

OLD PETROV'S SLAVIC TALES

Eight Mini-Musicals

Adaptation, Script and Music by **JOHN MILLS**

Script Consultancy from **ADAM ELMS**

Inspired by the folk tales of **ARTHUR RANSOME**

Contents

1. What Is '*Old Petrov's Slavic Tales*' All About?
2. Writer's Note
3. Note to the Director
4. Stand-Alone Stories or 'Pick-And-Mix'
5. Speaking Parts And Synopses
 - a. Baba Yaga's Hut
 - b. Joka's Flying Ship
 - c. Ruslana And The Golden Firebird
 - d. Sadko And Boyka
 - e. The Stolen Turnips
 - f. The Story Of Frost
 - g. The Story Of Salt
 - h. Yevheniy's Golden Fish
 - i. Linking Scenes
6. Performances for A Handful Of Actors
7. Music

1) What is '*Old Petrov's Slavic Tales*' All About?

Blah Blah. Contrast the simple nature of poor Slavic storytelling and grandeur and power of the Tzar. Moral behaviours told in the tales. Talking animals. Glorious Slavic characters – firebird, golden fish, flying ship, Horse of power. Giant, Tzar and princesses. Modern twist

2) Writer's Note

In these eight mini-musicals I have sought to provide engaging entertainments for the over-7's that explore the Slavic style of storytelling – very folksy, full of moral behaviours, setting poverty against excess with plenty of camaraderie and humour. These stories have been carefully selected to provide different pace and energy for the stage, and the music is based on favourite Slavic folk tunes.

3) Note to the Director

Please have fun with these stories, there are plenty of humorous characters to work with and magical transformatory scenes – e.g. a ship that flies; underwater palace, fiery golden firebird, Frost's Winter kingdom; stormy weather.

4) Stand-Alone Stories or 'Pick-And-Mix'

The choice is yours! These stories can be performed as stand-alone stories lasting around 30 minutes or as 'Pick-And-Mix' combinations with additional introductory and linking scenes. Some examples of combinations might be as follows :

<u>In 2 Acts</u>	<u>In 2 Acts</u>	<u>In 1 Act</u>
The Little Hut In The Forest Sadko And Boyka Collecting Winter Logs The Story Of Frost <i>(Interval)</i> News Of A Christening Yevheniy's Golden Fish Wrap It For Christmas	The Little Hut In The Forest Joka's Flying Ship Sadko and Boyka <i>(Interval)</i> News Of A Christening Ruslana And The Golden Firebird Wrap It Up For Christmas	The Little Hut In The Forest Baba Yaga's Hut Stories About Everything The Stolen Turnips Wrap It Up For Christmas

... too many combinations to suggest here.

5) Speaking Parts and Synopses

BABA YAGA'S HUT

Speaking Parts

MOTHER	Loves eating food. Looking for love
ANASTASIYA	Hero of the story. Kind to everyone
STEPFATHER	Spiky, sharp-voiced brother to the witch Baba Yaga
BIGRAT	Talking Rat . Short-sighted with walking stick
BABA YAGA'S HUT	Scary-voiced hut on hens legs. Very ticklish
POLINA	Apprentice-witch poor at spell-making
SHAGGY WOLF	Canine assistant for Anastasiya
WILDCAT	Expert at different voices, spinner, helper to Anastasiya
BABA YAGA	Twitchiest-witchiest-witch in the world. Very cackly and wicked!

Uh-oh! Anastasiya's mother decides to remarry, a poor decision as her new husband is brother to the fearsome witch Baba Yaga. Anastasiya befriends Bigrat, a fearsome-looking but caring rat that can talk. Anastasiya's Stepfather orders her to to fetch needle and thread from Baba Yaga. She meets Bigrat again who tells her to keep every object she finds on the

way. Anastasiya arrives at Baba Yaga's Hut and gives the things she found to an apprentice-witch, a hungry Shaggy-Wolf and a sharp-clawed Wildcat. Baba Yaga – the twitchiest-witchiest-witch in the world tells Anastasiya to sit at her loom and weave whilst Baba Yaga prepares a painful death! Will Anastasiya escape with her life?

JOKA'S FLYING SHIP

Speaking Parts:

TZAR	Pompous, conniving and untrustworthy. Very powerful.
JOKA	Friendly fellow, always telling 'Dad-jokes'
MOTHER	Unsympathetic and doubting
DAVY JONES' GHOST	Plenty of 'Whooooo'. A real help to Joka
EATER	Companion with enormous appetite. Burps a lot
DRINKER	Companion with huge capacity for drinking. Burps a lot
WOODMAN	Companion with magic wood. Enjoys farting
ALEXA	Tzar's adventurous daughter. Welsh accent

The Tzar proclaims 'Whoever brings me a flying ship can be companion to my daughter!' So Joka begins his adventure. He shares his sparse meal with Davy Jones' Ghost who tells him where to find a flying ship. Stepping on board, Joka flies it to the Tzar's Palace. On the way he befriends with Eater, Drinker and Woodman. The Tzar loves the flying ship but is very unhappy that Joka – a poor peasant – should become companion to his daughter. The Tzar sets Joka and his friends a series of seemingly impossible tests. Does Joka become companion to the Tzar's daughter? Does the Tzar get to fly in the flying ship?

RUSLANA AND THE GOLDEN FIREBIRD

Speaking Parts:

RUSLANA	Darting archer, quick to speak and move. Story hero
TITAN	Ruslana's Horse of Power, partner to Ruslana
TZAR	Sword-wielding bully. Suffers from sleeping-sickness
GOLDEN FIREBIRD	Fiery, flashy dancer, shrill and threatening
PRINCE BRANIMIR	Banished son of the Tzar

Ruslana - a skilful archer and Titan - a powerful, talking horse, find a feather from the Golden Firebird. They give the feather to the Tzar who then demand they capture the Golden Firebird itself. They achieve this challenge without the shedding of any blood. The Tzar then commands Ruslana and Titan to find his son, Prince Branimir, who had been banished years earlier. If they do not bring him they, Ruslana will end up as mincemeat and Titan will end up as horsemeat! Do they find Prince Branimir? Why was he banished? Does the Prince return home? Do Ruslana and Titan keep their heads on their shoulders?

SADKO AND BOYKA**Speaking Parts:**

SADKO	Poor dulcimer-playing peasant–become-merchant
BOYKA	Creative dancer, Sadko's love-interest
DANCING GIRL	Selfish dancer
CASPIAN	Tzar Of The Seas. Thunderous voice, splashy movements
CLOTHES-SELLER	Street trader, cockney accent
SEA-CAPTAIN	Eye patch, country accent
SALTY SEA-DOG	Country accent. Bit slow on the uptake

Sadko is a skilful dulcimer player – in love with his little River Boyka - Caspian, Tzar of the Seas, gives Sadko a box of jewels in exchange for playing Sadko trades these at market and becomes the richest merchant in Novgorod. After twelve years he boards a ship to trade over the Caspian Sea. Suddenly a huge storm blows up. The ship is stuck firm. Sadko realises he has not upheld his side of the bargain and jumps into the sea to save the others and swims down to Caspian's Underwater Palace. He plays his dulcimer for Caspian who dances energetically and then demands Sadko marries his daughter named Boyka. Sadko admires Boyka's necklace but it breaks, scattering the jewels widely. A rush of sea-currents drive Sadko and Boyka apart. Will they ever be together again?

THE STOLEN TURNIPS**Speaking Parts:**

IGOR	Old man, grumpy gardener of turnips, country accent
GALYNA	Old Woman, cheerful, country accent
TURNIP THIEVES 1, 2 & 3	Joyful, chattering, sing-song voices
GOAT	(Puppet?) Can sneeze gold coins to order.

Precious turnips have been stolen from Igor's vegetable plot! Galyna is scolded by Igor, her husband who demands that she find the Turnip-Thieves. Turns out they are funny children who happily give her gifts in payment – a tablecloth that produces food and a goat that sneezes gold coins. Igor is jealous of these gifts, so takes them and replaces them with worthless items. More turnips are stolen and this time the Turnip-Thieves give Galyna a whistle pipe that will whip its player. Igor takes the whistle and insists on playing it. Can you guess what happens in the end?

THE STORY OF FROST**Speaking Parts:**

FATHER	Weak, timid and hen-pecked
MARIYA	Hard-working and kind
STEPMOTHER	Harridan, greedy and manipulating

ANNA	Ugly sister loves singing (badly)
ALONA	Ugly sister loves dancing (badly)
MISTER FROST	Brilliant in white, beautiful but dangerous

Mariya is the hard-working and caring daughter who's Father remarried. His new wife has two daughters of her own, Alona and Anna, who are always ordering Mariya to do all the chores. Stepmother tells Father to take Mariya into the cold forest to marry Frost! He warns Mariya to be kind. The cold bites hard as Frost comes closer and Mariya is close to freezing but always remains polite towards Frost. He wraps her in his warm coat and she survives the night. Her Father returns expecting to find Mariya dead, so is delighted to find she's alive and with fine jewels in a small box beside her. They return home to the scolding Stepmother who insists that Anna and Alona - her own daughters, are taken to marry Frost and receive jewels too. Are they polite to Frost in the same way that Mariya was? Do Anna and Alona receive the jewels from Frost?

THE STORY OF SALT

Speaking Parts:

FATHER	Rich merchant, with three sons
IVAN	Youngest son, hero of the story, clean-shaven
MIKHAILO	Ivan's older brother, treacherous greedy, full beard
DYMTRUS	Ivan's older brother, treacherous and greedy, full beard
SALTY SEA-DOG	Cannot swim, prone to being sea-sick, dodgy knees
TZAR	Tired of tasteless food.
COOKIE	Lively cook, plenty of 'cheffing' gestures (e.g. Finger-kisses)
LYUBOV	Tzar's bad-mannered daughter, tired of tasteless food
EARWAX	Huge giant with very sensitive hearing

Ivan's older brothers are given sailing ships in which to trade. Ivan asks his Father for the same and sets sail with an Old Salty Sea-dog. They discover a huge snowy-white mountain, which turns out to be a mountain of good Slavic salt which is loaded into his ship. Ivan's offers to sell the salt to the Tzar, but he and his 'white dust' are turned away. Ivan goes to the Tzar's kitchens and drops a pinch of salt into the dishes. The Tzar and his daughter, Lyubov, are delighted with the tasty food, and the Tzar agrees to buy the ships' cargo. Ivan and Lyubov sail the seas together and see the ships of Ivan's brothers. They are very jealous of Ivan and they throw him overboard and take Lyubov and the cargo of salt as their own.. Ivan swim to land where he meets Earwax, a huge Giant with amazing hearing who carries him on his shoulders over the seas to his home. Will the truth come out? Does Ivan make his fortune and get to be with his Princess?

YEVHENIY'S GOLDEN FISH

Speaking Parts:

YEVHENIY	Old Fisherman, fretful and timid, croaky singing voice
YANA	Yevheniy's wife, contented at first then increasingly greedy

GOLDEN FISH	Blup, blap, blip, golden-coloured Ruler of the Seas
SERVANT(S)	Obedient and attentive
WOOLLYPUPPY	Stray puppy who bounces around – a lot!
GRANDMOTHER	Fanatical knitter.

Yevheniy, a poor, old Fisherman catches a rare Golden Fish from the sea. The Golden Fish can talk and pleads to be released. Yevheniy releases the Golden Fish who offers to give him anything he wishes for. Yevheniy cannot think of anything he needs so returns home empty-handed. Yana tells him to catch the fish again and ask for some bread as a reward. The Golden Fish agrees and when Yevheniy returns home this time he finds Yana with a fine loaf. She demands that he catch the Golden Fish again and ask for even greater gifts. These are freely given by the Golden Fish until the time comes when Yana demands to become Ruler Of The Seas. What happens to Yana's fine palace and clothes? Why does Grandmother have a 'frilly-knicker' moment? Does Woolypuppy get to become an expert knitter like Grandmother?

FIVE LINKING SCENES

Speaking Parts:

GRANDFATHER	Old Petrov, the storyteller, a huge bear of a man
MAROOSIA	(<i>Pronounces Ma-roosh-ya</i>) Granddaughter of Old Petrov
VANYA	Grandson of Old Petrov
VLADIMIR	Talking cat, often sleepy
BAYAN	(<i>pronounced Bay-un</i>) Talking wolf-dog, usually hungry
PRIEST	Steady and religious
LUDMILA	Proud, new mother

Linking Scenes:

- (1) The Little Hut In The Forest:
Introducing Old Petrov's family and their relationship with each other.
- (2) Collecting Winter Logs:
Old Petrov's family collecting firewood, they rest to listen to another tale.
- (3) Stories About Everything:
Trying to catch out Old Petrov by suggesting ideas for stories.
- (4) A Christening In The Village:
Celebration of Christening a newborn, an chance to tell a heroic story.
- (5) Wrap It Up For Christmas:
Unwrapping presents which are important items from different tales.

6) Performances For A Handful Of Actors

All the stories from ‘*Old Petrov’s Slavic Tales*’ can be performed with ‘doubling’ using five or six actors as suggested below:

	Performer 1	Performer 2	Performer 3	Performer 4	Performer 5	Performer 6
Baba Yaga’s Hut	Baba Yaga’s Hut; Mother	Anastasiya	Bigrat; Polina	Stepfather; Shaggy Wolf	Wildcat	Baba Yaga
Joka’s Flying Ship	Mother; Eater	Alexa	Joka	Tzar; Davy Jones’ Ghost	Drinker	Woodman
Ruslana And The Golden Firebird	Tzar	Golden Firebird	Prince Grygorig	Titan, Horse Of Power	Ruslana	
Sadko And Boyka	Salty Sea-Dog	Girl-Who-Dances; Boyka	Sadko	Caspian, Tzar of the Sea	Clothes-Seller; Sea-Captain	
The Stolen Turnips	Igor	Galyna	Turnip Thief 2	Turnip Thief 1	Turnip Thief 3	
The Story Of Frost	Father	Mariya	Anna	Alona	Stepmother	Mister Frost
The Story Of Salt	Father; Dymtrus	Princess Lyubov	Ivan	Tzar; Earwax The Giant	Salty Sea-Dog; Cookie	Mykhailo
Yevheniy’s Golden Fish	Yevheniy	Golden Fish	Woollypuppy Servant	Yana	Grandmother	
Linking Scenes	Grandfather	Maroosia	Vanya	Bayan	Volodimir	

For performances using a larger cast/dancers, there are clear suggestions in the introductory page of each script.

7) Music

Based on well-known Slavic themes and folk tunes, each mini-musical opens and closes with *A Slavic Story Time* depending on whether they are stand alone pieces or used in combination with others.

MP3 backing tracks are available, both with and without vocals. An arrangement for 5-piece band comprising accordion, violin, clarinet, string bass and percussion is available. Extracts can be downloaded from the website <https://earwormmusicals.uk>

8) Musical Numbers

Baba Yaga’s Hut

BYH01 A Slavic Story-Time: Baba Yaga	0’55”
BYH02 One Little Act Of Kindness - Duet	1’22”
BYH03 <i>One Little Act Of Kindness</i>	

BYH04 Baba Yaga	0'33"
BYH05 Twitchy Baba Yaga	0'33"
BYH06 Twitchy-Witchy Baba Yaga	0'44"
BYH07 A Slavic Story-Time: Baba Yaga – Reprise	0'44"

Joka's Flying Ship

JFS01 A Slavic Story-Time: Joka's Flying Ship	0'55"
<i>JFS02 My Flying Ship</i>	
JFS03 My Flying Ship	0'28"
JFS04 His Flying Ship	
JFS05 This Flying Ship	
JFS06 Oh, Such Treachery	1'19"
JFS07 No More Treachery	0'23"
JFS08 A Slavic Story-Time: Joka's Flying Ship - Reprise	0'23"

Ruslana And The Golden Firebird

RGF01 A Slavic Story-Time: Golden Firebird	0'55"
<i>RGF02 Golden Firebird - Instrumental</i>	
<i>RGF03 Corn Dance - Instrumental</i>	
<i>RGF04 Dance Of The Firebird - Instrumental</i>	
<i>RGF05 Palace Journeying - Instrumental</i>	
<i>RGF06 Firebird Chords - Instrumental</i>	
RGF07 The Lonely Prince of Sadness	1'35"
<i>RGF09 Fighting For Control</i>	1'57"
RGF10 The Happy Prince Of Gladness	1'57"
RGF11 A Slavic Story-Time: Golden Firebird – Reprise	1'57"

Sadko And Boyka

SAB01 A Slavic Story-Time: Sadko & Boyka	0'55"
<i>SAB02 Little River Boyka - Instrumental</i>	
SAB03 Little River Boyka	1'51"
<i>SAB04 I Love To Dance - Instrumental</i>	
<i>SAB05 I Love To Dance : Calypso- Instrumental</i>	
SAB06 I Love To Dance	0'34"
SAB07 I Love To Dance: Calypso – Reprise 1	0'49"
SAB08 Little River Boyka - Reprise	1'51"
SAB09 I Love To Dance: Calypso – Reprise 2	1'51"
SAB10 A Slavic Story-Time: Sadko & Boyka - Reprise	0'34"

The Stolen Turnips

TST01 A Slavic Story-Time: Stolen Turnips	0'55"
TST02 Guess Who Stole The Turnips?	0'43"
<i>TST03 That Igor! - Instrumental</i>	
<i>TST04 Guess Who Stole The Turnips? - Instrumental</i>	
TST05 Did We Steal The Turnips?	0'34"
TST06 Did We Steal The Turnips? (Yes We Did!)	0'34"

TST07 That Igor Will Not Gain!	0'34"
TST08 Did We Steal The Turnips?	0'32"
TST09 A Slavic Story-Time: Stolen Turnips - Reprise	0'34"

The Story Of Frost

SOF01 A Slavic Story-Time: Frosty Kingdoms	0'55"
SOF02 Always Something More For MeTo Do!	1'21"
<i>SOF03 Always Something More For MeTo Do! - Instrumental</i>	
<i>SOF04 Mister Frost- Instrumental</i>	
SOF05 Mister Frost	1'01"
SOF06 Mister Frost - Reprise	1'01"
SOF07 Mister Frost – Finale!	1'01"
SOF08 A Slavic Story-Time: Frosty Kingdoms - Reprise	1'01"

The Story Of Salt

SOS01 A Slavic Story-Time: Salty Treasure!	0'55"
<i>SOS02 Slavic Festive Dance - Instrumental</i>	
SOS03 A Mountain Of Salt	0'54"
<i>SOS04 A Mountain Of Salt- Instrumental</i>	
SOS05 A Mountain Of Salt – Reprise	0'54"
SOS06 A Slavic Story-Time: Salty Treasure! - Reprise	0'54"

Yevheniy's Golden Fish

YGF01 A Slavic Story-Time: Poor Yevheniy	0'55"
YGF02 Love Of My Life!	1'08"
<i>YGF03 First Dance Of The Golden Fish - Instrumental</i>	0'21"
YGF04 Golden Fish, Listen To Me!	0'21"
<i>YGF05 Second Dance Of The Golden Fish - Instrumental</i>	0'21"
<i>YGF06 Third Dance Of The Golden Fish - Instrumental</i>	0'42"
YGF07 Golden Fish, Listen To Me! (1 st Extension)	0'45"
<i>YGF08 Fourth Dance Of The Golden Fish- Instrumental</i>	1'21"
YGF09 Golden Fish, Listen To Me! (2 nd Extension)	0'20"
<i>YGF10 Fifth Dance Of The Golden Fish- Instrumental</i>	0'20"
YGF11 Golden Fish, Listen To Me! (3 rd Extension)	0'20"
<i>YGF12 Sixth Dance Of The Golden Fish- Instrumental</i>	0'20"
YGF13 Love Of My Life! – Duet	0'42"
YGF14 A Slavic Story-Time: Poor Yevheniy - Reprise	0'42"

Linking Scenes

<i>LS01 May Your Heart Feel Our Love- Instrumental</i>	
LS02 May Your Heart Feel Our Love	1'39"
LS03 A Slavic Story-Time: Through The Winter	

N.B. *Music in italics are for underscoring, time moving on or for scene changes*