



Translated extract from

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A Forest Sprite flies to Oman

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A Forest Sprite flies to Oman

If the trees could tell a tale,
I am sure they would not fail
To talk about the forest sprites
Who spend their days there, and their nights.

Forest sprites are very small,
But their dreams are grand –
Eating berries, riding squirrels,
High above the land.

A forest sprite sits in a tree
His legs are dangling down.
He dreams of all he'd like to see
Beyond its leafy crown.

Instead of sitting still at home
Around the globe he'd love to roam.
But how, he wonders, sadly sighing,
When I have no wings for flying?

His thinking nearly makes him fall
Right off his branch – sprite, leaves and all!

He thinks all winter and all spring,

Oh, to be airborne, on the wing!

In summer, birds laugh in the sky:

“You don’t have wings, so you can’t fly!”

“Those birds think they are very witty,”

The forest sprite sighs. ‘What a pity!’

But then the leaves turn red and brown,

Fall swirling, whirling in the wind,

The sprite can see them tumbling down –

Must he be left behind?

“Rustling leaf, rustling leaf,

Let’s whirl, twirl, fly away!

Let me be your passenger

On this autumn day.”

And so the forest sprite sets out.

On his leaf he sails

Through the air, above the trees,

Over hills and dales.

He wears his lucky acorn hat,
And hopes that they will not go splat!

In search of wintry Arctic weather
And Santa's merry elves,
Both leaf and sprite fly on together.
But then they freeze themselves.

A friendly polar bear's warm breath
Preserves them from an icy death.

The sprite goes on to Africa
To be precise, to Zanzibar.
He nose-dives past two tall giraffes.
"We're landing among apes!" he laughs.

But soon the desert wind again
Sends him on in his leafy plane.

It blows him hither, blows him thither,
And lands him in the Ganges river.
He meets a sacred cow there too.
All she can say is, "Moo, moo, moo!"

With lots of curry, dhal and rice,
His mouth is burning, but it's nice.

The forest sprite flies on to China
Where letters are drawn by a designer.
The Chinese give him – see it here –
A complicated souvenir.

But chopsticks really aren't much good
For eating berries and such food.

The forest sprite flies to the land of the samba
And dances there with a big green mamba.
How the Brazilians clap! They say
They wish the forest sprite would stay.

He loves the rhythmic, drumming sound,
“But no,” he says. “I'm onward bound.”

His leaf flies further, to New Zealand
Where kiwis live, there's sea and sand.
The people of those latitudes
Have very sporting attitudes.

His leaf is strong, lightweight and broad,
It makes an excellent surfboard.

The forest sprite flies to Oman
And makes his landing where he can.
“Welcome,” he hears a genie say,
“Looks like you come from far away.”

The problem isn't geographic,
It's too much magic carpet traffic.

The forest sprite stops for a rest
And thinks that maybe home is best.
How are his friends? How is his tree?
Yes, home is where he'd like to be.
He will go back, perhaps to stay.
His rustling leaf will find the way.

They swirl and whirl both far and high
And time like lightning rushes by.
Waving their hats, his friends are standing
Below to watch him make his landing.

The forest sprites shout with one voice.
“The sprite's in sight!” they all rejoice.

The forest sprite had whirled and twirled
His leaf-borne flight all round the world.
It made the sprite who flew so far
An international big star.

And when I asked the reason why
He didn't just let life pass by –
“That's not as wise as it may seem,”
He said, “I'd rather chase my dream.”