

Follow Me in Merry Measure Cast List

4 Male, 3 Female, 4 M/F, Extra Courtiers M/F

MINSTREL (M/F) the leader of the Baroque Chorale (a show choir and a bit of a cult).

JESTER (M) considers himself a wit. He's half right.

STEWARD (M) tired of the Christmas season, he'd like to just put an end to the Baroque Chorale.

SOFIA (F) a servant girl who infiltrates the choir.

KING (M) tired of the Christmas season, Christmas jokes, and Christmas busy-ness.

QUEEN (F) really tired of the Christmas season, which, apparently began at the summer solstice.

THE BAROQUE CHORALE

CRESCENDO (M/F) a singer who starts speaking softly and ends loudly.

FORTE (M/F) a singer who speaks loudly and forcefully.

TUTTI (F) a singer who is really into unity and teamwork. She's very optimistic.

FLAT (M) a singer who speaks in a flat tone and tends to be pessimistic.

SHARP (M/F) a singer who's really, really smart.

Sample Pages

At the start of the show, it is clear that the Christmas season is beginning to wear thin:

JESTER: God rest ye merry, gentlemen! Ladies here and good folk all! Welcome to our banquet hall! *(Enter SOFIA.)* 'Tis the season of mirth and good cheer. I take this time to welcome you here! *(Notices SOFIA, who is putting goblets out on the Royal Table.)* And merry greetings to you, Sofia!

SOFIA: *(Rolls her eyes at JESTER, sighs, and continues putting out goblets.)*

JESTER: Sofia, what is the matter? 'Tis the holidays! Time to eat, drink, and be merry!

SOFIA: "The holidays"! I'm already sick of them. Everyone is.

JESTER: Everyone?

SOFIA: Yes, everyone. The Town Crier snapped his vocal chords announcing holiday sales.

JESTER: Snapped?

SOFIA: Like an overdrawn bowstring. He can only mime the sales now. He works the big box stores. *(Mimes being in a box.)*

(Enter STEWARD with bowl of fruit for Royal Table. He listens in on conversation.)

JESTER: *(Mimes pulling a rope.)* I bet he has to drag them in.

STEWARD: I heard that the Queen was thinking of running away.

JESTER: *(Shocked.)* You don't say!

SOFIA: Where would the Queen run away to?

STEWARD: The Northern Castle.

JESTER: But . . . isn't the Northern Castle overrun by Vikings?

STEWARD: Yes.

SOFIA: But the Vikings make mayhem and run riot!

STEWARD: Ever been to Black Friday?

JESTER: Right.

SOFIA: Oh, I'm so tired of the holiday season. We've been listening to Christmas carols since the summer solstice.

JESTER: Really?

STEWARD: Really. Where have you been, Jester?

JESTER: If you must know, I've been away. Doing research.

STEWARD: Research? Where?

JESTER: The Royal Dungeon. My joke about the Yeti, the spiked eggnog, and The Island of Misfit Toys was not well-received.

SOFIA: You were making Christmas jokes at a time like this?

STEWARD: The King is in no mood.

JESTER: I found that out. *(Beat.)* And I had plenty of time to think about it.

SOFIA/STEWARD: Lucky you.

JESTER: Lucky me?

SOFIA: You were isolated from the . . . from that one group.

JESTER: What group?

SOFIA: You know. That one singing group.

JESTER: Oh, you mean The Baroque Chorale?

STEWARD: *(Slaps hand over JESTER's mouth.)* Don't say their name! *(JESTER mumbles through STEWARD's hand. STEWARD removes hand from his mouth.)* What did you say?

JESTER: Why can't I say "The Baroque Chorale"?

SOFIA: *(Slaps her hand over JESTER's mouth.)* Don't say their name! Haven't you ever heard the adage, "Speak of the devil?" *(JESTER mumbles through SOFIA's hand. She removes her hand from his mouth.)*

JESTER: So, Baroque . . . *(Looks at SOFIA's and STEWARD's upraised hands.)* So, that . . . a capella group has been a nuisance?

SOFIA: The Black Death was a nuisance.

STEWARD: That . . . singing set is a menace. It's one fundraiser after another. They are raising money to go to Disneyshire.

JESTER: They need money? I guess that makes sense. They are the Baroque Chorale after all. Get it? Baroque? *(SOFIA and STEWARD just stare.)* Right. What's the fundraiser this time?

SOFIA: Extortion.

JESTER: What?

STEWARD: Give them money or they sing at you. That's their fundraiser.

SOFIA: And that's not the worst of it. Their next fundraiser starts right after Christmas.

JESTER: For another trip?

STEWARD: No, worse: show choir choreography camp!

JESTER: That doesn't sound so bad.

SOFIA: Another rendition of "Don't Stop Believin'"!

JESTER: I see what you mean. Sounds like you just need a break from them.

STEWARD/SOFIA: *(On each side of JESTER. JESTER jumps.)* They must be stopped!

JESTER: Sounds a bit extreme.

SOFIA: *(Looks to STEWARD.)* But how do we stop them?

STEWARD: This will take some planning, but I might have an idea. (*BRASS FANFARE.*) Oh, no! Has the Court arrived already? I must get the first course ready. (*Exits quickly.*)

SOFIA: (*Exits after STEWARD.*) But what's your idea?

Later, the Steward reveals his plan:

SOFIA: So, what's the plan, Steward?

STEWARD: Well, as you know, The Baroque Chorale is more secretive and powerful than the illuminati.

JESTER: Ooh, I like a challenge. How do we find out their secrets?

STEWARD: Someone must infiltrate their organization and topple it from the inside.

SOFIA: That's an excellent idea, Steward! The Jester could pretend that—

STEWARD: (*Bursts out laughing.*) The Jester? My dear, we need someone who can keep their wits about him.

JESTER: (*Insulted.*) I'm a famous entertainer. I am known for my wit!

STEWARD: Wit. Notice that's singular. And you could never travel incognito. (*Looks to SOFIA.*) You, on the other hand, are a nameless serving wench whom no one takes any notice of, everybody ignores, plain, unremarkable, really just a worn piece of furniture that blends into a cluttered room, an ordinary—

SOFIA: (*Glares.*) I get the idea.

STEWARD: Really? Good. Now, we just need a way to get you an audition.

SOFIA: Yes, but—

STEWARD: (*Notices MINSTREL entering.*) Ah, perfect. The Minstrel approaches.

JESTER: What cheer, good Minstrel?

MINSTREL: I'm too busy for your nonsense today, Jester.

JESTER: Of course. As the founder and director of The Bar—(*Catches SOFIA's glare.*) of the best, most amazing choir in the land, you're very busy.

MINSTREL: (*Flattered, he reacts with false modesty.*) The best in the land? That's a tad much. But we did win the trophy for best choreography using thumbscrews.

JESTER: Ah, I remember that song. "I Will Always Love You."

SOFIA: With thumbscrews?

MINSTREL: It showed the pain of love. A very envelope-pushing interpretation. Edgy.

STEWARD: (*Sarcastically.*) Of course. (*Changes tone.*) Tell me, Minstrel, how does one audition for such an august singing group?

MINSTREL: Well, if you're talking about the Jester, we don't need any comedy—

STEWARD: Oh, I'm not talking about the Jester. I'm talking about Sofia.

MINSTREL: Who's Sofia?

JESTER: (*To SOFIA.*) Steward's right. Nameless.

SOFIA: (*To JESTER.*) But I've got names for you. (*To MINSTREL.*) I'm Sofia.

MINSTREL: And you want to join my choir? Excellent. How are you at facial expressions?

SOFIA: Facial expressions? Don't you want to hear me sing?

MINSTREL: No. Now, I'm going to say an emotion, and you express it with your face. Shock. (*SOFIA does facial expression.*) No, no, no. People at the back hall have to see your expression. Do it again. (*SOFIA does a more manic facial expression.*) No! More emotion! Wear your heart on your sleeve! Do shock! (*SOFIA does a very manic facial expression.*) Excellent! You're in.

SOFIA: Don't you even want to know my vocal range?

MINSTREL: Are you a soprano?

SOFIA: No.

MINSTREL: You're in. *(Begins to escort SOFIA off-stage.)* Let's go. We're late for rehearsal. . . .

(BRASS FANFARE. Lights up on Royal Table.)

JESTER: *(Enters cheerily and bows before the KING.)* Your majesty! Good cheer and tidings of the Yuletide season!

KING: And to you. Uh, how many more days do we have until Christmas, Jester?

JESTER: *(Excited.)* Only 16 days, your majesty!

KING: *(Shocked.)* 16? *(Looks to QUEEN.)* Still that many?

QUEEN: *(Frustrated at the KING.)* You told me it was less than a week. *(Stands.)* I'm going to hide out at the Northern Castle until this is over.

KING: The Northern Castle is overrun with Vikings and Bears and Lions.

QUEEN: Oh, great. An extended Christmas season and an extended football season?

KING: *(Grabs QUEEN's hand and gets her to sit.)* I thought we agreed to suffer this trial together? We can make it through just 16 days. *(Aside.)* 384 hours. 23,000 agonizing seconds. *(To QUEEN.)* We can survive, my dear.

QUEEN: *(Sighs.)* Oh, all right. We'll get through this together. So, I suppose we can't miss the performance by The Baroque Chorale?

KING: I'm afraid not. Unlike the politicians, we want to support music in our schools.

QUEEN: I suppose you're right. *(Looks out at a female in the audience and then averts her eyes when she talks to the KING in a stage whisper.)* Sire, the Diva is here.

KING: She is? Where?

QUEEN: Don't look! She's wearing _____ (*Describe the dress of the audience member you've picked out.*) You can see her just over there.

KING: How can I see her if I can't look. (*Starts to look.*)

QUEEN: Don't look at her! Whatever you do, don't make eye contact. (*KING looks at DIVA while not looking at DIVA.*)

JESTER: (*Looks out into audience.*) Uh, who's the diva?

KING: Sshh, Jester!

JESTER: I don't understand, your majesty.

KING: Let's just say that we had a little incident involving the Diva, a crystal chandelier, and a cranky chipmunk.

(*JESTER looks toward DIVA.*)

QUEEN: Don't look at her! Whatever you do, don't make eye contact. (*JESTER looks at DIVA while not looking at DIVA.*)

KING: (*Looks up.*) Oh, thank goodness.

QUEEN: What?

KING: No crystal chandelier. (*Looks around the audience.*) Better yet, no cranky chipmunk. (*Squints at one audience member in particular.*) I think.

QUEEN: So it's safe if she sings?

KING: No. We still have eardrums, don't we?

QUEEN: Right. What do we do?

KING: Ignore her. Maybe she won't sing. (*Off-key BRASS FANFARE.*) Oh, no. She's warming up!

QUEEN: That's the brass fanfare, milord. It's the boar.

KING: Exactly what I said. That bore, the Diva—

QUEEN: That's boar, as in big angry pig smothered in barbeque sauce.

KING: Oh. *(To the back of the hall.)* Well, bring in the boar! *(Beat.)* And send that horn player to the dungeon.