



# Perilous Tales

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

by  
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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:

**Intro:** 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 Vamp). 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.*

**Vamp:** 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 ... 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 .... ummmmmmm

**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

### SAMPLE OF NEXT SKETCH – LOKI'S LAMENT

*Suddenly the Puppet Theatre is snapped open again. This time the Ghost appears*

**Ghost:** A suitably sorry tale to begin with, but I did like the ending  
Happiness exists.  
When it passes your way wallow and roll in it, but don't grasp, it's so ... undignified,  
and you might find that you join myself and my close friends sooner than you would wish....

**Narr2:** I have a story, a fairytale in fact.  
This is the story of Princess Loki

*Loki takes CS*

Loki stands for Lupin Orchid Kissy Ipsa, which roughly translated means Greedy Wolf of Desire ... which is an odd name for a princess, but strangely appropriate.  
You see, Loki was a spoilt, foul tempered girl who did not know Joy. Not even when Joy was standing right next to her. In fact when that happened she invariably said

**Loki:** Who are you, go away. *(Turns the other way)* Ohhhhh, I want that! *(Points)*

**Joy:** Don't you want to be happy and joyous?

**Loki:** How much is it worth?

**Joy:** Joy cannot be measured in monetary terms

**Loki:** Then I don't want it. I want THAT! MOTHER!

*The King & Queen are seated on a high dais and never come down. They*

*communicate with Loki via speaking tubes/megaphone/similar device*

**Queen:** Yes, dearest one? What is it my little...

**Loki:** Shut up Mother and get me a new dress

**King:** What does our precious child desire Mother?

**Queen:** A new dress Father

**King:** Then she shall have one, the finest money can buy!

**Narr2:** But Joy stayed around Loki, trying to be seen and heard. Always there ... always ignored.

*Joy moves around Loki trying to be noticed*

**Loki:** Go away, you're so ... boring

**Joy:** Please play with me Loki. I can help you to feel good about life

**Loki:** I already do

**Joy:** I'll share my love and happiness and we can laugh and play in the sun

**Loki:** Ohhh, sounds amazing ... I suppose we can dance in the bluebells and run through the grass

**Joy:** Yes!

**Loki:** Cliché. Beat it sister. *(Turns)* Look at that. I want one of those!

**King:** What does she desire Mother?

**Queen:** A pony

**King:** She shall have the best and most expensive pony in the land

**Narr2:** Then one day Wisdom entered her life and tentatively tried to impart a little knowledge - the first step of the fairytale wisdom programme

**Wisdom:** But you see Loki, things alone won't make your life complete ... you need more than mere things

**Loki:** Not listening

**Wisdom:** I can help you achieve great things Loki, but you must listen to what I say. Read my book if you prefer .....

**Loki:** Won't. Can't make me. Ohhhh Daddy, I want that!

**Queen:** What does she desire Father?

**King:** She wants the library Mother

**Queen:** Oh, she must want to read books, I knew she would be clever

**King:** I'll purchase the library this very minute!

**Loki:** Great! Now burn all the books! I just want a BIG playroom for me and my pony.

**Wisdom:** Loki, you can't burn the books, other people might need to read them

**Loki:** Well, they should have thought of that before

**Wisdom:** But I need them ... you'll be spoiling so many lives

**Joy:** People will be unhappy

**Wisdom:** Why don't you try reading one

**Joy:** Or sharing with others

**Loki:** Why should I? It's not my fault is other people are unprepared for unusual occurrences in their lives. I can't be held accountable just because people are too lazy to get round to the library when they have the chance

**Wisdom:** But ....

**Joy:** Let's go, there's nothing we can do here

**Loki:** If I want something ... I have it. That's how life works around here, get used to it.

**Narr2:** So Wisdom and Joy retreated to the edge of Loki's life and waited. Then one day, Grace appeared

### SAMPLE OF GORGEOUS GERALD AND THE GHOST

**Cedric:** *A sad tale indeed  
And one that shows how  
If we listen and heed  
We can sometimes allow*

*Wisdom and Joy  
And Grace with her gift  
To enter our lives  
And cast us adrift*

*On the fast running waters  
Of love, warmth and care  
To wrap us up safely  
And help us to bear*

*The strains of our lives  
We so carelessly sire  
By thoughtlessly grasping  
For all we desire*

*But, our purpose is not  
To tell tales that redeem  
Our unfortunate subjects  
Are sailing upstream*

*They kick and they shout  
As they sink and submerge  
My challenge to you now  
Is a story in verse*

**Narr3:** *We take up the challenge!  
In verse it shall be*

**Narr4:** *We can rhyme just as well  
As you will now see*

*Puppet theatre shuts*

**Narr3:** The tale of Gorgeous Gerald and the Ghost

*Cedric pokes head round puppet Theatre curtain*

**Cedric:** In verse

**Narr3:** *OK!  
Now, It may seem odd  
Or decidedly strange  
That someone like Gerald  
Could make an exchange*

*With a ghost so ghastly  
So ugly and bad  
But that's what happened  
To the unfortunate lad*

**Narr4:** *Our story begins  
One fine sunny day  
As Gorgeous Gerald  
On his bed lay*

**Gerald:** *He said  
Am I not  
The most gorgeous fellow  
My lips are so red  
My hair so yellow*

*My complexion is perfect  
My body divine  
There is no body  
So gorgeously fine*

**Narr4:** But, there was something that Gorgeous Gerald didn't know

**Narr3:** For Gerald had an admirer

**Narr4:** A secret, secret admirer

**Narr3:** An admirer from afar you might say

**Narr4:** But also very close  
as you will see

**Narr3:** *Gerald's new fan  
Was a ghost you see  
An unfortunate soul  
Who just could not be*

**Narr4:** *At peace with himself  
In the afterlife  
He craved the sun  
And his beautiful wife*

**Ghost:** *If only*  
**Narr4:** *He thought*  
**Ghost:** *I could get into that skin  
I could live once more  
And try to win*

*Back my darling Imelda  
Who is under the spell  
Of a man who has clearly  
Walked straight out of hell*

**Narr3:** *And the ghost was right  
For Imelda's new bloke  
Was a creature of death  
In a swishy black cloak*

**Imelda:** *Imelda did fear  
That her suitor might try  
To force his attentions  
And make her comply*

**Narr3:** *With his strange ideas  
That sounded so clever  
About drinking blood  
And living forever*

**Ghost:** *And the ghost of her man  
Was watching in vain  
He knew he was helpless  
In his ghostly domain*

*He longed to be free  
Of the twilight zone  
The endless wandering  
Without flesh and bone*

**Narr4:** *He needed a body  
To become more alive  
And thought that with Gerald's  
He could probably thrive*

**Narr3:** *On this fine sunny day  
Gerald was walking*

*With a friend or two  
And they were all talking*

**Amy:** *About Gerald's great beauty*

**Keira:** *His poise and his grace*

**Amy:** *His wisdom, his charm*

**Keira:** *And his fabulous face*

**Narr4:** *They were so enraptured  
By Gerald's great fame  
That they didn't notice  
When a mere presence became*

**Ghost:** *A tangible force  
In their trio of chatter  
The three became four  
And started to flatter*

**Amy:** *The Gorgeous Gerald  
With outrageous dares  
Keira:* *And dangerous deeds  
Ghost:* *Designed to ensnare*

**Amy:** *The gullible Gerald  
To do something mad  
Keira:* *To risk his life  
And all that he had*

**Ghost:** *Just to prove he was brave  
Fearless and strong  
Narr4:* *And his friends urged him on  
Though they knew it was wrong*

**Gerald:** *Said Gerald  
My friends  
I've just had a thought  
If I jump of a cliff  
I might just be caught*

*By the wind, for you see  
The wind is my friend  
And there is no danger  
I cannot transcend*

## **SAMPLE OF THE GRIMBLE'S LAST GAME**

*Puppet Theatre curtains open & Keira & Amy are on the puppet stage  
dancing*

**Keira:** Tales of ghosts and greed are all very well, but what of dancing?

**Amy:** Let us finish on a lighthearted tale to lift the spirits

**Keira:** Something to dance to perhaps?

**Amy:** Something uplifting.....

**Narr5:** I'll tell a story, a tale about the perils involved in not reading the small print

**Narr6:** *(Sarcastically)* Ohh, riveting

**Keira:** And dancing?

**Narr5:** No!

**Narr6:** Yes, dancing! This tale is about the terrible fate that awaits those who play one computer game too many

**Narr5:** And fail to read the small print

**Narr6:** Ok, maybe that did happen, but it's not really the point

**Narr5:** Well, we'll see. Ed Grimble was a champion player of computer games

**Narr6:** Actually, Ed and MOLLY Grimble were champion players of computer games

**Narr5:** He doesn't have a sister

**Narr6:** Watch

*Ed is sitting CS as if playing a computer game, Molly joins him*

**Molly:** Hello brother of mine

**Ed:** I wish I had a brother instead of a sister

**Narr6:** See

**Narr5:** Well, ok, but she isn't in the story

**Narr6:** *(Ignoring him)* Ed and Molly Grimble were champion game players. This is because they sacrificed their lives to perfecting this noble art.

**Narr5:** And because they frequently downloaded all the cheats they could find

**Narr6:** Which they considered to be an essential gaming skill

**Narr5:** They were so good and so fast that a new game only lasted 10 minutes

**Narr6:** Molly's motto was 'Cheat don't sweat', which on paper looked like it should rhyme, but actually it didn't - much to Molly's annoyance. So she never actually said it out loud, but had it written in large letters and pinned to her bedroom wall

**Narr5:** Ed's motto was 'Kill! kill! kill!' and he preferred to say it out loud at every opportunity

**Ed:** KILL! KILL! KILL!

**Narr6:** But, they both agreed that winning was all that mattered.

*They finish a game & celebrate*

**Ed:** Next game!

**Molly:** *(Looking round to the game pile)* That's it

**Ed:** Next game!

**Molly:** There aren't any more

**Ed:** How? I thought the universe supported you and provided for you if you believed in it

**Molly:** Believed in what?

**Ed:** Being supported by the universe. Having games available every minute of the day

**Molly:** Maybe the universe wants us to go to the game shop and get a new one

**Ed:** What? Outside?

**Molly:** It's a cruel, unforgiving universe

**Ed:** We have no choice, prepare to depart on a mission of extreme urgency

**Molly:** We'll need chocolate

**Narr6:** And when they were fully loaded with chocolate they made their way to the imaginatively named 'Game Shop' in the High Street to search for new games

**Narr5:** But there weren't any. And this had a strange effect on the siblings

*They stand very still staring out in shock, then they turn to each other*

**Molly:** What now

**Ed:** There isn't anything to do

**Molly:** There must be somewhere we can go to get advice

**Ed:** What's that? *(looking at something that has just appeared in the street)*

**Narr6:** Ed had spotted a shop he had never seen before

**Molly:** It's a shop we've never seen before

**Ed:** But that building

**Molly:** Yeah, weird or what

**Ed:** Didn't it used to be a bus stop?

**Molly:** Yes, and I feel strangely drawn to it

**Ed:** As if alien forces were sucking us in....

**Narr5:** Which indeed they were .... well, possibly ...

*The shop keeper - Zed - is a fantastically strange looking person*

- Zed:** Ah, children do come in to my humble little sweet shop
- Ed:** Sweet shop?
- Zed:** Toy shop
- Molly:** Toy shop?
- Zed:** Game shop
- Ed:** Phew!
- Molly:** This shop is rubbish
- Ed:** We're not a liberty to discuss details of our mission, but we need a new computer game
- Molly:** One we haven't played before
- Zed:** What lovely children you are. So ... you want a game do you
- Ed:** We just said that
- Molly:** Duh!
- Zed:** *(Looks strangely satisfied)* Oh good. Well, no problem, I think I have something you might find rather challenging. In fact, I wouldn't be surprised if you fail at the first level.
- Ed:** Hah!
- Molly:** Fail! Us!
- Ed:** You don't know who you're dealing with
- Molly:** We're like .. the best!
- Ed:** We'll complete all levels before you can close
- Zed:** Oh, I don't think so, I'm about to close now . But, if you can manage to get the the 5th level do pop back in the morning and I'll refund your money in full - but no cheating. And I will know if you cheat.
- Molly:** How?
- Zed:** You'll see. Now are you up for the challenge?
- Ed:** What is this game?
- Zed:** Here it is *(produces a big box tied up with ribbons)*
- Ed:** Beyond The Ultimate Yucky Nightmare Of Doom

**Zed:** Do you like anagrams?

**Ed:** Uh?

**Molly:** Uh?

**Zed:** I thought so. The game costs £100 - full refund tomorrow if you can finish it.

**Molly:** Wait there

**Ed:** We'll be back

**Narr5:** And they raced home to raise the necessary funds

**Narr6:** The universe arranged for money to be available in various purses, wallets and piggy banks that miraculously appeared around the house

*They make it back to the shop*

**Ed:** Here we are

**Molly:** Refund tomorrow?

**Zed:** As agreed

*They race home with the box, tear it open & inside they find 2 bizarre looking headsets*

**Molly:** *(Searching the box)* It doesn't tell us what we should do

**Ed:** That's easy. Just kill everything in sight

**Molly:** I'll find the cheats

**Ed:** Try this on first

*They put the headsets on and immediately the lighting changes & gets really weird*

**Ed:** Woahhhh. Cool. Where's the disk

**Molly:** There isn't one

**Ed:** Must be

**Molly:** Nope, this is it

*Zed appears in what appears to be an over the top disco divas outfit*

**Zed:** Welcome to my world. So glad you managed to get this far.

**Molly:** Arghhh. This isn't right - you're not here

**Zed:** Of course not. Except, I am. As you can see. Now let's get on with the game shall we