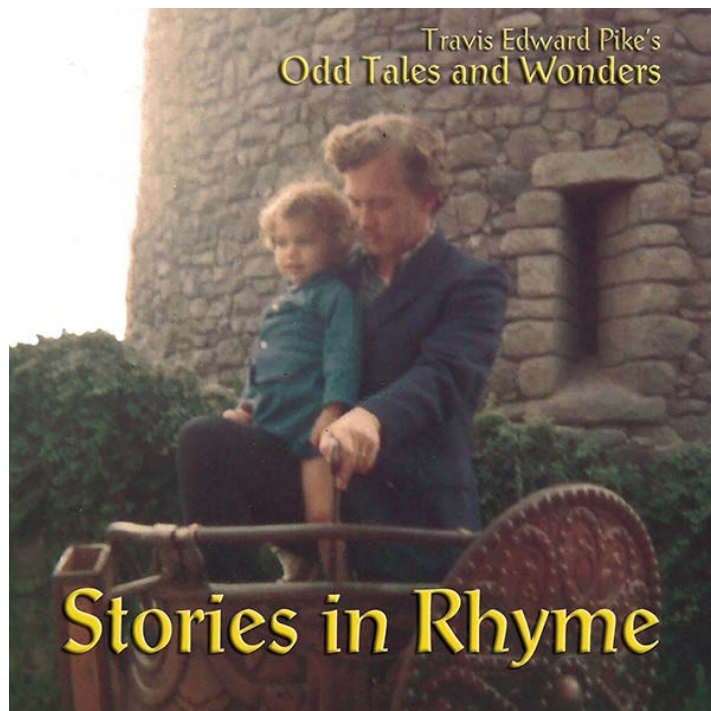


ODD TALES AND WONDERS

STORIES IN RHYME LINER NOTES

Travis Edward Pike
Otherworld Cottage Industries



When telling a story, the storyteller's voice, gestures and facial expressions are only part of the performance. The audience contributes too, whether horrified and trembling, inspired and bursting with pride, sympathetically reduced to tears or compelled to laughter and cheers.

A storyteller's recording should fully engage the listener's imagination, but distractions do occur -- a doorbell, a barking dog, even a well-meaning host offering refreshments may pull the listener out of the story and the mood be lost.

Live, a good storyteller quickly refocuses the audience, but a recorded storyteller cannot. It is up to the host to create and maintain the atmosphere in which the story is intended to unfold.

The narrative rhymes performed in this collection are enhanced with sound effects of the kind that kept my generation glued to their radios, listening to such favorites as The Lone Ranger, The B-Bar-B Riders, Captain Midnight and The Shadow. Books are more stimulating to an individual's imagination than movies. Notwithstanding the author's descriptions, each reader imagines the heroes, villains and settings for himself, making the experience more personal than watching a movie, where the heroes and villains are imagined for you by the filmmakers. In that world, the audience witnesses the action unfolding before its eyes.

Through special effects creatures long gone and creatures that never existed in the imagination of the storyteller are observed by the audience. A brilliant music score helps create the mood and sound effects turn rubber hand puppets and miniatures into towering monsters.

Lacking the facial expressions and gestures of a live performance, recorded or broadcast storytellers must find other ways to hold the attention and engage the imagination. For these recorded performances, I used sound effects.

Travis Edward Pike, Otherworld Cottage, Los Angeles

01. "Santa's Magic" was written for Travis Pike's Tea Party's first California Christmas in 1968. With all our families still on the East Coast, we felt like pioneers. We shared this poem with those on the other side of the country, and it helped to bridge that gap. When I was growing up, I had an older brother and a younger brother, and although the ages and personalities don't match exactly (I'm the imaginative youngest brother in the tale), the story, music and sound effects do capture the spirit of my mid-20th century youth. (9 min. 3 sec.)

02. "A Twail's Tale." This little rhyme is the main reason for the disclaimer on this CD. Not nearly as grim as some of Grimm's fairy tales, it may scare highly impressionable children (or their over-protective neurotic parents). I wrote an alternate ending, but I've never told it that way. I'd rather skip it than alter it at all. (3 min. 50 sec.)

03. "The Oddwok and the Marbuck" should be immediately recognized as a fable, because the animals talk, but reactions to it vary widely, making this an excellent tale to inspire discussions of tolerance, accommodation, and opposition to egregious characteristics. Most youngsters tend to be sympathetic to the Oddwok, some going so far as to defend its repulsive, and deliberately destructive behavior as justified by the Marbuck's behavior. Yes, the Marbuck's tirade is abusive and deliberately intimidating, but it may be based on feelings of resentment any of us might experience if our picnic was disrupted by an unruly interloper. Another, clean and well-behaved creature might have been welcome company. Might the Marbuck's outrage have been triggered by an unselfish desire to preserve the beauty and tranquility of its environment? (5 min. 37 sec.)

04. "The Glomlop and the Quark" considers evolution, environment and natural selection in this "first contact" tale of an ocean-going species of uncertain dietary needs, and a flying, land-dwelling, carnivorous species that results in a draw, and an appreciation in both for their specific places in the world. (3 min, 37 sec.)

05. "Krimms" is a comedy of manners, the tale of a weak-willed, overly hospitable host, whose inability to refuse the entreaties of his ill-mannered, destructive guests are certain to drive him mad. (2 min. 29 sec.)

06. "The Lori" is a story of an idealistic lost civilization, destroyed by a series of natural disasters beyond its control that preceded our modern civilization in which natural disasters still occur, but now greed, pestilence, and war also pose a threat to our survival as a species. In 1974, Stormy Forest Records presented it to Universal for a TV Special, with my integrated musical score. The creative types at Universal hailed it, but the commercial interests shot it down on the grounds they would not be able to find sponsors for it. (2 min. 44 sec.)

07. "The Peerless Goth." Coaches, contractors, shop foremen, scoutmasters, producers, directors, and anyone else who has ever tried to manage a crew will easily identify with The Peerless Goth. I need say no more. (2 min. 47 sec.)

08. "The Twaddle and the Gurck," my personal favorite of this collection of odd tales, owes a lot to Lewis Carroll's "Jaberwocky." I always enjoyed his cunning and expressive twaddle that inspired my "Twaddle and the Gurck," an exercise in joyful mayhem, rhythmically delivered through onomatopoeia. It is the story of the Woof, their destruction by the terrible Twaddle that kills for pleasure, much more than he can ever eat, and devours only the most tender and tasty of its prey, the Gurck, a sort of park ranger whose assignment is the protection and preservation of the territory he patrols, and the Gurck's ultimate triumph over "the garrilly Twaddle that ratched nerroo." (4 min. 23 sec.)

WARNING: These rhymes were written and performed in the late sixties, mainly for college coffeehouse crowds, injured servicemen in military hospitals and both in saloons and dance halls. Some content may not be suitable for children under 13. **PARENTAL GUIDANCE IS ADVISED.**

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