sky and various weathers rotate through.)

REMUS

And so, the friends all started out for the fabled “Laughin’ Place” that Brer Rabbit kept telling them about. They travelled *all* day and *all* night. It got rainy, then it got hot and dry, and finally, after three days of trekkin’, Miss Meadows cried out –

MISS MEADOWS

Gracious Brer Rabbit! Ain’t we to your laughin’ place yet?

(A cave appears. RABBIT is still on FOX’s back.)

RABBIT

In fact we is, Miss Meadows. Take a gander over there!

TARRYPIN

That’s your laughin’ place, Brer Rabbit?

MISS MEADOWS

Why, that ain’t nothin’ but an old cave!

FOX

(Panting)

Brer Rabbit – this – this better be good. How come you ain’t laughin’ yet?

RABBIT

Well, it would be rude as host of this here laughin’ place, to not let my guests take a look around, first.

MISS MEADOWS

Well, I for one would like to see what all the hullabaloo is about!

TARRYPIN

Me too!

BEAR

Me, two! I mean, four!

FOX

(Hopelessly)

Shall I – shall I carry you inside?

RABBIT

(Kindly)

Brer Fox, you carried me far enough for now.

FOX

Oh, thank goodness!

(He sets RABBIT down)

You're a lot heavier than you look, Brer Rabbit!

RABBIT

I expect I'll be feelin' a lot lighter soon enough. Now, y'all go inside, and check it out.

REMUS

So the group of critters sidled up to the cave and peeked inside.

BEAR

Uh, I don't see nuffin'.

RABBIT

You gotta go all the way in, Brer Bear!

(They all do.)

REMUS

So the critters filed into the cave.

MISS MEADOWS

Brer Rabbit, I still don't see nothin' funny!

RABBIT

That's cuz you gotta clap real loud, three times!

REMUS

And so they did!

(The group does.)

RABBIT

Nu-uh, you gotta clap louder than that!

REMUS

(To the audience)

Can y'all help them clap real loud, three times? I'll count to three, then all y'all clap along. Ready? One – two – three!

(Audience claps)

FOX

I think that done work, Brer Rabbit. I'm starting to hear somethin'...

REMUS

And hear somethin' he did. Brer Fox and all the others heard a loud buzzing sound. Can you all buzz real loud for me?

(Audience buzzes)

FOX

Say that sure is a funny sound. What buzzes like that?

REMUS

What makes a buzzin' sound, y'all?

(Audience hopefully replies, BEES!)

MEADOWS, TARRYPIN, BEAR, FOX

BEES?!

REMUS

And bees it was! For inside that cave was nothin' but one big beehive!

#5b. Cave Chase

MEADOWS, TARRYPIN, FOX, BEAR

AIEEEE!

(They come running out of the cave, comically being chased around by a cloud of bees.)

TARRYPIN

I think one stung me through the shell!

BEAR

Uh, come here bee! OW! They're sneakin' up on me!

MISS MEADOWS

My poor soft sensitive face!

FOX

OW! Brer Rabbit, how come you go OW callin' this your laughin' place? I don't see nothin' YEE funny YOW about this!

RABBIT

(Laughing)

Brer Fox, I never said it was *your* laughin' place, but it sure is mine! Whoohoo, look at y'all go!

(The song ends as the animals are all chased off, and RABBIT exits, laughing.)

REMUS

Brer Rabbit sure did think himself mighty clever, pullin' a joke on his friends. But – was that a *nice* kind of joke?

(Audience response.)

No, it sure was not.

SCENE 6

(The pond. Enter FOX, aching with bee stings.)

FOX

Stupid OW Brer Rabbit! All I ever done was be his YEE friend, and what does he do when I'm bein' EEK murderd by bees? Just sit there, laughin'! Not to mention AHAHAH that he led us *into* the beestings to begin with OW!

(GATOR surfaces.)

GATOR

Well well, looks like you got yourself into a little bit of trouble, Brer Fox. It wouldn't happen to be on account of that BUZZ-ybody Brer Rabbit, would it?

FOX

Ha ham yuk it up, Sister Gator. Go on, say I told you so. Go on!

GATOR

Now hold on, Brer Fox. I ain't here to laugh at you, nor tell you I told you so – even if I *did* tell you so.

FOX

Then AH what're you here for? And while you're just sittin' there, why don't you help pull some of these stingers outta me YEE?

GATOR

I'll pass. Listen, Brer Fox: Brer Rabbit gone and fooled you one too many times, by my account. He's never thinkin' of others, and when he hurts someone, he says its just a joke – but, it never feels like a joke to *you*, now does it?

FOX

No it does not! It's really mean! I thought he and I were pals! Sure, I try to *eat* him every now and then, but that's what pals do!

#5c. Grump-it is (Reprise)

GATOR

What would you say if I could get rid of your rabbit problem – *permanently*?

FOX

Whoah whoah whoah there, Sister Gator. What are you talkin' about?

GATOR

BY ALL ACCOUNTS, I THINK IT'S TIME
WE WENT AND PAID HIM BACK.
I'VE GOT A PLAN TO GET HIM GOOD
AND GET US A LITTLE SNACK!
LISTEN CLOSELY TO ME, FOXY
WE'LL GET HIM BACK FOR SURE.
WE'LL GET REVENGE FOR ALL OUR FRIENDS
AND FOR US A LITTLE MORE!

REMUS

And so, Sister Gator and Brer Fox planned all through the night, working on some concoction, until finally –

GATOR

It's finished! There it is!

FOX

The honey bunney!

(They reveal a goopy sculpture of a rabbit made from honey.)

GATOR

Yessir when Brer Rabbit comes along, he won't be able to help but get gunked up in this!

FOX

And then, its us that does the trickin'!

GATOR

Exactly Brer Fox. Exactly...

SCENE 6

REMUS

Now, the next day, Brer Rabbit was hoppin' down the road when he saw Lil' Tarrypin comin' his way...

RABBIT

Well, howdy Lil' Tarrypin, mighty fine mornin'!

TARRYPIN

Brer Rabbit, I ain't talkin' to you no more!

(She tries to leave but RABBIT stops her)

RABBIT

What gives, Lil' Tarrypin?!

TARRYPIN

I wouldn't have let my *friend* get all stung up by a bunch of bees. Good day, Brer Rabbit!

RABBIT

Tarrypin, wait –

(Exit TARRYPIN, past RABBIT. Enter BEAR.)

What a little sissy! Here comes Brer Bear, least I can always count on him for a laugh!
Haloo, Brer Bear!

(BEAR flinches.)

BEAR

Uh, you stay away from me Brer Rabbit! I ain't fallin' for no more of your tricks!

RABBIT

Tricks? What tricks? I just wanna talk with you?

BEAR

La la la la la! I ain't listenin'! I know I'm slow, Brer Rabbit, but that don't mean you can just make me do whatever you want!

(He starts to exit.)

Oh, and I don't know for sure, but I'm guessin' Lil' Tarrypin don't like being called a sissy. But what do I know, I ain't the smart one here.

(He exits. MISS MEADOWS enters.)

RABBIT

What's got into everyone? What did I ever do to them! Ah, here comes Miss Meadows, she'll be sure to talk to me! Howdy, Miss Meadows.

MISS MEADOWS

Brer Rabbit, don't you dare talk to me!

RABBIT

Not you too! What did I do to *you*?

MISS MEADOWS

You got me stung up by bees, stole my pie, ruined my picnic – and made me worry myself sick about you being down with the *grump-itis*.

RABBIT

Well, when you put it like that... but Brer Bear, Lil' Tarrypin –

MISS MEADOWS

Brer Rabbit. You ain't been nice to a single one of us for a good long while. I think it's time for you to start thinking how your actions affect others, and not just how funny it is for yourself. Tarrypin was so upset yesterday, she started to cry. I ain't even seen Brer Fox all day, he was so stung up! Think about it. We want to be your friends, Brer Rabbit. But how can we be your friends, if you ain't ours?

(She exits, sadly.)

RABBIT

But – but I am your friend! Miss Meadows, come back!

REMUS

And suddenly, Brer Rabbit felt very lonely, standing there on the road all by himself.

RABBIT

(Sad and small)

Anyone?

(Enter FOX and GATOR, as RABBIT's back is turned. Between them, they hold the honey bunny, dressed up like the other critters.)

GATOR

Easy there, Brer Fox! Don't go upsetting her.

FOX

I got my end, you just handle yours – SHH! Look, right over there is Brer Rabbit!

GATOR

Perfect! Quick, set her down, I wanna see our trap work!

FOX

That rabbit finally gonna get what's comin' to him. Some friend *he* turned out to be. Did we really have to make this whole thing outta honey? My paws are all sticky, now.

GATOR

'Course we did! How else we gonna get Brer Rabbit all gunked up and stuck?

FOX

Fine, let's just set her down and hide. Still woulda been easier to make her out of tar, I say...

GATOR

Would you give it a rest with the tar? Alright, she's set, let's hide!

REMUS

Then, Brer Rabbit came a-hoppin' down the lane.

RABBIT

Well, here's someone to talk to – don't recognize them! Mornin', Ms. Honey Bunny!

FOX

Honey Bunny! Ha! Why didn't I think of that?

REMUS

Brer Rabbit kept hopping, then stopped, realizing even the Honey Bunny hadn't said a single word to him.

(RABBIT hops back to the honey bunny.)

RABBIT

Hey, I said good mornin', Honey Bunny!

REMUS

Still, there was no answer.

RABBIT

Say, you're bein' rather rude. I know you ain't got no quarrel with me, since I ain't never seen you before. So what gives?

REMUS

But the Honey Bunny just sat there, starin' at the rabbit.

RABBIT

Listen, when folks are introduced to each other in this part of the wood, we shake paws and say hello. You know how to shake paws?

(No answer.)

Look, it ain't that hard! You just say, "Howdy!" and go like this!

(He gets his paw stuck in the honey.)

See, there you go. Say, you got a good grip.

(Tries to pull away but can't.)

Haha, I see you got a good handshake, Miss Honey Bunny, but I think it's time for you to let go –

REMUS

Without knowing it, Brer Rabbit had wandered into the trap. For the Honey Bunny was just that, made entirely of honey, so she'd stick to whatever she touched. For instance, Brer Rabbit.

RABBIT

Give me back my paw!

REMUS

So he pulled with his right, but that only got the left stuck. Then he pulled with the left, but that only got the right stuck again! He tried pushing with his feet, his ears, even his tail, until he was so tied up in that Honey Bunny he couldn't move one inch!

(RABBIT gets one paw unstuck, just as another gets stuck. He starts fighting back and forth, finally ending all stuck up in the honey bunny.)

RABBIT

In the name of Sam Hill, I think I'm stuck! Brer Bear! Help me out of here! Lil' Tarrypin! Miss Meadows! HELP!

(He listens, but no response.)

Somebody! Anybody? Auntie Remus?

REMUS

Yes, Brer Rabbit?

RABBIT

How come no one is comin' to rescue me?

REMUS

I'm sure I couldn't say.

RABBIT

Is it cuz I pulled a few tricks? I'M SORRY. There! I said it! How come no one's comin'?

REMUS

Brer Rabbit, you was awfully mean to them.

RABBIT

But it was only jokes?

REMUS

I bet they didn't seem like jokes to your friends. Imagine if you were led into a cave of bees, or had your crops stolen!

RABBIT

Oh, Auntie Remus, you been right this whole time! What am I gonna do?

REMUS

You gotta say you're sorry.

RABBIT

But they know I'm sorry, I feel bad!

REMUS

But your friends gotta hear it from you.

RABBIT

I've apologized, but I've never had to say sorry like *this* before...

REMUS

It ain't easy, I'll tell you that. Fessin' up to what you done never is.

RABBIT

And that's the only way to fix things?

REMUS

Usually is.

RABBIT

Can't you just pull me outta here? I don't know if I can do this...

REMUS

That's somethin' you gotta do yourself.

(She exits.)

RABBIT

Wait! Auntie Remus, come back! She's gone! Well, I gotta apologize, and mean it.

(Rehearsing)

I'm sooooo sorry – no, that don't sound right. Hey guys, I'm really sorry – no no no!

*(BEAR, TARRYPIN, and MEADOWS enter on the side of the stage
FOX is on, opposite GATOR.)*

BEAR

Howdy, Brer Fox!

FOX

AHH! Brer Bear, keep yer voice down. I'm watchin' Brer Rabbit get what's comin' to him.

MISS MEADOWS

Brer Fox, what *are* you talkin' about?

FOX

Me and Sister Gator are playin' a little trick on *him*! A comeuppance for all the wrong he done us. Now, would you lot quiet down? He's tryin' to say somethin'!

RABBIT

I'm sorry – I-I'm sorry. I'm sorry...

#6. I'm Sorry

I'M SORRY
IS NOT AN EASY THING TO SAY
BUT NOW I WANT TO SAY IT
AND MY FRIENDS HAVE GONE AWAY

MY JOKES AND TRICKS,
LIKE STONES AND STICKS
HAVE MADE THEM FEEL BLUE
AND I KNOW I WUN'T WANT
TO BE TREATED
LIKE I TREATED YOU.

AND I'M SORRY
I'M SORRY
I'M SORRY
SO SORRY, SO SORRY
SO SORRY...

I'M SORRY
IS NOT AN EASY THING TO DO
BUT YOU'RE MY FRIENDS
UNTIL THE END
AND I'VE BEEN MEAN TO YOU
MORE LYRICS

(GATOR enters, slowly clapping.)

GATOR

Well if that ain't the sweetest thing I ever heard. Almost makes me want to shed a little crocodile tear.

RABBIT

Sister Gator! Whachu doin' here?

GATOR

I'm here to get the two things most important to me.

RABBIT

Laughter and friendship?

GATOR

Uh-uh. Though I'll probably be laughin' pretty soon. No, I means to get me a good hearty meal, with a nice side of *revenge!*

RABBIT

Well I've always heard that revenge is a dish best served cold, and it's mighty hot out today, so maybe you'd better just let me go, I –

(GATOR shoves an apple in his mouth a la a luau.)

#?. Dinner Time Blues

GATOR

Not this time, Rabbit. Ain't no silver tonuged escape for you.

HEY THERE, MR. BUNNY,
YOU'RE LOOKIN' MIGHTY SWEET!
WHY DON'T YOU 'STICK' AROUND
AND HAVE A
'BITE' TO EAT?

NO, NO MR. BUNNY,
YOU AIN'T GOIN' NOWHERE!
I GOT ME A HANK'RIN' FOR FOOD,
'SPECIALLY FOR SOME TASTY HARE!

DON'T NEED NO KETCHUP,
NO MUSTARD OR A BUN
BRER RABBIT, YOU GONE AND STUCK YOURSELF
SOMEWHERE YOU JUST CAN'T RUN!

NO SALAD, NO FORK, NO PLATE OR A SPOON,
DON'T NEED NO HOUDERVES FOR
MY DINNERTIME BLUES
NO SOUP OF THE DAY, NO RABBIT FONDUE
I'LL HAVE YOU RAW OR COOKED, I DON'T CARE
AND THAT'S THE DINNER TIME BLUES!
OH THAT'S MY DINNER TIME BLUES!
YEAH MY DINNER TIME BLUES!

MISS MEADOWS

I do believe Sister Gator really intends to eat poor Brer Rabbit!

TARRYPIN

We gotta do somethin'! Brer Fox, how could you?

FOX

I din't know it would go this far!

MISS MEADOWS

What do you mean you didn't know it'd go this far? Sister Gator is twelve kinds of crazy, and five more of hungry! 'Course she's gonna eat Brer Rabbit! Now, if you wanna help your friend out, put that witty, foxy brain of yours to use!

FOX

R-r-right! Think, Brer Fox, think!

BEAR

Wait! I gots it!

FOX

Brer Bear! What are you doing?!

(BEAR runs out from hiding, waving his arms at GATOR.)

BEAR

Wait a minute!

GATOR

Huh?

#?. Bear's Blues

BEAR

YOU CAN CHOP HIM UP,
STICK HIM IN A STEW,
MAKE BREAKFAST OR LUNCH
BUT WHATEVER YOU DO,

DON'T THROW HIM IN THAT BRIAR PATCH!
I SAY
DON'T THROW HIM IN THAT BRIAR PATCH!
YOU CAN COOK OR FRY HIM,
BUT DON'T THINK I'M LYIN'
DON'T THROW HIM IN THAT BRIAR PATCH!

FOX

Oh, Brer Bear, you clever devil, I see what you're onto!

TARRYPIN

Me too!

MISS MEADOWS

How that bear keeps getting fooled is beyond me!

(They, too, burst from cover.)

FOX

HE WOULD TASTE REALLY NICE
IN A BUNNY FONDUE,

TARRYPIN

GO AND TRY A SLICE,

MISS MEADOWS

BUT WHATEVER YOU DO,
DON'T THROW HIM IN THAT BRIAR PATCH!

MEADOWS, TARRYPIN, FOX

WE SAY
DON'T THROW HIM IN THAT BRIAR PATCH!

FOX

YOU CAN COOK OR SCALP HIM!

RABBIT

I DON'T SEE HOW THIS IS HELPIN'!

BEAR

JUST DON'T THROW HIM IN THAT BRIAR PATCH!

NOW, MOMMA USED TO SAY
YOU COULD MAKE YERSELF SICK
ON A NUMBER OF DISHES, TOO MANY TO PICK
THERE'S TURTLE, DELICIOUS
AND RABBIT TO MATCH
BUT SHE ALWAYS SAID BOY

BEAR, MEADOWS, TARRYPIN, FOX
DON'T THROW YOUR FOOD IN A BRIAR PATCH!
DON'T THROW HIM
INTO THAT BRIAR PATCH

MEADOWS

NO, NO, NO

TARRYPIN

NO, NO, NO

FOX

NO, NO, NO

BEAR

NO, NO, NO

RABBIT

(Getting it now)

OH, OH, OH!

BEAR

I SAY DON'T THROW HIM
INTO THAT BRIAR PATCH

TARRYPIN

EAT HIM UP FROM HEAD TO TOE,

FOX

JUST DON'T SAY WE DIDN'T TELL YOU SO –

BEAR, FOX, MEADOWS, TARRYPIN

JUST DON'T THROW HIM
IN THERE!

REMUS

Now, Sister Gator thought about this for a minute –

RABBIT

Where in creation did you get off to!?

REMUS

I been onstage this whole show, woman's gotta take a waterbreak. Besides, I'm back now. *Someone's* gotta wrap up this story.

RABBIT

Fair 'nuff. Carry on.

REMUS

As I was sayin' - !
Sister Gator thought about this for a long minute, then said –

GATOR

Brer Rabbit, you know what I'm gonna do with you?

RABBIT

I wait with bated breath.

GATOR

I have decided, after much deliberation and with much enthusiasm, to chuck you headfirst into that there briar patch o'er there!

RABBIT

Oh no!

TARRYPIN

The horror!

FOX

The agony!

(MEADOWS swoons.)

BEAR

Come to think of it, I don't even know what a briar patch is.

FOX, MEADOWS, TARRYPIN

Shh!

RABBIT

Sister Gator, have mercy!

GATOR

Nu-uh, Brer Rabbit, you're done in for sure this time!

REMUS

And Sister Gator lifted Brer Rabbit and the honey bunny, and heaved them once –

GATOR

Hup!

REMUS

Twice –

GATOR

Hup!

REMUS

And threw ol' Brer Rabbit clean out into the middle of the briar patch!

RABBIT

What a world, what a world!

REMUS

And as he passed through the roof of the briars, Sister Gator leaned over to hear the bloodcurdling sounds of Brer Rabbit's agony –

(GATOR does.)

But instead – she heard laughter!

GATOR

What's that, now?

(RABBIT pops up casually from the briars.)

RABBIT

Sister Gator, don't you know *nothin'*? I was born in this here briar patch, I grew up in this here briar patch, I lived in this here briar patch all my live-long life! These briars are like water off a duck's back to me!

GATOR

BRER RABBIT! Nobody fools Sister Gator twice and gets away with it!

REMUS

And Sister Gator dove headfirst into the briar patch –

(GATOR does.)

REMUS

Only to find, they ain't as comfortable if you're not a rabbit.

(RABBIT hops out of the briars.)

RABBIT

My friends, I owe you my life. Really, I do. And what's more, I gots something to say!

Lil' Tarrypin, I'm sorry I got you stung and called you a sissy. Miss Meadows, I promise I'll bake you a new pie if you have another picnic. Brer Bear, I'm so sorry I used you for my jokes. They really weren't that funny. And Brer Fox - I've been so mean to you. So mean you wanted to play some mean jokes and get back at ME. Now I know how it feels. Can you ever forgive me?

FOX

Aw, Brer Rabbit, that's all I needed to hear! Of course I forgive you. You're my friend.

MEADOWS

He's right, Brer Rabbit. If you truly mean it –

RABBIT

And I do!

TARRYPIN

Then we forgive you.

BEAR

Uh, yeah! We do!

RABBIT

Thank you all, you're my best friends.

MEADOWS

And that makes it even harder to say sorry, I know.

FOX

But you were able to, and that's all that matters.

(They all hug.)

RABBIT

Thank you all. But I got one more person to say I'm sorry to.

(He runs over to the briar patch.)

FOX

Brer Rabbit, what in tarnation could make you want to get that nasty ol' gator outta there?

RABBIT

Well, she may be ill-tempered, nasty, hungry, and an all about grouch –

MEADOWS

You made your point.

RABBIT

But all the same, she's our friend, even if she made a mistake. I know I made more'n my fair share.

FOX

Fine, you're right, Brer Rabbit.

(FOX and BEAR move to help RABBIT.)

BEAR

Move aside you two, and let a real bear get in there and pull!

RABBIT

One, two – THREE!

(They pull GATOR free. She is covered in briars.)

GATOR

Brer Rabbit, I don't understand...

RABBIT

What don't you get, Sister Gator? We just pulled our friend out of a briar patch.

GATOR

Yeah, but I tried to eat you!

RABBIT

So what? You're still my friend.

FOX

Do you know how many times I've tried to eat that little feller?

RABBIT

And we're thick as thieves! Besides, Sister Gator, I gotta apologize to you. I was pretty meant to trick you like that, back at your pond.

GATOR

Oh, Brer Rabbit –

RABBIT

And getting' you to chase Brer Bear and Brer Fox.

FOX

That's more like it.

RABBIT

And for tellin' you that soda pop was actually made from delicious boiled fox fur –

FOX

What!?

GATOR

Brer Rabbit, I don't know what to say!

TARRYPIN

You don't gotta say much at all. Just that it's ok, and we can all be friends again!

REMUS

And so, with all the loose ends tied up and apologies made, the friends decided they were going to be ok, and everything returned to the normal friendly-like way it usually was in the wood.

RABBIT

Hey, Auntie Remus! We're gonna have a picnic, you wanna come?

REMUS

Do I ever! I can't wait to get me a slice of Miss Meadow's pie.

RABBIT

You better hurry then, 'fore Brer Bear eats it all!

REMUS

(To the audience)

Well, you get the idea. I'm gonna hop on off now, get me some pie!

RABBIT

Auntie Remus!

#?. Goodbye, Briar Patch!

REMUS

Y'ALL COME BACK TO THE BRIAR PATCH,
Y'ALL COME BACK, YA HEAR?
CUZ WE WILL BE HERE WAITIN'
EVERY MONTH OF EVERY YEAR!

WITH YOUR FRIENDS –

RABBIT

BRER RABBIT!

FOX

BRER FOX

BEAR

BRER BEAR!

MEADOWS

MISS MEADOWS!

TARRYPIN

LIL' TARRYPIN!

GATOR

AND SISTER GATOR,
WHO'LL BE WAITIN' HERE
TO GREET YOU WITH A GRIN!

ALL

BUT NOW IT'S
GOODBYE, BRIAR PATCH!
GOODBYE, FRIENDS!
GOODBYE IS NOT FOREVER
BUT EACH DAY MUST HAVE IT'S END

SO AS YOU TRAVEL DOWN LIFE'S PATH
AND NAVIGATE IT'S MANY TRAILS

DON'T YOU FORGET OL' AUNTIE REMUS
AND HER AMAZING RABBIT TALES!

THE END