

# Side # 4

Let me explain something to you:

[The SONS sit down quietly. The DAUGHTER stands aside. The FATHER OF SEVEN SONS speaks in quiet, measured tones.]

Every day I work hard.  
I work hard every day.  
Every day I leave my home and I go outside to work.  
Very hard.  
And why do I do this?  
Because I love to work?  
No. I do not love to work.  
I leave my house every day and go outside to work because I have eight children.  
Seven sons and a daughter.

But today it is snowing outside. The ground is hard, and because of this I can stay inside for one day. For one day I can stay inside and sit beside a lamp and open a book. And from my warm chair I can look outside at the lake and the wild white swans gliding on the lake, with the snow falling all about them. And I have this one day where I myself can feel silent and calm. Both inside and out. Silent and calm.

But you children wouldn't know anything about that feeling, would you?

No.

Do you know why?

Can anyone tell me why?

No.

# Father of Seven Swans

~~One by one the SONS get up from their chairs and slowly sink to their knees, placing their heads on their arms on the seats of the chairs. They are sad. The FATHER OF SEVEN SONS continues.]~~

I'll tell you why: Because you are too busy dashing around and making noise and never *ever ever* thinking of the other person.  
What's in your heads?  
What are you thinking?  
What's wrong with you?  
Why do you break everything and dash around everything?  
Why can't you be silent like the swans upon the lake?  
Because you're bad.  
You're just bad.  
And Andrew—

[The FATHER OF SEVEN SONS looks at ANDREW. ANDREW looks up.]

You are the worst of all.

I'm going back to my book now.

[The SONS slowly get up and sit in their chairs.]

Once upon a time, there was a man with seven sons and one daughter. The sons were young and loud, and one day they were younger and louder than usual. The father, losing patience, uttered this curse:

[He slams his book shut.]

I wish all my sons were swans.

And immediately—they are.