

Snake Leaves

By

RaphaelH

Based On "The Three Snake Leaves" by The Brothers Grimm

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FADE IN:

EXT. KING LUKAS' CASTLE - NIGHT

An giant German Castle stands on a hill overlooking the sea.

LUKAS (V.O)

Olivia meant more to me than anyone
else I have ever known.

INT. QUEEN OLIVIA'S BEDROOM - DAY

LUKAS (27) stands beside elegant four-poster bed. His unshaven good looks mark him out as a true royal, but he looks anxious at the moment.

OLIVIA (24), a raven-haired beauty, lies in the bed. She seems a little pale, but looks at LUKAS with a luminous smile.

LUKAS

You need some more rest. Stay in
bed, and don't even consider going
outdoors.

OLIVIA

I didn't mean to upset you. I just
don't like being stuck in this
castle with this infernal illness.

LUKAS

I know, but please be careful. At
least until you get better.

OLIVIA

Don't be so worried. Hopefully I
will, and when I do, we can do
something fun.

LUKAS' eyes light up at this prospect.

LUKAS

How about we go on a nice long sea
voyage?

OLIVIA

That's a brilliant idea!

INT. QUEEN OLIVIA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

OLIVIA is still in her bed. She is even paler, and COUGHING intensely.

LUKAS watches, a look of incredible concern on his face, as a grey-haired PHYSICIAN tries to help her.

PRINCE LUKAS (V.O)
It seemed almost impossible to
believe that I could lose someone
as lovely as her so suddenly.

INT. THE ROYAL CRYPT - NIGHT

OLIVIA's body lies in a glass tomb in the middle of a vast grey crypt.

LUKAS is kneeling by the tomb, unable to control his grief.

LUKAS
I want you to be awake again...

LUKAS looks around the crypt. It seems completely silent.

Suddenly, a large SNAKE slithers into view. It crawls across the crypt and towards the tomb. LUKAS notices it.

LUKAS (cont'd)
Don't you dare touch her!

LUKAS gets up reaches into his belt, taking out a sword.

He slashes at the SNAKE twice, cutting it into three pieces. The pieces fall to the floor at his feet.

LUKAS stands there, looking at the SNAKE. As he does so, a SECOND SNAKE arrives.

It surveys the body of the FIRST SNAKE like a doctor looking at a patient, then slithers away.

A few seconds later, the SECOND SNAKE arrives with three small brown leaves.

The SECOND SNAKE puts the leaves down, then moves the three parts of the FIRST SNAKE's body until the three pieces are joined up. LUKAS watches the second snake intently.

The SECOND SNAKE then takes the leaves, and places one leaf on each part of the FIRST SNAKE. Soon, all three leaves have been placed on all three pieces of the FIRST SNAKE.

(CONTINUED)

Nothing happens for a few seconds, but soon, the FIRST SNAKE begins to heal. The two ugly wounds heal into narrow scars - the FIRST SNAKE's body has now been put back together.

The FIRST SNAKE then starts moving again. It slithers away with the SECOND SNAKE, leaving the three leaves behind. LUKAS stares at the leaves, amazed by what he has just witnessed.

LUKAS (cont'd)
If these leaves can bring a snake
back to life...

LUKAS goes up to the tomb and opens it. OLIVIA's body is no longer covered by a wall of glass.

LUKAS takes up the three leaves, and places one on OLIVIA's mouth and two over her eyes. He watches closely for a few seconds.

All of a sudden, colour starts to return to OLIVIA's cheeks, and she starts breathing again.

LUKAS puts down the leaves just before OLIVIA opens her eyes.

OLIVIA
Good Heavens! Where am I?

LUKAS
In the royal crypt.

OLIVIA
Really? I was dead all this time?

LUKAS nods.

OLIVIA (cont'd)
I feel a lot better now!

LUKAS
Excellent! Do you want to go back
to the castle?

OLIVIA
Why not?

OLIVIA gets up. LUKAS takes her hand and leads her out of the crypt.

INT. THE CASTLE HALLWAY - NIGHT

LUKAS places the three leaves in a fabric bag.

He gives the bag to his servant CHRISTOPHER (Late 40's), a stern, bearded man.

CHRISTOPHER
You used these leaves to bring
Olivia back to life?

LUKAS
I did. Will you look after them for
me?

CHRISTOPHER
I will, your majesty.

LUKAS walks away.

CHRISTOPHER looks at the fabric bag.

CHRISTOPHER (cont'd)
Lukas, what have you done?

INT. THE CASTLE KITCHEN - NIGHT

CHRISTOPHER walks through the castle kitchen, which is currently completely empty. He holds the fabric bag in his hands.

CHRISTOPHER soon comes across a roaring fire. He walks up to it and, without any hesitation, throws the fabric bag onto the fire.

CHRISTOPHER watches as the bag burns to ashes, and the three leaves inside are destroyed.

INT. QUEEN OLIVIA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

OLIVIA lies in bed with LUKAS. It's the middle of the night.

LUKAS is asleep, but OLIVIA is tossing and turning. She seems unable to get any rest.

INT. QUEEN OLIVIA'S BEDROOM - DAY

OLIVIA is pacing around the room. She now looks incredibly tired. LUKAS is sitting down nearby.

LUKAS
What's wrong?

(CONTINUED)

OLIVIA
I haven't been able to sleep.

OLIVIA's speech is now extremely slurred. LUKAS notices this.

LUKAS
You really need a good rest.

OLIVIA
I had one recently. It was the most peaceful rest I ever had. Then you woke me up!

LUKAS
It's just anxiety. You've been dead for a while, and you're struggling to readjust to being alive.

OLIVIA
I'm not sure I even want to be alive.

LUKAS
I know just the thing to calm you down. One voyage out to sea, and you'll be sleeping like a log again.

EXT. THE COAST - DAY

LUKAS watches as small wooden dinghies take items to the giant Royal Ship. Christopher stands next to him.

LUKAS
I hope this makes her better.

CHRISTOPHER
I don't think so.

LUKAS
What do you mean?

CHRISTOPHER
The dead don't like being woken up.

LUKAS
It's alright. She'll recover.

CHRISTOPHER
That's what you said when she was ill.

There is an awkward pause.

(CONTINUED)

LUKAS
Do you have the leaves?

CHRISTOPHER
I destroyed them.

LUKAS
What?

CHRISTOPHER
Believe me, you'll regret bringing
her back.

As LUKAS and CHRISTOPHER talk, a DOG watches them.

A SNAKE crawls up behind the DOG and bites its leg. The DOG convulses in pain and drops dead almost instantly.

The SNAKE hisses furiously. It has two large scars around its body, proving is the FIRST SNAKE which was brought back to life earlier.

In addition, the FIRST SNAKE has red marks across its body - it's blood vessels are unusually emphasised.

INT. THE ROYAL BOAT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

LUKAS and OLIVIA lie in a giant bed in the largest room on the ship.

LUKAS holds OLIVIA's hand, which now has the same swollen blood vessels as the resurrected FIRST SNAKE.

LUKAS
This is lovely, isn't it?

OLIVIA doesn't respond. She looks even more tired than she did earlier.

LUKAS (cont'd)
It's so nice to be able to travel
together.

OLIVIA remains silent.

LUKAS (cont'd)
What's up? I thought you loved the
sea?

OLIVIA
I did until you brought me back!

(CONTINUED)

LUKAS
What do you mean?

OLIVIA
I was happy being dead! It was so peaceful!

LUKAS
Stop talking like this!

OLIVIA
Then you come along, and wake me up! Why the hell did you bring me to life?

LUKAS
Because I love you.

OLIVIA
If you loved me, you'd have let me die. You're a self-centred bastard!

LUKAS looks at OLIVIA, unable to comprehend what she's saying.

OLIVIA gets up and walks towards a nearby mirror. LUKAS follows her.

LUKAS
Olivia, stop!

OLIVIA
You're the one that needs to stop.

OLIVIA grabs the mirror and throws it to the floor, causing it to shatter.

She takes a shard of glass from the mirror and advances towards LUKAS.

OLIVIA (cont'd)
And I'm going to be the one who stops you.

OLIVIA attacks LUKAS with the shard of glass, cutting at his flesh.

LUKAS is in pain, but tries to hold off OLIVIA.

OLIVIA aims the shard of glass at LUKAS a second time, but LUKAS deflects her attack.

The shard of glass goes into LUKAS's leg. He falls to the floor, seemingly immobile.

(CONTINUED)

OLIVIA takes the shard of glass and walks away from LUKAS.

OLIVIA (cont'd)
Now it's time to do what I should
have done a long time ago.

OLIVIA uses the shard of glass to slash her throat from ear to ear. Blood flows rapidly from the wound.

OLIVIA waits, expecting something to happen, but she remains conscious. In fact, the injury seems to have no effect on her.

OLIVIA (cont'd)
What's happened to me?

OLIVIA continues to cut at herself with the glass. As she is distracted by her attempts to kill herself, she doesn't notice LUKAS getting up.

Though OLIVIA's attack has injured LUKAS, he is strong enough to take his sword out of his belt.

Limping but unharmed, LUKAS grabs OLIVIA and pushes her towards the wall. This causes OLIVIA to drop her shard of glass in surprise.

LUKAS impales OLIVIA with his sword. He then puts it through the wall, leaving her stuck in place.

LUKAS is breathing heavily. OLIVIA's face is full of anger, fear and confusion.

OLIVIA (cont'd)
What did you do?!

LUKAS is unable to respond.

OLIVIA (cont'd)
I can't go on like this.

LUKAS looks at OLIVIA, silently acknowledging this reality.

OLIVIA (cont'd)
You have to destroy my body
completely.

There is a pleading look in OLIVIA's eyes.

OLIVIA (cont'd)
Please. Let me go back to sleep.

EXT. THE SEA - NIGHT

OLIVIA lies inside a small wooden dinghy. she is tethered to the floor, which is covered in straw, and her body is covered in oil-soaked firewood up to her neck. She looks like a child tucked up in bed.

LUKAS sits in another dinghy next to her, holding a flaming torch. He hesitates for a few seconds - can he do this?

OLIVIA looks at LUKAS, her earlier love for him apparent one last time.

OLIVIA

Go on. End this now.

Upon hearing these words, LUKAS places the lit torch at the foot of OLIVIA's dinghy. The fire ignites the wood and spreads quickly.

LUKAS grabs hold of the pair of oars in his dinghy and starts to row away from the blaze.

OLIVIA closes her eyes and smiles peacefully as the fire consumes her body.

LUKAS watches silently as he rows back, his eyes filling with tears.

FADE TO BLACK.