

[Enter Olga:]

Olga: Hello everybody! I said "Hello everybody". My name is Mrs. Novoski-oski-broski-ochi-brochi-iski-biski-ovovic. Now since we is all going to be good friends, I want you to say 'ello to me every time I come on stage. Do you think you can do that? Sure, you can. So, when I come on I say "'Ello" and you all say "'Ello Mrs. Novoski-oski-broski-ochi-brochi-iski-biski-ovovic!". Let's try okay, "'Ello!"

Hmmm, not great to be 'onest. Okay just as a favour and because you all seems like such lovely people, I is gonna let you use my first name, 'Olga', so it's just "'Ello, Olga". Let's try, ... ["'Ello" etc]. And now that we got that straight we can 'ave a lovely evening.

Well, welcome to our 'umble castle in Bo'emias because that's where we are, beau'iful Bo'emias. I don't know where you are but us lot up here on stage are in Bo'emias in the 10th century AD, and it's the 26th December, and you lot is just going to have to go with it.

It's very nice here. Well apart from the occasional plague. We keep having plagues and everything goes 'aywire, you gets locked down where you lives, you has to wear all sorts of anti-plague equipment and you 'as to 'ave anti-plague injections. But you modern lot, you wouldn't know nuffink about that, would you? [business] Oh, no you wouldn't!

But the last lockdown seemed to make people act weird. I had a friend, he went out and bought a sombrero, some tortillas, and some Latin dance shoes. That was Hispanic buying.

Any way. I am the cook here in the castle. I'm not very well paid though. That's why I always knead dough.

Enter Pavel

P: Hey, Mum!

Olga: Oh,'ello Pavel. Did you catch up with the guy what was stealing utensils from my kitchen?

P: Yes. I asked him why he did it. He said he thought it was a whisk worth taking.

Olga: Anyway, I been talkin' to my friends here.

P: Oh, hello! [to Olga] Who are they then?

O: Don't really know. Let's 'ave a look, um [both mime looking]. Drunks, mostly.

P: Yeah, looks like it, especially her ... [... to audience]. Are you from Bohemia?

O: Where then? [...] Luxembourg? Never heard of it. Is that real? No, you're making it up.

P: What is it, then? A Kingdom, a fiefdom ... [...to Olga] They're saying a Grand-Duchy?

O: A Grand-Duchy? Well, now I know it isn't real, that's ridiculous. That's straight out of a fairy story. Anyway, Pavel. How are you getting on with your new job?

P: As a page to the King? Yes, it's fine. A lot of carrying stuff. I could do with less of that to be honest.

O: Well just you stick with it.

P: I will. But I would really like to be promoted. I need a way to really impress the King so I can move up in the ranks.

O: I'm sure you'll find a way. Oh, look smart, Himself is 'ere.

[enter Wenceslas, with chorus and Bard. Chorus singing ...]

Wen: [talks to stage not audience] Greetings! And I wish you the joys of this St. Stephen's Day! [to Bard] That was good, get that down.

[Bard comes forward and writes]

Bard: The King wished the joys of St. Stephen's Day.
Which really was quite a nice thing to say.

Olga: Same to you, love, I mean, King. And you seem to 'ave brought a lot of er, friends and that.

Wen: Ah, yes. This is my new chorus. I decided a proper King should have people around to sing his praises. Go on, chaps!

[Sing 'For He's A Jolly Good Monarch!']

Olga: 'Kay. And who is this ...? [indicates Bard]

Wen: Ah, this is my writer. I wanted someone to write some new works in my honour.

Olga: Oo, are you, like, a poet, then?

Bard: [speaking secretively to Olga] Not really but don't tell anybody. Bit of a misunderstanding. What I said was I used to be a Lawyer but now I'm disbarred.

Wens: See, I think it's a shame that Bohemia doesn't have enough songs of its own. I mean, do you know a Bohemian Ballad? A Bohemian Lullaby? A Bohemian[turns and looks off stage] ... [dramatically - Freddie-style!] Mama!

[chorus: 'Oo, oo, oo]

Drahomíra: Hello Wenzel. [gestures to chorus] And who are these people?

Wen. Great, isn't it? It's my chorus. [to chorus] Go on, do the thing:

Chorus. [sing] *Wenceslas! Wenceslas! Wenceslas!*
He's good, he's good, he's very, very good!

Dra: Is that what they sing? "He's good, he's very, very good"?

Wen: Yes, see I've decided I'm going to be known as Wenceslas the Good.

Dra: You? Good? You're not good.

Wen: You can talk, you murdered your Mother-in-Law.

Dra: Did you a favour. Your Grandmother was really annoying. Anyway, I know why you want to call yourself something. You didn't like the name you had before.

Wen: No, nothing to do with that. Let's talk about something else.

Dra: King Wenceslas of the Inopportune and Thunderous Farts. I mean, I can see why you don't like it.

[Enter Boleslav]

Bole: Good afternoon.

Dro: Boleslav, my darling son!

Wen: Oh, Hi, Bowling Ball.

Bole: My name is Boleslav!

Wen: That's what I said, Bowling Ball.

Bole: Mummy! He's picking on me again!

Dro: Come here, darling. [Bole goes to Dra and she comforts him] Wenzel, stop being so mean to your brother wiz the silly names!

Wen: Call him what I like. I'm the King. And I'm King Wenceslas the Good. [to chorus] Do the thing again.

Chorus: *He's good, he's good, he's very, very good!*

Wen: Lovely. That's how they will remember me.

Dra: [Dismissive noise]. No, they won't. Not unless you start doing good deeds.

Wen: That's a good point, I am going to do some good deeds! Let me think. Umm, I shall have a look outside. [moves to front of stage as if looking outside] Gosh, it's very, err ... Page, come here! And Bard, you as well!

Pavel. [goes over] Yes, sire.

Bard: Yes, sire.

Wen: What's all that white stuff?

P: Snow, your majesty?

Wen: Ah yes, I remember now. Gosh, must be mighty cold and all that.

Bard: [moves forward and strikes a 'reciting' pose]
Good King Wencelas looked out on the Feast of Stephen,
When the snow lay round about, deep and crisp and even.

Wencelas: Oh, yes! Super! I have to do something interesting now. Hmmm. [looks closer]
There's a theres' a .. in an old coat and whatever... a pheasant.

P: Peasant, I think you mean Sire.

Wen: Do I? Oh, Okay. What's he doing?

P: Looks to be collecting firewood.

Wen: Won't get much of a fire with those few sticks. [gasps] I know what we'll do. Page, do you know that pheasant? Do you know where he lives?

P. Peasant. Yes, sire. That's old Davidek. He lives ooo, like quite a way, right out by the mountain where St. Agnes fountain is.

Wen. Right! We are going to do a good deed! Mrs. Novoski-oski-broski-ochi-brochi-iski-biski-ovovic?

Olga. 'Ere I am! And that were very good, not many people can say my name like that.

Wen: What have I been telling you? I *am* good! Bring me some of your most excellent foodstuffs. I am going to go find that pheasant and give him a proper meal.

Olga: Peasant. Right then. [exit]

P. Excuse me Sire, but what is it, you are planning?

Wen: We are going to take that pheasant a fine Christmas meal with all the accoutrements.

[enter Olga]

Olga: 'Ere, Sire.

Wen: Well don't give it to me, give it to him. [indicates Pavel]. And we shall need some wine!

Olga: Oh, yes, I agree. A little drinkie before you go, I shall join you ...

Wen: No, for the pheasant.

Olga: Peasant. Right. Hold on. [exits]

Wen: What else will he need? Let me think ...

P: This food will need cooking, so he'll need a fire and he only collected a few sticks.

Wen. Good thinking, my lad.

[enter Olga]

Olga. 'Ere ya go. Wine for the pheasant. I mean ... oh never mind.

Wes: And we shall need logs. The pheasant will need to be able to make a good fire.

Olga: Logs? Oh, alright. [exit]

Wen. Okay. So we need to head out through the forest, to the edge of the mountain where St. Agnes' fountain is.

P: That's right. Umm, it's very cold and snowy out.

Wen. Not to worry young lad. I've got my best boots on already. I'll just wrap my cloak really tight, and I'll be fine.

[Pavel lifts his foot to look - he is wearing slippers. Enter Olga, carrying logs bound with two ropes]

Olga: And logs! [piles logs on to Pavel who has arms full] Now I hope that is all.

Pavel: So do I!

Wen: Okay, everybody ready?

P: Umm, if I may sire?

Wen: Yes?

P: Well, you have good boots, but I don't.

Wen: What? Oh, don't worry about that. You just have to walk in my footsteps. The very warmth of my inner goodness will cause a miraculous heat where I tread.

P: Umm, really? Are you sure?

Wen: No idea, but it *could* happen.

[exit all except Dra and Bole]

Dro: Okay, Boleslav this is a perfect opportunity!

Bole: Is it?

Dro: Yes. You just have to dress up like that peasant, just a big coat and scarf. Then you run to the woods and get to the peasants' cottage before the others do. And then [raised hand stabbing gesture]

Bole: Yes, right! [raises fist] I persuade the peasants to overthrow the King! A revolution!

Dro: No, no, you nincompoop! You stab him! You are next in line to the throne. If Wenzel is out of the way, then you will become King.

Bole: Gosh, yes, Mummy. I would like to be King. What larks! Ha, ha ha!

Dro: Ha, ha, ha ...!

[They exit]

Scene: Out in the Forest [could be front of curtain or similar]

[sounds of wind. Enter Wen, chorus, Olga, Pavel. Each are taking big deliberate steps and stepping in the footprints of the person before. All stop and look front, as if looking around]

Wen: [look around then turns and shouts to Pavel] Am I still on the right track?

Pavel: Yes, sire!

Olga: Yes, you're fine, love, I mean Sire. I know the way to old Davidek's like the back of my hand. His wife was a dear friend of mine. God rest her.

Wen: Oh, is she dead?

Olga: Yes, poor thing. I shall never forget what she said, just before she kicked the bucket.

Pavel: What was that?

Olga: She said, "Watch! I'm going to kick this bucket!"

Pavel: Any way, Mum. You didn't have to come all the way out here in the cold.

Olga: Nonsense. If someone is cooking this old chap some dinner you are going to need me. None of you lot can cook.

Pavel: I can cook!

Olga: Well, you *said* you learned to cook in Belgium. But I know you were just waffling.

Wen: Hey Page, How are your feet by the way?

Pavel: Oh. Not too bad, actually.

Wen: Told you, it's the miraculous warmth of my holy inner spirit. Get that down, Bard.

Bard: [reciting] In his masters step he trod, Where the snow lay dinted
Heat was in the very sod, Which the Saint had printed

Wen: Oh, that's excellent! Could hardly understand a word.

Pavel: Ummm, well I think it's more all the other people in the ... [Olga elbows him and shakes her head.] Umm, yes, Sire that must be it. Hey, I don't suppose any of you guys could help me carry some of this.

Chorus: [look around at each other ... Sing from Bohemian Rhapsody] No. No. No. No No.

[Pavel looks at Olga who shakes her head]

Wen: Okay then, on we go.

Scene: Out by the Peasant's Cottage

[enter Boleslav and Drahomíra]

Dra: Okay my little Boleček, here we are.

Bole: It's Boleslav, why does nobody call me by my real name?

Dra: Just being affectionate, sweetie, you know you are my favourite! But everyone will have to speak you properly when you are ... King Boleslav! All it takes is one little stab! Ha, ha, ha.

Bole: Ha, ha ,ha! Not sure why you had to come along though mummy.

Dra: Oh, you know. Just keeping an eye on things, making sure you don't lose your nerve.

Bole: Oh, mummy, as if I would.

Dra: Darling, you know you are my darling boy, but you are not the bravest or the strongest. And you are definitely not the smartest.

Bole: What? I don't understand.

Dra: Anyway, you know what to do.

Bole: Of course! Um, remind me again?

Dra: Find the peasant, kill him. Then make sure you are well disguised, and when your brother turns up, you surprise him and kill him, then we tell everyone the peasant did it, and you become King.

Bole: Gosh, rough on the peasant.

Dra: But necessary, my dear. We must be resolute. Right, get ready and let's hide.

Enter Wolf (as P3), hiding face with back to audience. Enter Bole as P2.

Bole (asP2): [draws knife -] Sorry old chap, but I have to ... [pause, Bole sees Wolf's face] But
[shocked starts running away] Ahhh!

[Enter Wen, chorus, Olga & Pavel N.B. not Bard]

Wen. Okay, where is the pheasant?

Pavel: Peasant. Should be around here. [looks around – shouts out] Oh, Davidek!

Olga: [looks out] Hang on, I think I see him, running over there.

Wen: Is he running away from us? Why would he do that?

Pavel: I'll catch him and explain we have a dinner for him. Let me put this stuff down. [runs after Bole as P2]

Olga. Well, I'm sure Pavel will find him and sort it all out in no time, so I'll get on with cooking the supper. Here's a good place for a fire. But first I think I ought to just check this wine is okay, wouldn't want to give the chap bad wine. [opens bottle and pours a drink]

[Wolf asP3 wonders on – face hidden]

Olga: Oh, Davidek, there you are, love! This is 'im, Sire.

Wen: Splendid! Good to er, yes, anyway.

Olga: 'Ow are you love? 'Ow are Renata and Josef doing? Anyway, Kingy here decided you should 'ave some nice supper for the day after Christmas, 'cause you was looking a bit peaky. [looks up and Bole as P2 runs on followed by Pavel]

Pavel: Stop that man! He's got a knife!

Wen: Hang on. Isn't that the peasant again? Then who is this?

Pavel: No, Sire. It's your brother with a knife!

[Bole runs to Wens and grabs him. Dra runs on]

Dra: That's it, get him, Boleček!

Bole: But Mummy. I didn't realise there'd be all these people.

Dra: Don't worry. With Wenzel dead, you will be King no matter what they say. Not a thing they can do. Here, I will help you! Not the first nuisance I have got rid of.

[She goes towards Wens. Olga produces giant spoon, grabs Dra and start hitting her with spoon.]

Olga: No, you don't!

[Pavel runs and grabs Bole]

Pavel: I will save you, Sire!

Bole: Get off me! I'll stab you if I have to!

Pavel: No you won't, you evil so-and-so!

[They fight and Pavel takes the knife from Bole, and gets hold of Bole's arms]

Pavel: Mum, have you got the rope from those logs?

[she passes a rope over and Pavel ties Bole up, then Olga ties Dra]

Wen: Gosh, jolly well done, Page, thank you. You're an excellent chap, and I shall have to promote you. How about Captain of the Guard?

Pavel: Yes! [big gestures of happiness] Thank you, Sire. I shan't let you down.

[Goes to hug Olga]

Olga: Fantastic. Let's celebrate with some supper. What do you think, Davidek? You are very quiet.

[she goes to him, and takes down hood/scarf – showing it is the Wolf]

Olga: [jumps back] Waah!

Wolf: Don't worry. I'm don't mean any harm. I'm just a bit lost to be honest. Have any of you seen a little girl in a Red Riding cape with a hood?

Pavel: No, but why would you want to find her?

Wolf: No reason. Maybe three little pigs in three little houses made of shoddy materials?

Olga: No. What are you after Mr. Wolf?

Wolf: Maybe you have a young boy who guards sheep who keeps shouting about there being a wolf, but when you go – there isn't one.

Wen: No, and we know that trick.

Pavel: Yes, and I am Captain of the Guard now. You'd better not try anything bad.

Wolf: I am sorry. It's just my wolfie nature.

Pavel: Hang on, where is Davidek? Did you eat him?

Wolf: No. I was thinking about it. But you lot turned up.

[enter Davidek and Bard]

Davidek: Oh, hello, everyone. Nice to see you all.

Wolf: See. I don't *like* eating people. It's just I'm well, I'm hungry.

Olga: Oh, well, don't worry about that you can join us for some nice stew.

Wolf: Can I? That's so [starts to sob] Nobody has ever been nice to me before.

Pavel: There, there. Hey, would you like to be a Wolf of the Guard? You promise no killing little girls, or shepherds, or anybody except maybe some villains, and you get a warm bed, and dinner every night.

Wolf: Could I? That would be wonderful. I really don't want to be bad.

Wen: Super, you can be good like me! Hey, Bard where were you?

Bard: Oh, well I wondered off to focus my thoughts. After the bit with the miraculous warm steps, I guessed that not much else would happen, so I wanted to get my words down with a clear head. I'm right, aren't I? Nothing else happened?

[pause]

Wen: Nothing important. Does this thing you wrote say I'm good?

Bard: Yes, it's all about that. Saying everyone should be like you.

Wen: Well, that's what's important.

Olga: That and us all being 'ere to share some Christmas cheer! Pavel, pour the drinks, while I finish this stew. 'Ow's that song go then?

[song]