

**CHANTECLER: PLAY
IN FOUR ACTS**

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Chantecler: Play in Four Acts by Edmond Rostand & Gertrude Hall

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EDMOND ROSTAND & GERTRUDE HALL

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CHANTECLER

PLAY IN FOUR ACTS

BY

EDMOND ROSTAND

TRANSLATED

BY

GERTRUDE HALL



#22559
20.4.14

NEW YORK

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1912

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NORWOOD · MASS · U · S · A

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

CHANTECLER ✓	THE WOOD-PECKER
PATOU ✓	THE TURKEY
THE BLACKBIRD ✓	THE DUCK
THE PEACOCK	THE YOUNG GUINEA-COCK
THE NIGHTINGALE	THE PHEASANT-HEN ✓
THE GRAND-DUKE	THE GUINEA-HEN
THE SCREECH-OWL	THE OLD HEN
LITTLE SCOPS	THE WHITE HEN
THE GAME-COCK	THE GREY HEN
THE HUNTING DOG	THE BLACK HEN
A CARRIER-PIGEON	THE SPECKLED HEN
	THE TUFTED HEN

A Gander. A Capon. Chickens. Chicks. A Cock-
erel. A Swan. A Cuckoo. Night-birds. Fancy Cocks.
Toads. A Turkey-hen. A Goose. A Garden Warbler.
A Woodland Warbler. A Spider. A Heron. A Pigeon.
A Guinea-pig. Barnyard animals. Woodland Crea-
tures. Rabbits. Birds. Bees. Cicadas. Voices.

PROLOGUE

The customary three knocks are heard. The drop-curtain wavers and is rising, when a voice rings out, "Not yet!" and the MANAGER, a gentleman of important mien in evening dress, springing from his proscenium box, hurries toward the stage, repeating, "Not yet!"

The curtain is again lowered. The MANAGER turns toward the audience, and resting one hand on the prompter's box, addresses them:

The curtain is a wall,—a flying wall. Assured that presently the wall will fly—why haste? Is it not charming to delay—and just look at it for a while?

Charming to sit before a great red wall, hanging beneath two gilt masks and a scroll—The thrilling moment is when the curtain thrills, and sounds come from the other side.

You are desired to-night to listen to those sounds and entering the scene before you see it, to wonder and surmise—

Bending his ear, the MANAGER listens to the sounds now beginning to come from behind the curtain.

A footstep— is it a road? A flutter of wings— is it a garden?

The curtain here rippling as if about to rise, the MANAGER precipitately shouts, "Stop!—Do not raise it yet!" Then again bending his ear, continues making note of the noises, clear or confused, single or combined, that from this onward come without stop from behind the curtain.

A magpie cawing flies away. Great wooden shoes come running over flags. A courtyard, is it? — If so above a valley — from whence that softened clamour of birds and barking dogs.

More and more clearly the scene suggests itself — Magically sound creates an atmosphere! — A sheep bell tinkles intermittently — Since there is grazing, we may look for grass.

A tree, too — a tree must rustle in the breeze, for a bullfinch warbles his little native song; and a black-bird whistling the song he has caught by ear, implies, we may presume, a wicker cage.

The rattling of a waggon run out of a shed — the dripping of a bucket drawn up overfull — the patter of doves' feet alighting on a roof — Surely it is a farmyard — unless it be a mill!

Rustling of straw, click of a wooden latch — A stable or a haymow there must be. The locust shrills: the weather then is fine. — Church-bells ring: it is Sunday then. — Chatter of jays: the woods cannot be far!

Hark! Nature with the scattered voices of a fair midsummer day is composing — in a dream! — the most mysterious of overtures — harmonised by evening, distance and the wind!

And all these sounds — song of a passing girl — laughter of children jogged by the donkey trotting — faraway gun-reports and hunting-horns — these sounds describe a holiday.

A window opens, a door closes — The harness shakes its bells. Is it not plain in sight, the old farmyard? — The dog sleeps, the cat but feigns to sleep.

Sunday! — Farmer and farmer's wife are starting for the fair. The old horse paws the ground —

A ROUGH VOICE

[*Behind the curtain, through the horse's pawing.*] Whoa, Dapple!

ANOTHER VOICE

[*As if calling to a laggard.*] Come along! We shan't get home till morning!

AN IMPATIENT VOICE

Are you ready?

ANOTHER VOICE

Fasten the shutters!

MAN'S VOICE

All right!

WOMAN'S VOICE

My sunshade!

MAN'S VOICE

[*Through the cracking of the whip.*] Gee up!

THE MANAGER

The waggon to the jingling of the harness rattles off, jolting out ditties. A turn in the road cuts off the unfinished song. — They are gone, quite gone. The performance can begin.

Some philosophers would say there was not a soul left, but we humbly believe that there are hearts. Man in leaving does not take with him all drama. One can laugh and suffer without him. [*He listens again.*]