

CZECH RADIO
Production Department
Drama and Literature Creative Team
Dramaturge: Lenka Veverková
Director: Bela Schenková

Broadcasting premier.: 7. May 2023
Max length: 55 min.

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SUNDAY TALE

WHY IS HEAVEN SO FAR AWAY

Based on books by Daisy Mrázková and written by Matěj Samec.

Tales and stories by Daisy Mrázková talk about the most every-day, but at the same time most powerful childhood moments. The instants when the world around us suddenly appears huge, dreadful, but also beautiful; the fact that thinking of something is different from doing something; that when we love someone, everything is different and better, and that some questions don't have definite answers...

Characters in her books jump around the woods together, they look, ask questions, wonder and that way gently lead the reader through the landscape of the first great philosophical questions: What am I and what are you? Can a thought change the world? What does it mean to love?

Undoubtedly, we can place these books alongside modern world literature:

Winnie the Pooh, Alice in Wonderland or The Little Prince.

Stopping, turning, lying down in the grass and just observing... in today's world this is no longer common. Stories and poems by Daisy Mrázková are just a little pause, a relief.

The radio drama **Why is Heaven So Far Away** was written by Matěj Samec for the 100th birth anniversary of the Czech painter, illustrator and writer.

2023

CHARACTERS

Jeníček (Jáciček)

Mother

Olí

Doctor

Squirrel

Oak

Forest

Ants

Stone

Rain

Distance

Mountain

Snow

Wind

Icicles

Nothing

Silence

1. RUSTLING

- Jeníček: Mum? Mum! Mum! Come here!
- Mother: What is it? How come you're not asleep yet?
- Jeníček: Can you hear it, mum?
- Mother: What?
- Jeníček: The rustling! The slithering rustle.
- Mother: I can't hear anything.
- Jeníček: Someone wants to kidnap you!
- Mother: Don't say. Who would that be?
- Jeníček: Someone is outside. He saw you in the street and he really fancied you and now he's waiting for me to fall asleep and -
- Mother: It was just a dream.
- Jeníček: How do you know?
- Mother: When you have a life-like dream and you wake up, you feel as if it really happened.
- Jeníček: Where are you going?
- Mother: Where do you think? To my bedroom. Go to sleep, we're going on a trip tomorrow!
- Jeníček: Can you stay here?
- Mother: I can't.
- Jeníček: Why not?
- Mother: Because I want to sleep in my bed.
- Jeníček: Why do you have to sleep so far away?
- Mother: Calm down, I'm close.
- Jeníček: Mum, what does a life-like dream mean?
- Mother: Oh... Nothing! A dream means that nothing has happened.
- Jeníček: And... mum?
- Mother: Nothing! Good night. (*she leaves*)
- Jeníček: Nothing! Nothing! Nothing, nothing.

2. NOTHING, NOTHING, NOTHING, NOTHING

- Nothing: Hallo, Jeníček. It's nice of you to think of me. People usually think of Everything rather than me.
- Jeníček: Are you Nothing?
- Nothing: I am.
- Jeníček: How are you, Nothing?
- Nothing: Thanks for asking. Well, how... not so well.
- Jeníček: What's "not so well"?
- Nothing: Not so well is something like so and so.
- Jeníček: What's it like?
- Nothing: Well, so and so!
- Jeníček: That must be great.
- Nothing: Listen, boy, if you want I'll show you what it's like. Are you not afraid?
- Jeníček: No. Please, show me!
- Nothing: Okay. Close your eyes and think of nothing. Say nothing. Psssst. If you are quiet, you'll hear it soon.

3. FOREST

- Forest: *from a distance:*
- From Sunset to SunriSe
Try cloSing owlS' eyeS
I rock them Softly gently
Back and forth
SmalleSt baby jay bird weepS
It takeS ageS to put to Sleep
And when day
Then comeS to Stay
The lovely AnemoneS I have to Sway

4. OAK

Jeníček: Is that... Mum?

Oak: I'm not your mum. I'm oak.

Jeníček: Where are you talking from?

Oak: I'm behind the window. If you open it and look up, you'll see my eye. Come on, don't be afraid. Can you see me?

Jeníček: I can. Why is your eye so sad?

Oak: How could it not be sad, when I'm ALL sad. And how could I not be sad, when I've been trying for fifty years but no one notices me.

Jeníček: I'm noticing you.

Oak: Okay then. That makes me much happier.

Jeníček: You know what. I'll be noticing you a lot, so you can be very happy. Has no one really noticed you yet?

Oak: No one. Only once. About ten years ago a boy with his dad was walking past. And the boy suddenly cried: Dad, the tree has an eye!

Jeníček: What did the father say?

Oak: He told him to stop talking nonsense.

Jeníček: Poor boy.

Oak: That's life.

Jeníček: Yeah?

Oak: Yeah.

Jeníček: That's a pity. That's a real pity that life is only like that!

Oak: Well, it can be different too.

Jeníček: Like what?

Buk: That's a secret.

Jeníček: Will you tell me?

Oak: What's a told secret good for?

Jeníček: Hm. And will you tell me at least something? For example: Why are you not asleep, oak?

- Oak: A Squirrel used to live on me. And she got lost. So I'm waiting for her.
- Jeníček: Where did she go?
- Oak: On a trip. Maybe in the forest.
- Jeníček: Why in the forest?
- Oak: Because nowhere else is as beautiful.
- Jeníček: I'm going on a trip tomorrow too. With my mum. But I don't know whether there is any forest where we are going.
- Oak: Hm, people from the city like to go to the forest, so maybe. You should be sleeping then.
- Jeníček: I can't. I'm scared. Please, oak, could you tell me a story?
- Oak: What about?
- Jeníček: About when you were little. When you were smaller than our house.
- Oak: Your house wasn't here then. Just a shed. And before the shed there was a forest. I was just a thin twig, I couldn't look around much. But I listened a lot. The forest makes lovely sounds. It's strange, but even now when the wind is blowing and you prick your ears, you can hear it. Rustling. Can you hear it?
- Jeníček: Yes, I can! I thought it was a burglar.
- Oak: It's the forest rustling. It must be somewhere close!
- Jeníček: What does it look like?
- Oak: There are probably little mounds and hillsides and pink dry grass on the hillside and my Squirrel is merrily hopping around on it and she marvelling at everything.

5. SQUIRREL AND THE FOREST

- Forest: Dry leaves rustle,
And as soon as they start the bustle
They want to share

Knowledge that's rare

Squirrel: Hello, forest!

Forest: Welcome, Squirrel!

Squirrel: How are you doing, Forest?

Forest: It's not bad, Squirrel.

Squirrel: What are you doing, forest?

Forest: Rustling.

Squirrel: Tss! Shhhh. That's not hard!

Forest: Of course, it is! I could feel insulted.

How can you say

How much hassle it may be,

to put to sleep bird babies

From sunset to sunrise

Try closing owls' eyes

I rock them softly gently

Back and forth

Smallest baby jay bird weeps

It takes ages to put to sleep

And when day

Then comes to stay

The lovely anemones I have to sway

Squirrel: Fantastic! I'm sorry you took offence. It's my first time here, so I don't know what's proper.

Forest: On a trip, you say?

Squirrel: Yes. I thought it would be nice to get to know the world a little.

Why has no one told me that morning in the forest is SO lovely?

We must celebrate. Forest!

Forest: Sure.

Squirrel: I need someone! I need to tell someone, what your grass is like, forest!

Full of flower
and secrets
and tiny spruce trees
and cobwebs
and strange things!
And that there is Something Very Beautiful White.

Forest: It's cotton grass.

Squirrel: And something Strange Terrible Blue and Green.

Forest: That's a dragonfly. It's resting.

Squirrel: And Something Terrible Unbelievable.

Forest: That's a little frog.

Squirrel: I need to tell someone!

Forest: Find yourself a friend.

Squirrel: No. I don't have time for that. Bring me someone.

Forest: Come on! You don't have time? You are really cheeky.

Squirrel: That's true! It's a pity I'm not better when the world is so beautiful.

Forest: What can you do? You have to wait.

6. TRIP

Jeníček: Mum! We are so high up. Everything looks so tiny. Can you see the little boats?

Mother: Here you'll see why Prague is called the city of a hundred spires.

Jeníček: Are there really a hundred?

Mother: Maybe more.

Jeníček: The higher you are, the happier.

Mother: Hm, there might be truth in that. Why do you think that is?

Jeníček: Because you can observe everything.

Mother: That's true, you can.

Jeníček: And search for.

Mother: Oh.

Jeníček: And find.

Mother: I'd like to know what you want to find.

Jeníček: Hm. That's a secret.

Mother: Will you tell me?

Jeníček: What is a told secret good for?

Mother: You talk like a book.

Jeníček: What is that forest over there called?

Mother: Prokopák.

Jeníček: Shall we go there?

Mother: Some other time.

Jeníček: I want to go now.

Mother: No way. I will lie down here and sunbathe for a while.

Jeníček: And in the meantime, I'll go there.

Mother: No way!

Jeníček: There's a pine tree. A squirrel is sitting on it, waiting and wishing that I came. She has nothing to do. She has nothing at all to do. She's looking at a branch.

Squirrel: That's an uninteresting branch.

Jeníček: She's looking at the sky.

Squirrel: The sky is too far away, it's no fun.

Jeníček: She's looking at the pine needles.

Squirrel: The needles are all the same. Each needle has the same drop of dew and it falls in the same way.

Jeníček: She's looking at the cones.

Squirrel: Cones are horrible. Pffff, so boring!

Jeníček: She's looking at the Vyšehrad Hill, in our direction. She really wishes me to come. And suddenly I do. And I call: Hallo, Squirrel!

Mother: Why are you shouting! I've just nodded off.

Jeníček: And like a lightning – Squirrel is flashing down along the tree trunk. The needles and the cones are suddenly SO interesting! The needles have released their scent and the dew has started glittering and the whole world, the whole world -

Mother: - What are you talking about?

Jeníček: Well... about Squirrel -

Mother: Oh. Well, I think we'll go home. It looks like rain. What are you looking at, help me with the blanket.

Jeníček: I had an idea.

Mother: What idea?

Jeníček: A great idea... but I forgot it.

Mother: I've just felt a drop of rain. We must hurry.

Jeníček: Now I'm going to forget the idea even more.

Mother: Okay then. What were you thinking of before that?

Jeníček: About you!

Mother: You know what, you might remember at home.

Jeníček: I won't! I'm not going anywhere.

Mother: I'm beginning to have had enough.

Rain:

Drip drop pitter patter

First the quiet drizzle splatter

Splash and splosh and plop and spray

Now get ready for the rain

Drip drop pitter patter

First the quiet drizzle splatter

Splash and splosh and plop and spray

Now get ready for the rain

Jeníček: Mum! Mum!

Mother: What is it?

Jeníček: Wait! There's something here... Mum... it's Squirrel!
Mother: Don't dare touch it! It's raining, let's go!
Jeníček: Mum, look! Poor thing. Someone must have thrown her away.
Look, its head is held by a thread! And she has no ear.
Mother: I told you not to touch it! See how dirty it is? You do not have
enough fluffy toys at home, or what?
Jeníček: I'll wash it. I'll stick more hair on her. I'll repair her eye.
Mother: Not a word more! Put it down! And let's go.

7. THE FOREST

Rain: Drip and drop and tsrrr and whizz and splash
Squirrel: Hm, what a nuisance it's raining!
Stone: No, it doesn't matter it's raining.
Squirrel: You do not mind it's raining? Who are you anyway?
Stone: Stone.
Squirrel: Could you be my friend? Can you jump?
Stone: I can't. But I know that when it's raining, it's a trifle. It doesn't
matter.
Squirrel: And what isn't a trifle? I'd love to know. Give me an example.
Rain: Drip and drop and tsrrr and whizz and splash
Squirrel: My wise beautiful grey speckled little stone. Tell me, please. I'm
cheeky and I don't have a friend and I don't know anything.
Stone: All right I'll tell you, but it will be no good anyway. So what
matters:
Not forgetting how hot the earth is deep down
Not forgetting how heavy the earth is deep down
Not forgetting how rich the earth is deep down
Not forgetting how strong the earth is deep down
Not forgetting how the earth is excited deep down...
Do you understand?

Squirrel: Sure. But I have to go now. It's stopped raining I must search for someone I could be friends with.

8. INT. IN THE ROOM WITH AN OPEN WINDOW: JENÍČEK AND OAK

Jeníček: Oak? Are you asleep?

Oak: I'm waiting for you. How was the trip?

Jeníček: First fantastic, we were really high up! But then it started raining and we had to go home.

Oak: Something is troubling you, isn't it?

Jeníček: I'm worried about the rain. Someone has nowhere to hide from it.

Oak: Hm.

Jeníček: They might catch a cold.

Oak: Who will catch a cold?

Jeníček: Well, SOMEONE... maybe!

Oak: Don't worry. I think that SOMEONE is not stupid and has hidden somewhere.

Jeníček: And what if they can't? They can't see with one eye. They are all broken.

Oak: Don't worry, they are content. They are happy it's raining.

Jeníček: How do you know?

Oak: I don't know how I know, but I know.

Jeníček: How can you do that, knowing and not knowing at the same time?

Oak: Enough. You ask too difficult questions. Listen, you really are worried. I'll tell you a story, shall I?

Jeníček: That might work. What about?

Oak: I'll tell you a story about you.

Jeníček: About me? Why?

Oak: Everyone likes the best listening about themselves. What is your name anyway?

Jeníček: Jeníček.

Oak: Jácíček? There you go. Just like a little rabbit who lived in the forests by the city. He didn't like to be alone, but when he grew up, his mother often left him alone. So he would hop to the pine tree, where Squirrel lived.

Hallo, Squirrel, he'd call.

Jeníček - Jácíček: Hallo, Squirrel!

Oak: And like a lightning – Squirrel was flashing down along the tree trunk. On her way she managed to notice that the heavens and the needles and cones are suddenly SO interesting as can be. The needles released their scent. The dew started glittering. And the wind blew gently into Squirrel's face and made her really happy and excited to do something wonderful.

9. IN THE FOREST

Jeníček: Hallo, Squirrel!

Squirrel: Jácíček, have you noticed that the world has become somehow... more interesting?

Jeníček - Jácíček: When did it start?

Squirrel: Just now, a little while ago, when you said HALLO.

Jeníček - Jácíček: That's true. I noticed! When I said HALLO and saw you running down, the world became more interesting. How is that?

Squirrel: It might be the HALLO.

Jeníček - Jácíček: Maybe it's a secret password. Come, let's try it.

Squirrel: And how?

Jeníček - Jácíček: We'll find something uninteresting, we'll say HALLO and we'll see.

Squirrel: Okay, let's go.

Oak: They found an old black pond. There were stones and roots and leaves in it and several long mosquitos were touching the water.

Jeníček - Jáciček: (*whispering*) Is it uninteresting enough?

Squirrel: (*whispering*) It's not very beautiful.

Oak: But the pond heard very well what they were saying.

Jeníček - Jáciček: Let's try it. HALLO!

Squirrel: Nothing, right?

Jeníček - Jáciček: Nothing.

Squirrel: No, nothing.

Nothing: Nothing.

Jeníček - Jáciček: You try.

Squirrel: HALLO!

Nothing: Nothing again.

Jeníček - Jáciček: We can try calling at the same time. One – two - three:

Both: HALLO!

Jeníček - Jáciček: We were standing too far apart.

Squirrel: You have to call louder!

Both: HALLOOOOOOOO!

Oak: And the forest hummed and tree branches started to rock and dropped a pair of glasses which a wood cutter put there recently when he was washing in the pond. The glasses plopped on the side right in front of Jáciček.

Jeníček - Jáciček: I didn't expect that!

Squirrel: Put them on!

Jeníček - Jáciček: Everything is tiny! Everything is in the distance! Squirrel, how did you suddenly get so far away?

Squirrel: I'm standing on the spot.

Jeníček - Jáciček: Come back quickly.

Squirrel: Why are you shouting, I'm next to you.

Jeníček - Jáciček: It sounds as if you were close, but it looks as if you were in the distance.

Squirrel: Maybe we're both in the distance, but we don't know about it! It doesn't matter, as long as we're together.

Jeníček - Jáciček: We have to cancel the distance, I'll try to call once more.
Squirrel!

10. IN THE ROOM WITH AN OPEN WINDOW

Mother: Oh god, Jeníček! Why are you lying on the floor?

Jeníček: Mum!

Mother: And why is the window open? Did you sleep under the window?
You can't be serious, what got into you?

Jeníček: Squirrel was here.

Mother: What squirrel?

Jeníček: Mum, I'm hot!

Mother: You've caught a cold! Come to bed. Oh, Jeníčku, you're all hot. I'll call for the doctor.

Fever: Purple yellow reddish hot
There's a monster you can spot
Burning, burning – eyes and head
Burning body, breaking sweat
Furnace burning on the lips
Scarlet fever, you're in its grips

Doctor: Boy, you're going to go to the hospital.

Mother: He has a fever of 105 degrees.

Doctor: Hold onto me.

Jeníček: Careful, it's him – The one I told you about. He wants to kidnap me.

Mother: It's the doctor.

Doctor: You can't go in the ambulance.

Jeníček: Mum!

Fever: It's scarlet fever!

Mother: Don't worry, Jeníček.
Doctor: Come and see him at the hospital.
Jeníček: Mum!
Doctor: Quiet, boy. Everything will be all right.
Fever: Siren's wailing, strangest smells,
White everywhere. Sickness reigns.
You've been kidnapped, snatched away!
White everywhere. You can't stay...

11. SOMEONE IS CRYING IN THE FOREST

Squirrel: Boohooo!
Forest: Someone seems to be crying here!
Squirrel: It's me!
Forest: Who is "me"?
Squirrel: Squirrel. And I'm crying because I had a friend and now I don't have him. We played, but then he put on glasses and told me that I'm too small and left me here. Boohooo!
Forest: Don't cry, Squirrel. It's not your fault. There's nothing wrong with being small!
Squirrel: Just that no one will notice me and I won't have any friends, boohoooo.
Forest: You're not the smallest in the forest!
Squirrel: No?
Forest: Not by far.
Squirrel: Who is even smaller?
Forest: Is there something tickling your paws? Concentrate! They are right underneath you! They keep rushing all the time. They are called ants.
Ants: From the forest to the oak,
From the oak to the clearing,

From the clearing to the larch,
From the larches to the tree nursery,
From the nursery to the hay rack,
From the hay rack god knows where.

Squirrel: Godknowswhere? Where's that? I want to go there. Can I go with you?

Ants: Crawling crawling crawling in carrying carrying carrying up if I
crawl into the forest don't worry I'll crawl out
Down I carry up I carry I will carry I won't sir no no carry it out

Squirrel: Ant, are you listening to me? Where is the godknowswhere?

Ant: It can't be said.

Squirrel: Who says that?

Ant: It can't be said.

Squirrel: Why not?

Ant: It can't be said.

Squirrel: Do you always just say "It can't be said"?

Ant: It can't be said.

Squirrel: Phhhhhew! I'll find out myself! I didn't know there were creatures
as tiny as this in the world.

Forest: You still don't know so much, Squirrel!

Squirrel: Sometimes I'm worried I might never learn some things.

Forest: That wouldn't matter so much.

Squirrel: It would!

Forest: One can't know everything.

Squirrel: I certainly don't want to be one. I'm me, Squirrel, you hear?

Forest: How could I not hear when you're shouting so much.

Squirrel: I'm Squirrel and I know everything! And I'll follow the ant now
and learn where that path of theirs leads!

Forest: If you think so...

Squirrel: I know hop and flop

Why the sun is shining
And I know
Hop and flop
Why the wind is blowing
I understand everything
And I know everything
Sometimes I know
Everything everything!

12. IN A HOSPITAL ROOM

- Olí: Hallo. You really are a sleeper! What's your name?
- Jeníček: Jan.
- Olí: My name's Olí. I was here on my own. It was so boring. There's nothing to do here. But I'm going home soon.
- Jeníček: I want to go home too. To my mum.
- Olí: Don't cry. No one likes staying in hospital. In hospital you just are and you don't like it. You must think of something nice.
- Jeníček: Like my mum?
- Olí: Not your mum! I think of what I'm going to do when I grow up. I'm going to be a pilot. And you?
- Jeníček: I'll be at home with my mum.
- Olí: Hahaha. That's totally silly.
- Doctor: Good morning, lads! I hope no one is whimpering. Jeníček, how are you feeling?
- Jeníček: Better now. Can I go home, please?
- Doctor: Not today.
- Jeníček: And when?
- Doctor: I don't know yet. But maybe in about six days. Very few people stay in hospital for more than six days with scarlet fever. Only those who have some after-effects and that probably won't be your case.

Jeníček: Is my mum coming here?

Doctor: Visitors are not allowed on the isolation ward. But I promised I'd let her know as soon as you wake up and she'll come to wave to you under the window. Lie down now and I'll tell you when she gets here, agreed?

Jeníček: Agreed.

Doctor: Okay then. I'll lend you a book in the meantime. Hm? You can look at the pictures. And you, Olí, be good to him.

13. STILL THE HOSPITAL ROOM, BUT WE'RE GOING TO FLY

Jeníček: When I grow up, I'll be a doctor. I'll have a deep and calm voice. And I'll always lend my books to ill boys.

Olí: There you go. And can you read?

Jeníček: I can't.

Olí: Noooo, don't dare start crying again! I can read, do you want me to read to you?

Jeníček: I don't.

Olí: Look what I've got. It's a puzzle with letters. I learned them from it. Each letter is a colour.

Jeníček: Can you lend it to me?

Olí: No. But you can come and have a look.

Jeníček: The doctor said I should stay in bed!

Olí: When we hear him coming, you can get back to your bed.

Jeníček: Which one is the purple one?

Olí: That's P. P like purple.

Jeníček: And is this R? Like red!

Olí: No, M is red. Look, I'll take the red M and place it next to white A. And once more. Red, white, red, white. What have I written?

Jeníček: M A M A. Mama.

- Olí: Sure! And now you're not sad. I was terribly sad when I was here on my own. And do you know how long I was here on my own? INSANELY long!
- Jeníček: INSANELY? That's terribly long!
- Olí: Yeah. INSANELY, that's terribly. But I'll tell you a secret. This bed is a plane. I can fly anywhere I want. And look at what's underneath. Do you want me to take you somewhere?
- Jeníček: I do!
- Olí: Get on then. Behind me! You have to sit behind the pilot. And buckle up.
- Jeníček: What? How?
- Olí: With the duvet. Take the one from your bed, this one is mine. Great.
- Jeníček: How shall I do it?
- Olí: Oh, just tuck the end of the duvet under the mattress. There. And now the other end and you're safe. It'll be a perfectly safe flight. I'll warm up the engine.
- Jeníček: Look though, Olí, this plane of ours doesn't have wings!
- Olí: You have to spread your arms.
- Jeníček: Mine are too short. You spread them!
- Olí: I can't, I'm the pilot.
- Jeníček: My arms are too short! I'm only little.
- Olí: It doesn't matter! A small plane – short wings. Watch out, we're taking off! Careful! We're flying!

14. AND WE'RE FLYING

- Jeníček: Where are we flying to?
- Olí: To the world!
- Jeníček: We can make a stopover at Prokopák then!
- Olí: What's Prokopák?

Jeníček: It's a forest.

Olí: Can you see a forest underneath?

Jeníček: I can! I can! Listen, Olí, what is the world?

Olí: The world? That's like... well, basically it's everything underneath us, us, and a bit above. The green stuff, the forest, that's the world. And where it's not green, that's the field and that's also the world. And the blue threads, those are rivers and guess what, the world too of course!

Jeníček: That's great to see everything from high up like this.

Olí: So much world at once, isn't it! Now I hope you know why I want to be a pilot.

Jeníček: Look Olí, is the world infinite?

Olí: It depends. It's round, so in a way it is. But it's complicated, so you probably won't understand.

Jeníček: I will!

Olí: Don't get mad! Concentrate on the flight, careful we're flying into a cloud!

Jeníček: Help! I can't see anything!

Olí: White darkness. Don't worry! But maintain the wings.

Jeníček: What's it like on the other side?

Olí: On the other side of what?

Jeníček: The world. Since it's round. What's it like on the other side?

Olí: Like here. The same.

Jeníček: Everything is the same? Even the cloud?

Olí: Careful, we're flying out of the cloud, it will get windy, it will blow your hair. You should have put on a hat.

Jeníček: The same forests, fields, everything?

Olí: Yeah! Don't tilt, the wind is blowing hard!

Jeníček: Exactly the same?

Olí: Yeah!

- Jeníček: But like really REALLY the same?
- Olí: Yeah!
- Jeníček: Olí! We've got no provisions.
- Olí: It doesn't matter. We can land on a chestnut tree and pick some nuts.
- Jeníček: We can land?
- Olí: I'll try. Over there, what do you think!
- Jeníček: Just watch out there's no swamp.
- Olí: I know. Don't worry. Tilt the wings to the right a bit! A bit more, and now level, more, level, we're descending, great, and now to the left, more, a bit more, great, careful, it's going to jolt us now!

15. IN THE FOREST AT SQUIRREL'S PLACE

- Squirrel: I know taa da taa da daa
why the sky is blue
and the water clear
and the bells are purple
and white anemones
I understand it all
I know it all and all
I know it all -
I can see you all this time sitting on the lawn! I saw you land.
- Olí: Don't lie, Squirrel!
- Jeníček: Don't lie!
- Squirrel: Why didn't you tell me you were listening, I could have sung something else.
- Olí: We liked this.
- Jeníček: We liked this.
- Olí: Stop copying me.
- Squirrel: But it wasn't for you. It was just for me.

Jeníček: Sing some more!

Squirrel: Sing for yourselves!

Jeníček: No, wait, Squirrel, don't go. Listen, Squirrel, did you use to live on an Oak?

Squirrel: That was a long time ago.

Jeníček: The Oak misses you.

Squirrel: That's a pity. I'll go and see him some time. But now I have so much work to do here in the forest.

Olí: What kind of work?

Squirrel: I'm looking for a friend. Jáciček.

Jeníček: Could I be your friend? My name is similar.

Squirrel: What is it?

Jeníček: Jeníček.

Olí: And I'm Olí.

Squirrel: That's not similar.

Jeníček: You're not nice.

Olí: Would you like to send it a letter?

Squirrel: What's that?

Olí: That's when someone wants to write something to someone far away, they can divide the words into vowels and consonants and draw them on paper.

Squirrel: What are vowels and consonants?

Olí: Jeníček will teach you. It's when you say letters out loud. And Jeníček will teach you the letters.

Jeníček: Okay! Let's try. What do you want to write? For example: Dear Oak. This is D, why, because it's red. And E. That's...

Olí: Cold white. And A is green, R is grey...

Jeníček: ...and purple O.

Olí: Glass-like A,

Jeníček: and brown K. And we've got DEAR OAK.

Squirrel: Ah-ha! That's too complicated. You know what? Let's jump around for a while. Can you jump?

Like this! And you have to sing at the same time:

I have eyes like me

I have ears like me

and I jump like me

I can do anything

because I'm me...

Jeníček: Listen, Squirrel, did you know the world is round?

Squirrel: So what?

Jeníček: And the other side is the same as this one!

Squirrel: So what?

Jeníček: It's exactly the same world as here. The same Squirrel like you. The same boy like Olí. And the same boy like me!

Olí: Don't get all worked up.

Jeníček: I'm not. It is working me up.

Squirrel: What are they doing now?

Olí: Jumping!

Jeníček: And Squirrel is asking what they are doing.

Olí: And Olí says: Jumping!

Jeníček: And Jeníček says: And Squirrel is asking what they are doing?

Olí: And Olí says: And Olí says: Jumping!

Squirrel: It makes my head dizzy! Has the Squirrel jumped as high as I have just now?

Jeníček: Yes!

Squirrel: What are we going to do?

Jeníček: I feel like doing something, you know SOMETHING the same boy wouldn't think of! Like... like... try to think!

Squirrel: Try doing seven rolls quickly in succession!

Olí: He'd think of that straight away.

Jeníček: Hold on, I know! Listen! (*he whispers*)

BRIMBRUMPANGRI BRAMBREMPINGRO

BREMBRIMPUNGRE BRAM BRAM BRAM!

Squirrel: You think they won't think of this?

Jeníček: Certainly not THAT!

Olí: Let's make sure! Jeníček, bring the letters we've brought. And we'll place them one after another! Is there a small hole here?

Squirrel: There's a hole here!

Olí: Great, put the letters in it! That's going to be our secret. But you mustn't tell anyone. And now... now put some soil on it and we'll trample it properly! Jump!

Squirrel: Jump!

Olí: I wonder if they are jumping too, what do you think?

Jeníček: They are jumping!

Squirrel: Jumping! Jumping, but they don't know why!

Olí: We've outsmarted them! Jump! Jump!

Olí, Jeníček, Squirrel: (*singing*)

why is the non-sky non-blueeee

and non-water non-clear

and non-bells non-purple

and non-white non-anemonies

16. IN THE HOSPITAL BED

Olí and Jeníček: and I don't understand anything

and I don't know anything I know nothing nothing nothing!

Doctor: Look at that! Jumping on a hospital bed! That's a novelty! We do our best to cure you and you? You are really naughty.

Olí: We didn't mean to!

Jeníček: We didn't mean to!

Olí: I wanted to cheer him up because he was crying.

Jeníček: We went to see Squirrel.

Olí: We meant well.

Doctor: That won't help how you meant it. It is what is done that counts, not what is meant. Jeníček, out of Olí's bed. And you, Olí, get dressed. You're going home.

Olí: Really? HURRAY!

Doctor: Jeníček, before you get back to your bed, look out of the window! Someone has come to wave at you.

Jeníček: Mum! Mummy!

Doctor: You should be glad she's not allowed here, she wouldn't like to see you jumping around.

Jeníček: She's so far away! Why can't she come here?

Doctor: Don't worry, you'll be together in a few days. Wave back at her!

Jeníček: Hi mum! I'd like to go to her... Olí, how do you start a plane?

Olí: It's too complicated.

Jeníček: But I need to go back. I must speak to Squirrel, she didn't finish her letter to the Oak!

Olí: It was just a game.

Jeníček: Please!

Olí: You know what? I'll leave the coloured letters here, shall I? And when I learn to pilot a real plane we'll fly somewhere.

Doctor: Hurry up, Olí! Chop, chop.

Jeníček: No, I don't want to be here alone. Doctor, please, don't leave me alone here.

Doctor: Enough, Jeníček. Stay quiet to get well soon. If you behave you can celebrate your birthday at home. Say your good-byes.

Olí: Bye then!

17. SILENCE

Jeníček: Silence.

Silence?

Silence, you're so huge.

Listen, silence...

And you're also really sad.

Do you want to say something?

I know you can't, because if you did, you wouldn't be.

Poor Silence.

Listen, I could speak on your behalf.

Can I?

If you wanted, Silence, I could tell you a story. When it's finished, you'll be happier.

You know what it's going to be about? About you. Because everyone is most comforted when they hear about themselves.

Once upon a time there was Silence.

You know where it was?

In the forest. By a brook.

And there was also a Squirrel.

And she liked Silence in the forest very much.

She hopped around all day and wanted to rest.

And suddenly she heard a strange sound.

It sounded like this: SHPLOWN.

18. BROOK

Brook: Shplown.

Jeníček: In the brook between the moss and stones there was a place where water loved to turn.

Brook: Shplown shplown shplown.

Squirrel: Aaah, you do a lot of shplowning! Can you stay quiet?

Jeníček: The Squirrel was a bit grumpy.

Brook: Why can't I shplown a bit? I've finished all my work.

All night and all day
I carried dry leaves away,
I bathed children's feet,
They didn't want to leave,
I carried a paper boat,
It never stopped afloat,
Watermills were in a rush,
Now I want to shplown, so hush.
I carried sand on the bottom,
I gave animals to drink,
I smoothed rocks and pebbles,
it's harder than you think,
I watered one whole meadow,
in a hat I sat like a shadow,
I undermined a bank to mush,
now I want to shplown, so hush!

Squirrel: Oh my. So many words.

But it's quite nice to listen to. Listen, brook, where do you actually lead to? Is it not to godknowswhere by any chance?

Brook: Take a piece of bark and put it on the surface and sit down on it like on a boat and you'll see for yourself where the brook leads to!

Jeníček: A piece of bark was lying right next to her, and so she did as the brook said.

Squirrel: Sailing on the water is so nice! How it rocks and the views! Oh!

Jeníček: Everything looks beautiful viewed from the river.

Brook: There are rapids ahead, watch out, Squirrel!

Squirrel: I'm not afraid of rapids.

Jeníček: It was a really brave Squirrel. But rapids on a brook can be treacherous. The water started jolting, Squirrel slipped off the bark on which she was sailing...

Squirrel: Help!

Jeníček: ...she got all wet and the pebbles in the brook tore her fur a bit.

Squirrel: Aaah, I'm so wet, it's so cold! And where am I? Brook!

Jeníček: She was on the edge of the forest, near Prokopák. But she didn't know what the place was called, so she thought she was godknowswhere. And the brook had its rapids to pay attention to and didn't have time to tell her.

Squirrel: I'm so sad!

Jeníček: When someone is in a difficult situation, they need a friend. To calm one, to wipe one's tears or fur and stroke any injuries. But she was alone.

Ticho: That was a sad story, Jeníček. Did Squirrel find a friend?

Jeníček: Silence, you're talking?

Ticho: Only quietly. Tell me how it ended.

Jeníček: But that's what I don't know.

Ticho: Squirrel might be in another story. Do you know any more?

19. ABOUT DISTANCE AND ABOUT SNOW AND MOUNTAINS

Jeníček: Once upon a time there was a little boy.

And he was alone in a hospital. He missed his mum.

He missed the Oak which grows outside his window. He missed Olí. And Squirrel.

But Silence was with him. So they looked out of the window together.

It was snowing.

It was unbelievably beautiful.

And the Silence was beautiful too. Because when the snow falls, that's what Silence is like. Soft, gentle and sparkling.

They watched the white world together. The snow-covered town.
The snow-covered forest behind the town. The trees were so
weighed down by the snow that they bent all the way to the ground
and formed a gate.

And then... then suddenly they saw – Distance.

It was white and misty.

They asked softly: Hallo, Distance, how are you?

Distance: So and so, boy, so and so, Silence.

Jeníček: And the Distance came closer.

Distance: Listen, little boy and Silence, I'd like to take you in for a while.

I'll show you the greatest magic tricks you've ever seen.

You'll learn everything about the world you ever wanted to know.

Jeníček: And so Distance lifted them both high up above the ground.

They saw rocks and caves and huge icicles made of clear green ice.

Silence: It's beautifully quiet here.

Distance: Did you say something?

Jeníček: That it's great here!

Distance: I'm glad.

Jeníček: Can I ask them something?

Distance: But of course!

Jeníček: Icicles, what do you do when you're alone and time is slow?

Icicles: Time is never too slow for us!

Jeníček: Good for you! But: what if it was too slow?

Icicles: If the frost was way too slow, an extra mile of us would grow.

Jeníček: That would be interesting. You are splendid, icicles. What about
you, mountain, what do you do when time is too slow?

Mountain: What does slow time mean?

Jeníček: When you don't know what to do.

Mountain: A mountain always know what to do.

Jeníček: So why do you never do anything?

Mountain: Because sometimes it's better to do nothing.

Jeníček: And what about you, snow, what do you do when time is slow?

Snow: I fall and fall and fall. Onto myself.

I fall and fall and fall. Onto myself.

I fall and fall and fall. Onto myself.

Jeníček: Wow, that's really clever! If I was made up of snowflakes, I'd fall on myself too. And my friend Silence here really likes it too. Keep doing it.

Distance: So do you want to go further on?

Jeníček: I do!

Distance: Hold on tight then.

Jeníček: Sky, what do you do when you miss someone and the time is too slow?

Rain: Drip drop knock knock

Drip drop knock knock

Drip drop knock knock

Jeníček: I see, you cry through rain. But not now, please! I mustn't get wet or the doctor will tell me off again.

And what about you, wind, what do you do when time is too slow?

Wind: I sing without words.

Jeníček: That's not bad.

Wind: *(wind's beautiful singing without words)*

Jeníček: It didn't occur to me that when the wind makes this sound it's actually singing.

Distance: And do you like?

Jeníček: It's really beautiful. It reminds me of the forest's rustling.

Distance: And how do you like it, Silence?

Jeníček: Knowing Silence, I think it loves this kind of singing, don't you?

Silence: Very much.

Jeníček: Listen, Distance, what the wind, snow, icicles and a mountain do is really interesting. But it's not for me. I think I need to ask my mum.

Distance: Where are we going to look for her?

Jeníček: Well, in you.

Distance: I'm sorry, Jeníček, but I have the feeling that your Mother is not in me.

Jeníček: Take me to Squirrel then.

Distance: Where?

Jeníček: To the forest.

Distance: Jeníček, your forest is not in me. I'm sorry.

Jeníček: Please, Distance, say it's not true.

Distance: Don't cry. Where did you last see your mum?

Jeníček: Under the hospital window.

Distance: But that's not far at all!

Jeníček: It's dreadfully, terribly, awfully far! She wouldn't hear me if I said something. I can't touch her!

Distance: You're a cry-baby, aren't you? It seems to me you should go back to bed. We're going back.

Jeníček: I'm sorry, Distance.

Distance: What for?

Jeníček: That I cried again.

Distance: I don't mind. People often cry because of me.

Jeníček: And why?

Distance: Because they don't know much about me. They are afraid. That they'll get lost in me. And I often look really big to them. So big that they prefer not to notice me. So I'm almost always alone.

Jeníček: And it makes you sad.

Distance: Sometimes.

Jeníček: Why do you care about people so much?

Distance: I don't know.

Jeníček: I think they should notice you much more, because you are beautiful. You know what? I think you don't have to be so huge all the time. Imagine if you were small, even tiny, you can still be a distance. A real, great distance.

Distance: You think it would work?

Jeníček: Sure. And you know what else would be great about it?

Distance: What?

Jeníček: That if you were small, more would fit in you. Even my mum and my forest.

Distance: You're right! Do you want to try it?

Jeníček: I do. But how?

Distance: If I disappeared by accident, don't forget, you know me, you just need to look out of the window.

Let's now both try to close our eyes.

Imagine that your mum is really close.

So close she can't be any closer.

That she's like you and time is too slow for her too.

Try to think of what you'd recommend to her.

Pssssst.

Silence, are you here with us?

Silence: Ho ho

Shadows go

Through the mist they flow

Through the sloe

What is that light in the forest at night

I'm not afraid, not quite,

The big distance's getting slight

Through the slow mist's flow

20. IN THE HOSPITAL

Mother: Asleep?

Doctor: There you have it. He couldn't wait and when you're finally here, he's asleep.

Mother: He looks like he's dreaming.

Doctor: I think we can wake him up.

Mother: Jeníček, wake up!

Jeníček: Mummy? Mummy, you're here! I knew it.

Mother: Did you feel sad here?

Jeníček: I did!

Mother: Was the time too slow?

Jeníček: It was!

Mother: For me too!

Jeníček: And what did you do?

Mother: First I was just sitting and worrying and feeling sad for not being able to go and see you. I remembered how you liked the plush squirrel we saw on our trip. And suddenly I felt sorry for it being there all alone when no one wants it. So I went there and found it. It's waiting for you at home. Shall we go to see it?

Jeníček: Really?

Doctor: Really, Jeníček. You're going home. You will celebrate your birthday with you mum.

Jeníček: It's my birthday?!

Mother: Yes, tomorrow!

Jeníček: Hurray. Hurray. Hurray.

21. BIRTHDAY

Jeníček: Squirrel, are you sad mother has brought you here?

Squirrel: No, I'm not.

Jeníček: Do you mind she mended you a bit?

Squirrel: I don't.

Jeníček: Squirrel, you make me so happy. You're the best birthday present I've ever got. But if you wanted to go back in the forest, I'd take you there some time, okay?

Squirrel: What does "birthday" mean?

Jeníček: It's... when someone has been in the world for long enough they get a cake and presents for it.

Squirrel: Oh! I know now.

Jeníček: I'm going to open the window, okay? Just for a while so that I don't get ill again. Oak! Oak! We're back home!

Buk: Finally, Jeníček. I was getting worried.

Jeníček: I was ill, you know? I caught a cold. But look who's here with me.

Squirrel: Hallo, Oak. I'm sorry I was away for so long. I wanted to get to know the world.

Buk: And what's it like?

Squirrel: Beautiful.

Buk: How?

Squirrel: Like the heavens above us.

Jeníček: Squirrel is right. Just like that.

Buk: That must be beautiful.

Listen, Jeníček and Squirrel, I was wondering and you might know now you have been in the world.

So: Why is heaven so far away?

Jeníček: So that we can see all of it.

Squirrel: Yes.