

## The Dancing Smurphs

In a land, which I guess you could say is quite far away, although, by all logical calculations and scientific reasoning, is not actually that far away at all, lived a fairly weird, but without a doubt, wonderful community of Smurphs. These Smurphs aren't just your average mystical character, which commonly feature in most bog-standard fairytales. These are lovingly created, humorously behaving Smurphs, fit for an awe inspiring tale of cunning, music, mystery and above all – laughter.

The tale begins with Master Smurph Kurt, who, somehow, with the intellect of a goldfish and personality of a clown, has led his 100-strong colony of Smurphs to a settlement just outside Bremen. Like all good fairytales however, life isn't as perfect as it would at first appear. The evil Marijke van de Berg has done something quite preposterously wicked and callous: she has stolen their sound system! This has resulted in an almighty atrocity meaning that all Smurphs are no longer able to dance! Dancing is a Smurph's right. It is an integral part of Smurph law. Not being able to dance is like a German pub with no beer. Like Bayern with no Lederhosen. Simply unimaginable.

The jolly band of Smurphs, however, carry on relentlessly in search of a ghetto blaster, worthy of their Smurphish ears. Master Smurph Kurt has heard of a great man in the land of Bremen who he believes holds the key to freeing the Smurphs from their predicament. Revenge on the evil Marijke too would of course be the perfect end, but Smurphs are a fun-loving and peaceful bunch and we must also remember that this tale is for children, so blood, guts and gore wouldn't really fit in here...

Once having reached the mighty land that is Bremen, Master Smurph Kurt set out in search for Hans Schmidt, owner of Germany's greatest and most successful music store. Finding him, however, was not going to be an easy task for the 4-inch high Smurphs. It has taken the best part of a decade to find their way to Bremen, with Chief Navigator Ralf's inability to actually navigate the main cause of the confusion. Added to the fact that his wife, Nurse Anna, doesn't stop arguing or contradicting everything, it's easy to see how it took so long. Good examples of the sheer helplessness of some situations are the legendary '*No, not this way, but that way*' conversations, which generally end up like this:

**Ralf:** Right, okay, I do believe that we should take the next right.

**Anna:** Well, you could do that, but if we take the second left, there is a much more scenic route along the river. You know how much I love beautiful things! Well, I made an exception for you but...

**Ralf:** Oh really! Well thank you very much dear, but your love of stunning landscapes will indeed get us absolutely nowhere and then you'll blame me.

**Anna:** No, no, no. I promise I won't... We aren't going your way, but this way instead.

**Ralf:** You aren't going to stop until I agree with you are you?

**Anna:** No

**Ralf:** Fair enough, lead the way...

And with this, the Smurphs spent many a day not only aimlessly following the clueless Nurse Anna, but the even more clueless Ralf. Wandering through district after district, taking scenic route after scenic route, before finally getting somewhere near Bremen. Some Smurphs didn't quite make it. Tears were shed and loved ones lost. Every Smurph as honourable as the last. Bear fights, dog fights and even mishaps bathing in the rivers caused these unfortunate losses. Once in Bremen though, it was up to Master Smurph Kurt to make the decisions, to save the Smurph way of life from disappearing forever. But as luck would have it, the Sound System Store which they were seeking was easily found – they just followed the music. Simple.

On Enquiry to Hans Schmidt Master Smurph Kurt was outraged that such a high price must be paid for the sound system. In a final bid to prevent all dancing from Smurph-like creatures ceasing to exist, the only option was to haggle. Haggling doesn't come easy to a Smurph. They are very shy and wouldn't hurt a fly. The great man from the Bremen Sound Store was very much a great man, but also a fearsome one. His prices are fixed and it would take an almighty effort to get him to reduce them. No man, creature or thing has ever been successful in doing so. A mere Smurph just doesn't possess such conniving haggling skills. However, Master Smurph Kurt is no ordinary Smurph. Blessed from birth with an extraordinary talent to get what he wants, he devised a very brilliant plan...

Master Smurph Kurt doesn't muck about, so on his second visit to the store, the plan was put into immediate action. He and the elite dancers, quite literally, waltzed into the store. A few superb sways and magnificent moves later and the feared Han Schmidt was under the magical spell of Master Smurph Kurt. Whilst under this spell, Magic Smurph Tom whispered the following chant into the store owner's ear:

*We need some new speakers  
So that we can dance again  
We don't like the price  
So could you be nice  
And reduce it.*

It has to be noted here that Magic Smurph Tom isn't always the best with words... *Rhyming Smurph Lily* has been a bit under the weather recently so unfortunately it was down to Tom to come up with the chant. A tad more dancing ensued and the store owner was then awakened. When asked if the extortionately high price could be reduced, he was more than happy to do so. With a smile on every face, and the need to dance the night away, the Smurphs spent the next month celebrating.

Tom's now legendary chant has been integrated into Smurph folklore and is now a popular Smurph chart song.

Tom, however, hasn't been nominated for any literary awards.

Marijke was finally captured by Smurph Police and made to learn every one of the 2,500 Smurph dances.

What a Happy Ending😊