

## Thomas and the Fox - A STORY FOR NARRATOR AND STRING ORCHESTRA

Approximate Length: ~14 minutes

Instrumentation: Narrator, Violin 1, Violin 2, Viola, Cello, Contrabass

The following is a piece for string orchestra and narrator. It draws heavy inspiration from Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf*. The piece is intended to be enjoyed by all, but is particularly crafted to be accessible to younger ones.

There are multiple instances where the narrator is speaking while the orchestra is playing, or where the narrator must sync his lines up with a particular measure in the piece. This is notated where applicable in the narrator's part.

## **Narrator:**

*m.1*

Once upon a time, in a forest not too far away from here, lived a young rabbit named Thomas. He lived happily with his mother and many little siblings in a burrow dug out underneath an old tree stump. Thomas loved prance about through the woods, and would play the day away till the sun got low and he grew tired. Today was as any other.

*Orchestra*

*m.26*

After spending his morning exploring the woods and running this way and that bursting with energy, Thomas finally grew tired and settled down for a nap under the pine tree.

*Orchestra*

*m.40*

While Thomas rested contentedly, the Fox was roaming through the woods, searching for his next meal. Now the Fox was a crafty creature, and though he was growing old and could no longer could keep pace with most of the animals in the forest he relied instead on his shrewdness, tricking the animals right into his paws. He was quite the fearsome creature.

*Orchestra*

*m.58*

After roaming through the forest for a good while, the Fox spotted Thomas sleeping in the distance. "Ah-ha!" thought the Fox, "this is my chance!" Yet just as he crept closer Thomas began to awaken, letting out a hearty yawn. His opportunity dashed, the Fox decided to patiently wait for another. So while Thomas returned to his playful escapades, the Fox watched him from afar, scheming away.

*Orchestra*

*m.82*

After watching Thomas play while the sun got lower and lower, the Fox realized that the rabbit would not be growing tired again soon. So thus he came up with a fiendish plan.

Knowing the general good-naturedness of young rabbits like Thomas, the Fox carefully crouched behind a thick bush and began calling out in a raspy falsetto. "Help, help! Someone help me!"

"What is it? What's the matter?" Thomas called out in reply.

“I reached deep in this bush for a berry and got stuck! Please help me out!”

“Where are you? I can’t see you anywhere.” Thomas said as he made his way toward where the voice was coming from.

“Just a little closer, come a little closer!” was the Fox’s response.

*Orchestra*

*m.110 fermata held*

Thomas neared closer and closer, but as came up to the bush the hairs on his back began to rise. Something didn’t feel quite right...

Then Thomas heard the faint snarl of the Fox in the bush as he prepared to strike...

And the Fox...

*Orchestra continues when narrator begins next line.*

*m.111*

Pounced out from the bush!

*m.112-113*

Thomas leaped away, running all the way home and not stopping for a single breath with the Fox in angry pursuit.

*Orchestra*

*m.124*

Thomas arrived home, tired and hungry from the day’s events. Much to his delight his mother had just finished preparing the day’s supper, a delicious porridge. Thomas dug into his meal while his many little siblings laughed and played around him.

*Orchestra*

*m.153*

Outside of the humble abode Thomas and his family lived in, the Fox crept in the shadows, back to his snide schemes. He had carefully followed Thomas, and now he wasn’t just hungry, he was furious!

*Orchestra*

*m.177*

This time the Fox was not to be outdone. He waited until the sun had set and all was quiet, and then bit by bit peeked his snout in through the entrance to Thomas' home, darting his eyes back and forth. It was a tight fit, but the Fox could just barely squeeze through the entrance. Once inside, his hunt began as he roamed about through the extensive tunnels, searching for his meal.

*Orchestra*

*m.188*

Little did the Fox know that Thomas was still wide awake, up late putting his younger siblings to bed with fables and tall tales. Thomas heard the Fox enter, and had begun planning how to overcome him. He awoke his family, motioning for them to be silent. Avoiding the Fox with their extensive knowledge of the many winding tunnels, they followed Thomas' direction and began to dig above the entrance to their home. Shortly after that, Thomas made his way outside alone.

"Hey Mr. Fox!" Thomas taunted, surprising the Fox who was still inside searching. "Are you looking for someone?"

*Orchestra*

*m.198*

Realizing that he had been outsmarted once again, the Fox was enraged.

*m.199 fermata held*

He ran to the entrance and began pushing his way out of the home, blinded with rage and determined to catch that mischievous rabbit. But at that very moment...

*m.200 G.P.*

*Orchestra plays with narration over top*

*m.200-203*

The weakened soil began to collapse, and the Fox was caught, thrashing angrily while his lower half remained firmly stuck.

*m.204-207*

"Come here and see what happens!" the Fox shouted. "I will eat you! I will!"

*Narrator alone*

*m.208*

Suddenly the Fox felt a sharp heat.

*Orchestra plays with narration over top*

*m.209-216*

From inside the home, Thomas' mother had diligently begun starting a small fire at the Fox's tail. As the fire burned hotter and hotter the Fox's angry shouts grew more and more incomprehensible.

*m.217*

Finally he thrashed and thrashed and managed to break his way free, running away squealing with his tail and pride both thoroughly burned.

*Orchestra*

*m.221*

From that point on, the Fox no longer hunted in the forest and instead turned to a humble diet of plants and berries, much to the amusement of the other animals. Thomas, however, returned to playing his days away, basking in the praise and rejoicing with them all.

*Orchestra*

END