

Stage Play Script - Erbkönig

SCENE 2

An autumn evening, dusk. There is a warm orange light as the sun sets, brown and orange leaves scatter the floor around the cottage. Ellery sits by the fire stirring the pot. Avaset enters the hut, in her clean servant's uniform but her hair is down, pulled away from her face elegantly. She has a cloth bag over one shoulder. Ellery stands and she rushes over to hug him.

Avaset: It is wonderful to be in your arms again.

Ellery: You were in my arms just a few days ago.

He kisses her in the forehead and goes back to the pot.

Avaset: I know, but before that I had not seen you for a week and before that – er – well don't remember. I just, it feels so odd not being with you.

Ellery: What did you bring?

Avaset: Oh, um, nothing all to special. Master just returned from his trip to Prussia and he bought some herbs back to the kitchen. I only pinched a few.

Ellery: Why?

Avaset: I thought we-

Ellery: I have an abundance here (*gesturing to the hanging bunches of herbs*). Silly little songbird, the forest gives us everything we'll ever need.

Avaset: But why not try them, something new, something different.

She goes up behind him and puts her arms around him, leaning her chin on his shoulder.

Ellery: I do not want them.

Avaset: Ellery?

Ellery: You must understand (*he moves away from her embrace*) I have been living like this for so, so long. I am not used to such new things.

Avaset: Yes, I know... I shall be more patient, I suppose.

Ellery: Thank you.

Ellery goes back to the pot. Avaset sits on the bed looking at the bird's nests while they talk.

Avaset: What are you cooking tonight? (*she breaths in*) It smells sublime.

Ellery: Even without your herbs?

Avaset: Yes, even without the herbs.

Ellery: Rabbit stew. I have been rather fond of it for many years.

Avaset: Have you now?... That's a little strange don't you think?

Ellery: The stew?

Avaset: Well not quite. That you killed the rabbit, the forest's rabbit... *(playfully)* Was it not a loyal subject of your kingdom?

Ellery laughs partly out of humour but also out of frustration.

Ellery: It is more that if I set a trap, my loyal subject can choose to sacrifice himself so that I may eat. You see now?

Avaset: Hm, I suppose so.

Ellery gets up and goes over to the bed. He leans over her and lifts up her chin to face him.

Ellery: Do you now?

Avaset: Hmm, perhaps.

Ellery pushes her down onto the bed where they kiss passionately. He bites her neck as he starts to take off her clothes. However her gaze is still fixated on the bird's nests.

Ellery?

Ellery does not stop biting and trying to undress her.

Ellery.

She nudges him.

Ellery: Yes? What is it?

Avaset: How did you get those bird's nests?

Ellery begins to kiss her neck again.

Ellery: What?

She shrugs him off.

Avaset: The bird's nests. How did you get them?

Ellery: I found them.

Avaset: Did you go climbing up a tree?

Ellery: Of course not, I found them on the ground. Shaken from the branches by fierce winds.

Avaset: I see.

Ellery: But not to worry, dear Avaset. The mumma bird and her chicks had long since flown away.

Avaset: I am sure they did.

The fire begins to dim, Ellery notices and sits up, he sighs and kisses her on the forehead grabbing at her waist.

Ellery: One moment, I shall be back shortly.

Avaset: Firewood?

Ellery: Indeed. You'll wait right here for me little bird.

Avaset: As always.

Ellery exits the hut. Avaset sits for a moment mindlessly staring at the nests again. She begins to hum Schubert's "Fantasia in F Minor". As she continues she gets off the bed and glides about the room. The music starts to play softly underneath her voice. She looks at all the little things around her, touching and caressing the surfaces and objects. As she moves the collar of her blouse falls down, where Ellery undid it, and we see bite marks and bruises on her neck. She reaches the nests in her dance and goes to touch them but then pulls her hand back. Her humming quietens but the music still plays as she gently goes to touch it. She smiles and leans up on tiptoes to see it closely, her smile drops. The music's volume rises. Avaset reaches into the nest and pulls out a tiny, blue speckled egg.