

BABA YAGA'S HUT

Adaptation, Script and Music by **JOHN MILLS**
 Additional Script Consultancy from **ADAM ELMS**
 Inspired by the folk tales of **ARTHUR RANSOME**

*(Action takes place through the song. **MOTHER** and her daughter, **ANASTASIYA**, are seated at a table. A mirror hangs on the wall. **ANASTASIYA** has a comb in her hair. A chunk of black bread is between them. **MOTHER** breaks off a tiny bit and eats it very deliberately. Further activity around the bread/eating. They play a game of Rock/Paper/Scissors. **MOTHER** combs **ANASTASIYA**'s hair then puts it back in her hair.)*

Music starts for BYH01 A Slavic Story-Time: Baba Yaga

SLAVIC STORIES, SLAVIC RHYMES TO SEE US THROUGH THE WINTER-TIME.
 A FREEZING WINTER, A NEVER-ENDING, FREEZING WINTER.
 ARE YOU READY FOR A SLAVIC STORY-TIME?
 SLAVIC STORIES, SLAVIC RHYMES TO SEE US THROUGH THE WINTER-TIME.
 WE'VE SLAVIC STORIES OF BABA YAGA. (*Chanted*) Baba Yaga!
 ARE YOU READY FOR A SLAVIC STORY-TIME?
 SLAVIC STORIES, SLAVIC RHYMES ... TO SEE US THROUGH THE WINTER-TIME.
 WE'VE SLAVIC STORIES OF BABA YAGA. (*Chanted*) Baba Yaga!
 ARE YOU READY ... FOR A SLAVIC STORY-TIME? Yoi!

MOTHER

(Tentatively) Anastasiya, I've been thinking.

ANASTASIYA

Yes, Mother?

MOTHER

Well, it's been seven years since your Father died and ...

ANASTASIYA

(Sigh) I still miss him.

MOTHER

Yes, seven lonely years. So I've been thinking ...

ANASTASIYA

You've said that already.

MOTHER

It's probably rather foolish, but ...

ANASTASIYA

Mother, get on with it!

MOTHER

(Blurting it out at speed) I'm thinking of finding me a new husband!

ANASTASIYA

What? A husband! What for? *(Disbelief)* Seriously, what for? *(A knock at the door)* Who's that? *(Opens the door)* Yes?

STEPFATHER

(Enters. Carries a tray of rock cakes, Big Mac and two bread rolls) Bread rolls? Rock cakes? Big Mac?

MOTHER

(Feeling the rolls) Yes. Yes. *(Turning down the Big Mac)* No thankyou! *(Sniffs the bread rolls)* Mmmm. Lovely bread. Aaaah! *(Pulling STEPFATHER near the table. To ANASTASIYA)* Aaaah! And he'll do for me, too!

ANASTASIYA

But, Mother, you don't know anything about him! He might burp a lot ... snore ... have really smelly feet!

MOTHER

I know, but he's got a lovely pair of rolls! *(Starts eating)*

ANASTASIYA

But, Mother!

MOTHER

This is such lovely bread.

STEPFATHER

(Takes MOTHER's hands) Yes, yes, yes, I'll marry you! *(To AUDIENCE, pointing at MOTHER)* She can look after me. *(Pointing at ANASTASIYA)* And she can do the chores!

ANASTASIYA

(To AUDIENCE) I hope Mother knows what she's doing!

MOTHER

(Spraying the bread around) Oh, I do, I do! *(Gives STEPFATHER a tight hug)*

STEPFATHER

(Out of breath) Anastasiya ... mug of tea ... mug of tea ... *(Sternly)* Now, girl, now!

ANASTASIYA

Yes, Stepfather. I'll get it now. *(ANASTASIYA exits. STEPFATHER places a ring on MOTHER's finger. MOTHER admires the ring)*

MOTHER

Sigh, such a lovely ring, do you think ...? *(Hand silenced by STEPFATHER)* It's a crisp fresh morning, how about we ... *(Hand silenced)* I was thinking about cooking some turnips tonight ... *(Hand silenced. N.b. MOTHER shouldn't hear the following conversation)*

ANASTASIYA

(Enters with mug of tea for STEPFATHER) Is there any bread left?

STEPFATHER

(Sharply) Not for you! More logs for the fire.

ANASTASIYA

(Pokes her tongue at STEPFATHER) Not even a crumb or two?

STEPFATHER

Not for you! The paths need clearing of snow.

ANASTASIYA

(Pokes out her tongue a little further) Mother, can we play the Rock-Paper-Scissors game?

STEPFATHER

Don't disturb your Mother. The chimney needs sweeping, add it to your list of jobs.

ANASTASIYA

(Pokes out her tongue) Mother, may I sit at the table with you?

STEPFATHER

No, Anastasiya, you're much too naughty to sit with us. *(Throws a few crusts on the floor)* Eat off the floor if you must.

ANASTASIYA

(Crying, picks up the crusts) But, Stepfather ...?

STEPFATHER

(Angrily stands up) Don't! *(Gnashes his teeth noisily, and points outside)* Get out to eat your crusts! *(ANASTASIYA goes outside the hut, crying to herself)*

ANASTASIYA

(Shivering, etc) It's so cold out here.

BIGRAT

(Enters) Midwinter. No food. My tummy aches. I shall starve if I don't ... *(bumps into ANASTASIYA, they both tumble to the ground)* Oh, sorry, I didn't see you there.

ANASTASIYA

(Brushing herself down) Don't worry Mister ... ?

BIGRAT

You can call me Bigrat. 'Cos that's what I am. A BIG Rat!

ANASTASIYA

(Taking a step back) Oh, dear!

BIGRAT

Don't worry, I'm a BIG rat with a BIG heart!

ANASTASIYA

Well, hello to you, 'BIG rat with a BIG heart.' I'm Anastasiya.

BIGRAT

Yes, I know. Having a tough time?

ANASTASIYA

Um ... *(Pause)* You look hungry? Would you like some of this crust?

BIGRAT

Am I hungry? I should say so! Thankyou, Anastasiya. Mmm, scrummy. Any more? *(ANASTASIYA gives another piece of crust)* Thankyou, you have such a kind heart. Any more? *(ANASTASIYA gives her last crust to BIGRAT)*

ANASTASIYA

My last crust. *(Gives it to BIGRAT)* It's yours!

BIGRAT

Thank you, You're too kind! *(Eats crust)* I feel so much better!

Music starts for BYH02 One Little Act Of Kindness

ANASTASIYA

SO MUCH JOY IN JUST ONE LITTLE ACT OF KINDNESS,
JUST A SMILE CAN BRING A MOMENT OF RELIEF.
EACH OF US, WE HAVE THE MEANS TO MAKE THINGS BRIGHTER,
IN US ALL, WE HAVE A WAY TO MAKE THINGS RIGHT

ANASTASIYA & BIGRAT

SO MUCH JOY (SO MUCH JOY) IN JUST ONE LITTLE ACT OF KINDNESS,
JUST A SMILE (JUST A SMILE) CAN BRING A MOMENT OF RELIEF.
EVERY DAY ANOTHER CHANCE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE.
EVERY DAY ANOTHER CHANCE TO MAKE THINGS RIGHT!
JUST ONE LITTLE ACT OF KINDNESS. JUST ONE LITTLE ACT OF KINDNESS.

BIGRAT

Anastasiya, come closer, I have something very important to tell you!

ANASTASIYA

Yes?