



Perilous Tales

A One Act Entertainment consisting of 4 sketches
with a cautionary edge and a dusting of nuts
(also available separately)

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Perilous Tales

Notes:

This show was designed to be played and narrated by an ensemble cast. You can use 'characters' to narrate tales or have narrators as separate entities – up to you. Perilous Tales is versatile in terms of cast size – use as many or a few as you wish.

You can also take the stage directions on board or ignore them completely and do your own thing. However, it is important to create some rather strange and sinister moments and to play it 'cartoon fashion'.

Characters:

MC: Can be any of the characters below. Originally VAMP introduced the show with a puppet body on a puppet theatre (another optional bit of staging)

Sibyl & Cedric's Tale

Narrator 1

Sibyl: Small minded, suspicious & manic. Married & devoted to Cedric.

Cedric: Small minded, suspicious & manic. Married & devoted to Sibyl.

Man, Girl, Woman, Boy, 2nd Woman

Others characters surrounding them

Loki's Lament

Narrator 2

Loki: A very spoiled princess

Wisdom: Embodiment of wisdom

Joy/Despair: Played by the same actor embodiment of joy/despair

Grace: Embodiment of grace

Thomas: The Keeper of Songs

Fairy: One will do, more if you like

Queen Mother of Loki

King Father of Loki

Various Relatives

Gorgeous Gerald & The Ghost

Narrator 3

Narrator 4

Gerald: Gorgeous & incredibly vain. Could be slightly effeminate & very well dressed.

Ghost: Male. A ghostly apparition! Must look fairly awful in contrast to Gerald

Imelda: Gerald's widow. Attractive & rather sexy.

Vamp: Male. A vampire - classic style, cloak etc.

Keira: Female friend of Gerald's. Well dressed & vain.

Amy: Female friend of Gerald's. Well dressed & vain.

The Grimble's Last Game

Narrator 5

Narrator 6

Molly: Rather sneaky & underhand.

Ed: Smug & selfish.

Zed: Male or female. The sinister owner of the 'gaming shop'. Fantastically evil & bizarrely dressed and would love to be in a real fairytale.

Monster 1

Monster 2

Various dancers, knights etc.

THE INTRO

Note: Anything in rhyming verse is in italics

Lights come up very gradually as music is played as if from a great distance - echoing into the room & fading away. The characters 'emerge' from the set gradually take their places on stage. The set should be 'musical' & the cast start to play the set. They make noises/sounds/music that will gradually build up to a cacophonous crescendo when everyone is present (except the person playing MC). At this point the puppet theatre curtains open & the MC is present with a tiny puppet body. Silence, everyone turns to look at him. He speaks in a slow resonant & sinister voice.

MC: Good evening to you all.
We, the diverse company of players you see before you

They all turn to the audience and bow theatrically

Will present, entirely for your benefit,
A collection of tales to delight and amuse.
But ...there are warnings in these tales.
Be alert!

We seek not to offend you ... much (*laughs in sinister fashion - the company start to laugh with each other*)

But (*silence*) to inform you
Of the dangers and hazards
That you may experience
If you choose to walk down
These perilous paths.
Enjoy.....

The puppet theatre curtains are snapped shut

Loki: Who will begin?

They look around at each other, shrugging, moving away etc

Loki: Someone must start. That's how it works.

Ed: Why don't you.

Loki: Shan't. You start.

Ed: Won't

Narr1: I'll start. (*Waits for everyone to pay attention*)

This is a rather sad tale about the perils of too much happiness.
Cedric and Sibyl were a very lucky couple who were so devoted and glued together that they hardly knew that the world existed beyond their noses...

A murmuring of approval

Ah, you like that?
How cosy, you're thinking.
How very romantic
Fools!
Watch ... see what befalls those who cannot bend with the winds of change.

Sibyl and Cedric take CS.

Our tale begins as Cedric and Sibyl make an extraordinary discovery.

Sibyl: Life is good Cedric. Everything is as it should be. Everything is just fine.

Cedric: We must strive to maintain this excellent state of affairs, Sibyl my angel.

Sibyl: Indeed we must, Cedric my sweet.

Narr1: And months passed and our happy couple were occupied with attempting to remain exactly the same for fear that a change to their circumstances might dissolve their happiness.

Cedric: Is everything still the same Sibyl. Has anything changed?

Sibyl: Changed? Of course not. Who would do such a thing?

Cedric: We must strive not to change anything

Sibyl: Were we striving before?

Cedric: Before what?

Sibyl: Before we decided not to change anything

Cedric: *(A flash of panic crosses Cedric's face as he thinks)* I ... I have always striven to maintain our happiness my love.

Sibyl: Yes, I'm fairly sure I was striving as well.

Cedric: Then all is well and we should continue to strive.

Sibyl: Well, now we've started it would be foolish to stop.

Man: *(Walks up casually)* I say, do you happen to have the time?

Cedric: Time? You're after the time are you ... *(suspiciously)* is that all?

Sibyl: What sort of time are you after? Do you want our time or have you misplaced your own?

Man: I just thought you might have the time.

Cedric: We have our own time, but not enough to share.

Sibyl: Find your own, ours is a very special time and we're not giving it away.

Man: Well, I'm sorry to have wasted it, good day *(walks off)*.

Girl: *(As they watch the man depart a girl approaches from the other side)* Excuse me. I wonder if you would care to give something to the local Orphanage to help the children towards a better happier life.

Sibyl: *(Surprised)* Oh! Well that was a bit sneaky. Creeping up and surprising innocent people like that.

Cedric: And what is it that you think we can give.

Girl: Well, I just thought you might like to share some of your good fortune with others.

Sibyl: Certainly not!

Cedric: Here, take some money instead and be on your way!

They thrust money at her & she wanders away confused

Woman: *(wanders by)* Could you tell me....

C&S: NO!

People are generally wandering around in close proximity to Cedric & Sibyl. Gradually people get closer & C&S are more intimidated

Cedric: Nothing must intrude on our happiness.

Sibyl: Nothing and nobody Cedric my sugar.

Cedric: We'll keep them away.

Sibyl: We will not let anyone ruin our happiness.

Cedric: We'll stop them even trying.

Sibyl: They won't even get close.

Narr1: And weeks passed and fear grew in their hearts.

They are getting more agitated by the people around

Cedric: *(To a passing man)* You Sir, *(he turns)* yes you. Keep away from us, I know what you're thinking ... you don't fool me

Sibyl: Cedric - look at that woman, what is she planning to do.

Cedric: *(Watching the man depart)* What are the symptoms my dearest.

Sibyl: *(Looking at a woman who is smiling at her)* She's looking at us my darling... I don't think she likes me.

Cedric: These people are jealous of our wonderful happiness and our carefree existence. Avert your eyes Sibyl, don't get sucked in, she's probably a witch.

Sibyl: A witch! What can we do oh no ... look over there *(other people passing by, some in a small group talking)*.

Cedric: We're surrounded stay calm.

Sibyl: *(Shrieking)* I'm perfectly calm Cedric do something!

Cedric: Perhaps we can negotiate.

Sibyl: With witches? They'll take what is most precious to us.

Woman: *(Coming over to them)* I say, are you folks alright? You look a little worried.

Sibyl: *(She screams)* Cedric. She spoke to us..... are we under a spell?

Cedric: *(Transfixed in fear)* Errrrrr.... what I ummmmmm..

Sibyl: Cedric! RUN!

Narr1: And they ran
And they reached their home
They locked the door
They drew the curtains
And they lived in terrible fear
That one day something might change
And their happiness
Would be lost or stolen
Or turned into something else.

Sibyl and Cedric go to bed, they don't sleep but look around, wide-eyed and fearful until morning. They speak & act in a nervous and suspicious manner

Sibyl: Good morning my dear.

Cedric: Good morning my dear.

Sibyl: Shall we stay in and keep the windows shut my sweet?

Cedric: That is exactly what we shall do today my love.

Sibyl: We could lock the front door.

Cedric: You mean it isn't already locked?

Sibyl: Oh, silly me, of course it is *(laughs nervously)*.

Cedric: *(Laughs with her)* And what about the garden gate, it is locked and barred ... isn't it sugar..?

Sibyl: Of course it is! Why, if it wasn't someone might gain entry to our garden.

Cedric: Walk down the path.

Sibyl: And

Cedric: Knock on the door

S&C: Nooooooooooooo

Narr1: But guess what?
The hinges on the gate were rusty
That happens if standing by your gate

Oiling your hinges
Strikes fear into you
Lest you should be approached by a neighbour.
And the gate fell off (*Loud crashing sound*)
And the path to Sibyl and Cedric's front door
Was exposed to all.

Sibyl: What was that noise?

Cedric: It came from out there.

Sibyl: You mean..

Cedric: Yes.

Sibyl: What?

Cedric: Exactly.

Sibyl: It's gone quiet again.

Cedric: Phew!

Narr1: But then

A lad comes rushing to their door and hammers on it.

Boy: Let me in please, help let me inplease!

Cedric & Sibyl look at each other, but don't move

I'm being chased by a pack of wild man-eating creatures with fangs and big claws
and ferocious body parts ...

They stand still, eyes closed, fingers in ears, pretending not to be there

I know you're in there. I can see you. It's coming ... I'm going to ...dieeeeeeeee....

*Completely over-the-top sounds of a wild animal - inflatable monster of some
sort - or puppet - devouring the boy, then silence.*

Sibyl: (*Long pause as they listen at the door*) Has he departed?

Cedric: It would seem so.

Sibyl: Thank goodness for that. For one awful moment I thought he might try to break down
our door just to try and save himself.

Cedric: What if it happens again?

Narr1: But before they could plan what to do there was a knock at the door.

Woman: Hello! Anybody in there? Hello?

They stay very still, close their eyes & put their fingers in their ears

Woman: Hellooooo! Anybody in there (*looks through the letterbox*) I can see you, please open the door, I would just like to ask you a few questions. Just a harmless, unintrusive survey.

Cedric: No you can't and we won't.

Sibyl: I'll get the broom.

Woman: I'm sure you'll agree it's a very worthwhile survey...

Cedric: No we won't, go away.

Woman: Question 1.....

Sibyl: (*Brandishing a broom through the letterbox*) We know what your game is. You want us to sign away our happiness ... we'll be turned into zombies as you gradually extract our happiness from us in a series of perverted midnight witch meeting things ... and if we refuse you'll set more wild animals on us ..you don't fool us.

Woman: But I haven't asked the question yet. How many times a week you you socialise with friends?

Sibyl: Take this (*pokes her through the letterbox with the broom*).

Woman: (*Shrieks*) What strange people. Are you quite alright? Would you like some help? I could get someone to visit... (*grabs the broom and pulls it through*).

Cedric: What does she mean.

Sibyl: I think she's planning to attack.

Cedric: Is she a witch?

Sibyl: (*Looks through letterbox*) She has a broom.. I think that's a sign.

Cedric: We're doomed unless we make her an offering.

Sibyl: (*Through the letterbox*) Wait a moment we have something for you. What can we give her?

Cedric: Here, use this (*takes a small jar*).

Sibyl: But those are Mummy's ashes.

Cedric: Exactly - and as she is somewhat dead she can't be turned into a zombie and we'll be safe.

Sibyl: But, I though zombies were raised from the dead.

Cedric: Only if they have bodies Sibyl - your Mother would have to come back as animated confetti.

Sibyl: Oh, do you think she would mind?

Cedric: I'm sure she would be willing to sacrifice whatever she has left for our happiness.

Sibyl: Good old Mummy.

Cedric: Stand clear, I'm opening the door *(throws out the jar)* ... take this, it should satisfy your unnatural cravings for dead things.

The woman gets hit by the jar & staggers off confused with broom and jar

Cedric: We'll write a note and place it on our door for all to see.

Sibyl: We must be more careful, that was close.

Narr1: And so they did.

A huge note is produced that says "NO CALLERS OR WITCHES"

And for a while it worked
People kept away
The garden became overgrown
They kept watch by the front door
Barred the windows and threw out the telephone.

Silent sequence to music and/or sound effects where Cedric & Sibyl sleep - or fail to, keep watch, run around getting more paranoid. Their clothes change slightly - camouflage, hard hats etc

And then one day

A letter arrives as Sibyl sleeps by the door

Sibyl: *(Screams)* We've been infiltrated!

Cedric: Stand clear it could be a trap ... *(shouts to the letter)* Come out with your hands on your address panel and speak slowly ... what do you want?

They nervously edge closer, poking the letter, testing it for radiation & ticking. They cautiously kneel down by the letter & pick it up examining it closely. On opening the letter they find a card