

"Saplings"

Mini-excerpts from "The Woods of Old Bohemia"

by  
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## LITTLE OTIK

NARRATOR

Mr. Otik was a woodsman who would lift and swing his axe all day. And he and his wife were happy.

MRS. OTIK

Only mostly happy. I want a baby.

MR. OTIK

(after thinking a moment)

Well, Mrs. Otik... I suppose I ought to go out and get you one.

She celebrates as he exits.

NARRATOR

And Mr. Otik chopped down a tree.

MR. OTIK

This is hard work.

NARRATOR

And out of that wood, he carved Mrs. Otik a gift.

MR. OTIK

Yes, Mrs. Otik. That will do. That will do just fine. Mrs. Otik, you'll never guess what I've brought you.

Mr. Otik produces a small wooden baby.

MRS. OTIK

Is this a baby, Mr. Otik?

MR. OTIK

Mostly, Mrs. Otik. I made him out of wood.

MRS. OTIK

I will treasure him.

NARRATOR

Mr. Otik returned to the woods. And Mrs. Otik did treasure Little Otik.

She sings a little and rocks the "baby."

NARRATOR  
(as Little Otik)

Ma-ma!

Mrs. Otik looks around, surprised, not once thinking the sound is coming from her baby.

Ma-ma!

LITTLE OTIK

Little Otik!?!?

MRS. OTIK

Ma-ma. Hungry!

LITTLE OTIK

NARRATOR

Mrs. Otik fed Little Otik sugar beets, and milk, and anything she could find. But Little Otik was still hungry.

MRS. OTIK  
I fed you beef. And potatoes and corn, and--

Mr. Otik enters.

MR. OTIK  
What is wrong, Mrs. Otik? I can hear a shouting all the way in the woods.

MRS. OTIK  
It's Little Otik. He's hungry.

MR. OTIK  
I don't believe you, Mrs. Otik. Let me see.

Mr. Otik draws near and Little Otik eats him. All of him.  
It's awful.

MRS. OTIK  
(surprisingly calm)  
Oh no, there goes Mr. Otik.

LITTLE OTIK  
Ma-ma!

MRS. OTIK

I'll take care of you, Little Otik.

Little Otik eats Mrs. Otik. All of her. It is awful.

LITTLE OTIK

Hun-gry! Ma-ma!

(bear)

I wander fields. Hun-gry! I eat cow. Moo! I eat farmer. Yummy!

(beat)

(Little Otik shouts)

Prince come along. Prince angry. Little Otik hungry! Little Otik and Prince fight.

Little Otik mimes an awkward fight against a swashbuckling (imaginary) Prince.

Little Otik falls, a very dramatic death.

LITTLE OTIK

(weak, sputtering)

Out of belly came farmer. And cow. and Mrs. Otik and Mr. Otik. And Little Otik dies.

Mr. And Mrs. Otik have returned.

MR. OTIK

I'm sorry for bringing you a (mostly) baby, Mrs. Otik.

MRS. OTIK

It is okay, Mr. Otik.

MR. OTIK

Do you suppose we can be happy without a baby?

MRS. OTIK

I suppose we can be content. And happy. Mostly.

NARRATOR

And they were: content and happy for the rest of their lives

## THE TWELVE MONTHS

MAROUCKLA

These winter winds chill me to the bone!

Marouckla takes a long arduous trek up a mountain. She searches. She collapses in tears.

MAROUCKLA

Up... up... up... I'll never find violets!

THE 12 MONTHS

What is it you wish for, my dear?

MAROUCKLA

Who's there?

THE 12 MONTHS

We are the Twelve Months. We are one with the Earth. Here, all the rules of time and space can be bent, but not broken.

One person portrays all the Twelve Months, changing their voice and physicality for each "character."

THE 12 MONTHS

I am "Leden." I am the youngest month. I bring ice. I am "Unor." The melting ice. I am "Hezen." The month of the birch tree. "Duben." The month of the oak. "Kvten." When the flowers come. "Erven." When the worm eats. "Ervenec." When fruit grows ripe. "Srpn." The time of harvest. "Za i." The gentle sun. "Ijen." When the deer finds its mate. "Listopad." The leaves will fall. And "Prosinec." When the sun has hidden. I am the oldest. What is it you seek, young one?

MAROUCKLA

Violets. My stepmother demands them. Or else.

THE 12 MONTHS

But it's winter.

MAROUCKLA

She won't let me inside without them.

THE 12 MONTHS

Cruelty. To one so young. What is your name?

MAROUCKLA

Marouckla.

THE 12 MONTHS

A strong name, indeed. I call upon the power of Kvten. Master of when the flowers come.

A conjuring. Magic. Mystical. And then a bouquet of beautiful violets.

THE 12 MONTHS

Take these to your stepmother. And let her be satisfied.

MAROUCKLA

Thank you. Thank you, thank you a hundred times.

Marouckla treks back with the violets.

STEPMOTHER

It's not possible!

MAROUCKLA

Then why did you ask for them? May I come inside? It's so cold.

STEPMOTHER

No. Your step-sister needs strawberries now.

MAROUCKLA

Why?

STEPMOTHER

How dare you question me!?! Go. Strawberries. Now.

Marouckla makes her sullen trek back up the mountain.

THE 12 MONTHS

Back so soon?

MAROUCKLA

I have to collect strawberries. Or else.

THE 12 MONTHS

In winter?

That's what I said.

MAROUCKLA

A conjuring. Magic. Mystical. And then a basket of strawberries.

Thank you. A million times!

MAROUCKLA

Marouckla treks back with the strawberries and hands them to her Stepmother.

STEPMOTHER

You think you're so clever! I need apples now.

Apples? In winter?

MAROUCKLA

STEPMOTHER

You found the other things so easily.

I'm so cold!

MAROUCKLA

Apples. Or else!

STEPMOTHER

Marouckla treks back into the woods.

THE 12 MONTHS

This is getting a little tiresome.

MAROUCKLA

You're telling me! I'm the one going up and down a mountain! Can you give me apples? Please? My stepmother demands them. Or else.

THE 12 MONTHS

Or else what?

MAROUCKLA

I'd rather not find out.

A conjuring. Magic. Mystical. And then a handful of apples.

MAROUCKLA

Thank you.

Marouckla treks back.

MAROUCKLA

(so tired)

I have your apples, Stepmother.

STEPMOTHER

Unbelievable! The most gorgeous apples. In winter. You got these up the mountain?

MAROUCKLA

Well... yes.

STEPMOTHER

I have to find them all!

The Stepmother runs off into the woods.

THE 12 MONTHS

A mountain can be a scary place in the winter. Especially when someone has control of the elements.

(more magical vibes)

And the wind howls, and the snow swirls< and Marouckla's stepmother was never found again. Because some stories have a happy ending. And sometimes the Marouckla's have the world have peace. And sometimes bad people are punished for their greed.

## **LONG, BROAD, SHARP EYES**

Long, Broad, and Sharp-Eyes, a sort of rag-tag team,  
address the audience.

**LONG**

Hello. My name's Long. Even though I look very regular. When called upon, I can stretch out to be as tall as I wish.

**BROAD**

Then why aren't you named "Tall?"

**LONG**

It's my parents' fault. Tell them who you are.

**BROAD**

My name's Broad. Even though I look very regular, I can stretch out to be as wide as I wish.

**SHARP EYES**

Then why aren't you named "Wide?"

**BROAD**

It's my parents' fault. Tell them who you are.

**SHARP EYES**

My name is Sharp Eyes. Even though I look very regular, my eyes are so sharp, they're like lasers. Crazy lasers.

**BROAD**

Well at least your name seems to fit.

**LONG**

We were all living by ourselves in the woods, until we were discovered by a Prince on a quest.

**BROAD**

Before the Prince, life was always boring.

**SHARP EYES**

Life is never boring for me. I have laser eyes.

**LONG**

The Prince recognized all of our special talents and asked if we could join him on a search for adventure and honor.

And adventure. SHARP EYES

I said that. LONG

I know. I just like adventure. SHARP EYES

The Prince is asleep now. He was enchanted by an evil wizard. BROAD

I didn't think he was so bad. SHARP EYES

We have to use our special talents to find a hidden Princess and return her to this tower before dawn. LONG

Sharp Eyes looks around.

I see her! She's been changed. Into an acorn. SHARP EYES

You're sure? BROAD

Lasers! SHARP EYES

So Sharp Eyes got on my shoulders. And I stretched my legs. LONG

They traveled quickly. Across a great distance. And Long reached up high into a tree. And pulled down the acorn. BROAD

We made it back just in the nick of time. But the Evil Wizard presented another challenge. LONG

I still don't think he's so bad. SHARP EYES

He hid the Princess again. LONG

Sharp Eyes looks around.

SHARP EYES

I see her! She's been changed. Into a jewel. On top of a mountain.

LONG

So Sharp Eyes got on my shoulders. And I stretched my legs.

BROAD

They traveled quickly. Across a great distance. And Long reached up high to the top of the mountain. And pulled down the jewel.

LONG

We made it back just in the nick of time. But the Evil Wizard presented another challenge.

SHARP EYES

I get it now. That wizard is no good.

(suddenly)

I see the Princess! She's been changed. Into a pearl. At the bottom of the ocean.

LONG

This time Sharp Eyes AND Broad got on my shoulders. And I stretched my legs.

BROAD

It was slow-going, but we traveled as quickly as we could. And I drank all the water out of the sea.

LONG

All of it?

BROAD

Yes. Because I can become very wide.

LONG

And I grabbed the pearl. We made it back just in the nick of time.

BROAD

And this time the Evil Wizard had to recognize we were the winners.

LONG

Because one bad person can never defeat a good team.

They celebrate.

BROAD

We went back to the woods.

LONG

And were never bored again.

SHARP EYES

I was never bored before... Lasers!