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FROM LINGUISTIC CUES TO CONCRETE VISUALS: EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NARRATION AND ILLUSTRATION THROUGH THE CREATION OF ILLUSTRATIONS BASED ON EUROPEAN FOLKTALES

A thesis submitted to
Regis College
The Honors Program
In partial fulfillment of the requirements
For Graduation with Honors

by

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May 2014

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Introduction: From Text to Ideas

From the time that I learned that I would have to complete a thesis as part of the honors program and as a final capstone project for my visual art major I knew that I wanted to work on a thesis that centered on the fantastic. I considered many ideas over the years that ranged from the significance of fantasy literature in popular culture to a series of paintings that would comprise a short bestiary, but it was not until I sat down and created a web of the different aspects of the fantastic that I was finally able to narrow down my focus to folklore. I chose to illustrate folktales from across Europe because I have always been fascinated with stories that revolve around mystical creatures and beings from the *Bannik*, a bath house spirit from Slavic mythology, to the Scottish *Glaistig*. More specifically, I wanted to explore the relationship between the human mundane and these fantastic beings that range from being outright malevolent to benign. In order to narrow down my story choices, I considered common themes that occur throughout folklore and settled on supernatural transformation. While this was my initial criteria for pickingstories, I also came to realize that another common theme connected the stories: determination. When the supernatural and mundane clash in folklore, determination (or luck) often plays a large part in the outcome of the story. In "Tam Lin" Janet's will drives the action in the story; in "The Six Swans" the conditions that must be followed to return the princes to their natural state require staunch determination because

of their extremity; the tension in "The Seal' Skin" is a result of a man's determination to have a selkie bride and the selkie's determination to return home; the heroine in "East of the Sun and West of the Moon" wins her husband only by determined pursuit; and Ivan in "The Death of Koshchei the Deathless" only succeeds because of his determination and the assistance from those around him;.

I chose to incorporate "Tam Lin" into my thesis partly because it has been one of my favorite ballads from the time I was first introduced to it, but also because I believe that it typifies one of the most fascinating themes in folklore: overcoming seemingly impossible tasks in pursuit of a goal. Janet's will is ultimately the only thing that comes between Tam and damnation—if she falters as the Faerie Queen transforms Tam in Janet's arms, he will be lost to Hell forever. In Robert Burns' 1771 ballad version of the song, Tam warns Janet that the faeries will turn him into an "esk [asp] and an adder"; "a bear sae grim" and "a lion bold"; and finally a "red het gaud o iron". Between describing each of these transformations, Tam assures Janet that she should: "hold [him] fast and fear [him] not" because he is her baby's father, and he will "do to [her] nae harm". Despite Tam's repeated reassurance about his harmlessness, holding on to someone who was transforming into a variety of dangerous animals and a red-hot piece of iron would require determination.

"The Six Swans" interested me because the supernatural transformation in the story is brought about by a (presumably human) witch rather than a supernatural being. Like Janet in "Tam Lin" the heroine of the story must overcome the supernatural through

determination. When the heroine finds her brothers after they have been turned into swans and asks then how she can "free" them, they reply by telling her that "the conditions are too hard. You must not speak or laugh for six years, and must make in that time six shirts for us out of star-flowers. If a single word comes out of your mouth, all your labor is in vain" (Lang 8). Despite her brothers' warning, the sister sets out to fulfill these requirements almost immediately. At first it is easy because she is alone in the forest and "could speak to no one, and she had no wish to laugh" (Lang 8). The difficulty of her task later increases when the king is hunting in the forest, sees the sister, and takes her back to his castle. The sister's situation is even more difficult when, after the king and the heroine marry, the king's wicked mother takes her first, second and third child and hides them while accusing the heroine of the murder. While the king does not believe his mother's accusations regarding the heroine after the disappearance of the first two children he accepts his mother's third accusation against the sister and "give[s] her over to the law, which decreed that she must be burnt to death" (Lang 9). Even when the heroine is tied at the stake she has the determination to bring the then-completed shirts with her and throw them over her brothers just before the fire is lit. While Janet must endure a physical and psychological trial in order to save Tam, the heroine of "The Six Swans" has to endure immense psychological difficulty. She must maintain her silence despite being kidnapped, having her children kidnapped and then being accused of murdering them, and then almost being executed—all of which she could have likely avoided had she spoken.

Selkies—people who have a seal form in the water and a human form on land because of their magical seal skins—have always interested me, so I was excited when I came across "The Seal's Skin". I thought this story was especially interesting when I compared it to the other stories that I chose because it is the woman who transforms in the story. Her transformation is also unique because she transforms of her own free will as a result of her supernatural nature and determination to return to her first home, he sea, rather than having transformation imposed on her by a supernatural force. The seal lives with the man who takes her skin peacefully for "many years" as his wife until she is given the opportunity to reclaim her skin and return home. The fact that when she finds the skin she "was unable to resist the temptation" the skin presents complicates the heroine's apparent determination, however. Her determination does not ultimately lead to a triumphant return to the life she lead before living on land, but instead leads to a life forever divided between affection for her family on land and her family in the sea.

I chose to include "East of the Sun and West of the Moon" because of the relationship between the youngest daughter and the White Bear. It is superficially similar to more familiar stories like "The Princess and the Frog" but it requires more than a simple kiss from the heroine to save her husband. The heroine moves the story along because she is both the cause of the White Bear being captured by his stepmother and the one who must act as his savior. This is despite the fact that she must rescue him from a castle that, according to the White Bear, "there is no way to that place. It lay EAST OF THE SUN AND WEST OF THE MOON, and thither she'd never find her way" (290). Her journey there takes a long time and requires her to seek the help of many different

people. ,Once she finds the castle, she is faced with the immediate possibility of having her husband marry someone else if she fails.

"The Death of Koshchei the Deathless" has interested me because the hero, Prince Ivan, overcomes the obstacles presented to him both through his own determination and through the assistance others offer him. He does not give up on his quest to retrieve his wife from Koshchei the Deathless even when faced with the possibility of his own death;.However, he does die and is only brought back to life through the help of his brothers-in-law, and later overcomes the tests necessary to own the horse that would enable him to save his wife only with the help of the animals to whom he had previously rendered assistance.

With these stories in mind, I began my project by considering the purpose of illustrating stories in a general context. Because telling a story in either form—linguistically or visually—asks the reader to fill in the details that are missing as a result of the inherent form of the medium used for communication, illustrating a story is an exercise in interpretation and translation. While the story provides some clues as to what is taking place visually, the illustrator must interpret what these clues mean and then translate linguistic cues into visual form. Take, for example, John Keats' poem "La Belle Dame sans Merci," which has inspired many illustrations. The poem gives the audience a general description of events:the speaker happens across a "haggard and woe-begone" knight, who then tells the speaker of his encounter with the titular woman who is "Full beautiful—a faery's child, / Her hair was long, her foot was light, And her eyes were wild" (Keats 14-16). Such a sparse description leaves much of the visual detail up to the

mind of the reader and has led to many different visual depictions of the interaction between the knight and the woman. In his drawing entitled *La Belle Dame sans Merci* (1855), Dante Gabriel Rosetti depicts a mostly literal interpretation of the sixth stanza (figure 1):

> I set her on my pacing steed,
>
> And nothing else saw all day long,
>
> For sidelong would she bend, and sing
>
> A faery's song. (Keats 21-24)

In Rosetti's piece, both the knight and a rather child-like woman are seated on the knight's horse, with the knight holding onto the woman and kissing her hand as she, sitting sidesaddle, leans over the horse's neck and wraps her long hair around the man's neck. This echoes the power the woman has in the poem, as she is the driving force behind most of the action, but it also puts the knight, quite literally, in her grasp. Frank Dicksee's *La Belle Dame sans Merci* expands upon this idea of the woman's power by further extrapolating from the poem (figure 2). Dicksee's painting shows a woman sitting sidesaddle across a black horse with the knight standing beside her. The woman is leaning down towards the man while her hair blows behind him and the man gazes up at the woman with his arms extended from his sides, seemingly entranced. By only putting the woman on the horse, Dicksee raises her above the knight and in doing so emphasizes her power over him. Indeed, a casual observer not familiar with the poem might think that the horse belonged to the woman. The two illustrations of the poem are significant because, even though they are different, both interpretations are textually sound—the

knight does not say whether or not he also climbs upon his "pacing steed," only that he set the woman there. In their differing interpretations Rosetti and Dicksee both essentially retell the story of "La Belle Dame," basing their retelling on the original story but expanding upon it. Illustrating stories is therefore important because the artist becomes the storyteller and changes the story in doing so. The story that is then communicated through the illustration is further abstracted from its original form when it is completed by the audience that views it. While the audience of the poem form of "*La Belle Dame sans Merci*" may all imagine a slightly different scenario when the knight sets the woman on his horse, the audience viewing the visual art *La Belle Dame sans Merci* will likely decide upon a slightly different relationship between the woman and the knight, depending on which illustration they see.

I personally planned on exploring and transmitting these stories through illustrations that engaged both the traditional aspects of the stories as well as the modern times in which I am working through the medium that I would use to illustrate these folktales. I decided to create my illustrations entirely digitally using Adobe Photoshop and a Wacom graphics tablet and then print the images onto textured Tyvek, a type of nonwoven paper-like substrate made of polyetheline fibers. Working in this way would allow me to take advantage of the fluidity offered by the digital medium while still creating a final product that references traditional painting techniques and the overall handmade quality of the piece as a whole. Ultimately I wanted this project to allow me to gain greater insight into the process of translating a textual story into my own visual interpretation of that story while creating a series of digital paintings that could stand on

their own in a gallery environment. To this end I worked to create illustrations in a very deliberate manner, considering how everything from composition to color would affect my audience's interpretation of the story that I was (re)telling.

Chapter One: Tam Lin

(see figure 3)

Shape-change has been something that has always interested me and the prospect of illustrating it was an exciting one, especially because it meant that I would have the opportunity to illustrate the story of Tam Lin, which has been one of my favorite folktales since I first came across it in middle school. While there are multiple versions of the story, for this project I focused in particular on the ballad version written by Robert Burns between 1771 and 1779 and first published in 1796 in James Johnson's *Scot's Musical Museum* according to the "Tam Lin" subsection of the Robert Burns section of the British Broadcasting Company's website (Mackay). I chose this version in part because I was most familiar with it and in part because I like the ballad format—certain parts of the story are repeated as a chorus, which emphasizes those parts of the narrative. Burns' version does leave some details out, most importantly the relationship between Tam and Janet before the beginning of the story. Because Tam is responsible for Janet's pregnancy the relationship between Tam and Janet is key to the overall emotional tone of the story. If Janet and Tam had a good relationship before the events of the tale, their story is one of love and redemption; if they had no relationship at all, the story is considerably darker and stranger. In order to provide context for their relationship in the Burns version of the story I drew inspiration from the variant found in Kathleen Ragan's *Fearless Girls, Wise Women, and Beloved Sisters* under the name of "Tamlane". "Tamlane" defines the relationship between the two characters in a concrete way: "Young Tamlane was the son

of Earl Murray, and Burd [sic] Janet was daughter of Dunbar, Earl of March. And when they were young they loved one another and plighted their troth. But when the time came for marrying, Tamlane disappeared, and none knew what had become of him" (Ragan 40). With this in mind, I synthesized the two versions of the story by taking the idea of Tam and Janet's loving relationship from "Tamlane" and using it to provide context for the emotional tone of the events described in "Tam Lin".

Because of my original focus on transformation, I wanted to directly represent the moment of transformation that occurs in this story when the Fairy Queen tests Janet's resolve to save Tam by turning him into a variety of frightening and potentially harmful forms:

> They'll turn me in your arms, lady,
> Into an ask and adder,
> But hald me fast and fear me not,
> I am your bairn's father.
>
> They'll turn me to a bear sae grim,
> And then a lion bold;
> But hold me fast and fear me not,
> As you shall love your child.
>
> Again they'll turn me in your arms
> To a red het gaud of airn;
> But hold me fast and fear me not,
> I'll do to you nae harm.
>
> And last they 'll turn me, in your arms,
> Into the burning lead;
> Then throw me into well-water,
> O throw me in wi' speed! (Burns 133-138)

Aside from my focus on transformation, I chose this scene because of the drama present, which I believed would allow me to create a more interesting painting. The repetition of

both "They'll turn me in your arms" and "But hold me fast and fear me not" builds anticipation of the trauma of the events that Tam is foretelling—both the physical trauma of transformation for Tam and the emotional trauma that Janet faces in having a loved one become something alien and dangerous. I particularly like this scene because the trauma causes tension: Will the struggle to hold onto her lover be too much for Janet? Will Janet's failure result in Tam being sent as a tithe to Hell? What would it be like to hold on to all of the things that Tam turns into when your instincts tell you to get away from the danger? All these questions made for a dramatic and compelling mental picture and presented me with the challenge of trying to represent both the emotional and physical drama I felt integral to the scene in a visual way. With this in mind, I decided to depict the beginning of Tam's transformation sequence from a human to an "ask", which I interpreted this to be an asp, a type of venomous snake, because I thought it would be the most clear from a visual storytelling perspective while remaining true to the source story. I did initially consider illustrating one of his later transformations because I felt that they would allow me to make a clearer representation of Tam's transformation, but while the later transformations are dramatic, they are also confusing without the context of the rest of the story. I was also drawn to this particular scene because the repetition of the idea of physical transformation encapsulates the theme of change present throughout the story as a whole in Janet's change from a virgin to a mother and from a beloved daughter to and independent agent, as well as Tam's change from a regular human to increasingly something increasingly inhuman. With this focus on both suspense and change, I began to generate thumbnails.

For this project I deviated from my normal method of making thumbnails in which I simply sketch a small and simple line drawing of a pieceInstead, I focused my attention mostly on the composition of the piece by making thumbnails that were made up entirely of silhouettes. Working with a relatively small amount of detail helped me to better arrange the spatial relationships between all of the elements of the story. For this particular painting, I especially wanted to explore the best way to depict the relationship between Tam and Janet in relation to the Fairy Queen in a way that conveyed their roles in the story. I quickly settled on the idea of placing Janet between the Queen and Tam to show her role as the element that severs the relationship between the Fairy Queen and Tam as well as her role as Tam's savior and a sort of shelter from the Queen. Another element that I felt was important was the placement of the Fairy Queen. I decided to depict her as a shadowy figure in the background, high up in the picture plane, in order to place her in a position of visual control over both Tam and Janet and establish her narrative importance and dominance in the situation.

While I figured out the rough spatial relationships that I wanted to establish between all of the figures fairly quickly, I had more of a difficulty establishing how close I wanted to bring the viewer to the scene and where the action was to take place. Initially, the scene was set in a rocky, mountainous environment and I had the "camera" quite close to the two figures, mostly depicting Tam and Janet's faces and with the Fairy Queen lurking in the top left corner. However, I realized that this would not work with my decision to depict Tam transforming into a snake because it meant that I could not show most of his body. I then experimented with pulling the "camera" back to allow for a

full-body shot of all of the figures. Several thumbnails later, it dawned on me that the narrative I was trying to establish in the piece would be much stronger if I flipped the composition. Rather than viewers encountering, from right to left, the Fairy Queen, Tam, and then Janet flipping the composition meant that viewers would see Tam, Janet, and then the Fairy Queen. This order clarifies Janet's role as a block to the Queen's plans to keep control over Tam and send him as a tithe to Hell. It also establishes Tam and Janet as being more central to the story than the Fairy Queen because they come "earlier" when reading the painting.

When I was ready to move on to the sketching and painting stage, I began by filling my canvas with a wash of strong, dark blues to create a night atmosphere in the piece. I knew that I wanted to have fairly dramatic lighting to emphasize and reflect the drama of the situation so I decided to place the moon behind Janet and Tam. This backlighting highlights the way the different elements in the painting read as units by drawing viewers' attention to their silhouettes; the trees are separate from one another, but the Queen's shape is connected with the trees , hinting at the Queen's connection with nature and wilderness.Meanwhile Tam and Janet's joined silhouette emphasizes the closeness of their relationship. It also draws attention to the triangular shape created by the joined forms of Janet and Tam, which suggests the stability of Janet's commitment and contrasts with the chaos of the situation. This triangular silhouette is also reminiscent of the pieta, reinforcing Tam's position as a potential sacrifice and Janet's loving emotional connection to Tam. During the sketching phase I moved away from the rocky setting I hinted at in my thumbnails and instead set the scene in a forest after looking up

photographs of the actual Carterhaugh wood in the Scottish Borders as well as Miles Cross Hill in Lincolnshire, England. This decision allowed me to use the dramatic lighting of the moon to cause the trees to cast long shadows that draw attention to Janet and Tam while emphasizing their triangular silhouette. The trees also fulfill several narrative roles: the barrenness of the trees communicates the season referenced in the ballad with the line "But the night is Halloween, Lady / The morn is Hallowday;" (Burns 107-108); they mirror Tam's transformation with their twisting, sinuous shape; they work to create the eerie mood of the piece with their skeletal nature; they draw viewers' attention to the figures in the foreground while somewhat obscuring the Queen, adding to her air of mystery and ominous nature.

Once I had sketched out the environment and all of the figures, I moved on to the painting process. I began by painting the trees in order to establish the environment that I envisioned for the scene, but I soon moved on to the figures. I painted Janet with a green cloak and dress and braided "yellow" (blonde) hair because of the repeated references to both her clothing and her hair in the original story. However, Tam's clothing was a little trickier. I knew that some elements of Tam's clothing were important:

> My right hand will be glov'd, lady,
> My left hand will be bare;
> Cockt up shall my bonnet be,
> And kaim'd down shall my hair;
> And thae's the tokens I gie thee… (Burns 127-131)

However, aside from mentioning the glove and hat, the story did not give any other indication of what Tam ought to be wearing. I therefore decided to give him somewhat fantastic clothing, a white loose-sleeved shirt and a purple vest, to connect him to his stay

in the fairy-land. I chose purple for the vest as a reference to the historically exotic and expensive nature of purple dye and to make Tam almost the opposite from Janet in terms of color. The purple also contrasts somewhat with the brown of the snake into which Tam is transforming, which creates visual interest and contrast that reflects the two conflicting forces that wish to take possession of Tam. Despite the symbolic nature of the colors the figures are clothed in, all of the colors are analogous which creates harmony between the environment and the figures. Tam's pose is rather fluid and sinuous throughout both his human and snake parts, which reflects the obvious aspects of his transformation into to a snake and hints at his temporary loss of humanity. Over the course of the painting process, I made the Queen larger than she had been in my original sketch to make her more ominous. At a smaller size, she was almost getting lost in the trees around her, which greatly diminished the threat she presents.

As a painting this piece is fairly successful, but it does not communicate the section of the story I was attempting to portray as clearly as I would have liked because the events occurring in the image are fairly ambiguous without the context of the entire story. This is especially true of Tam's transformation. It is not clear that he is a human turning into a snake, which opens up the possibility that the painting depicts a woman holding a man-snake for no apparent reason. The way Janet is holding Tam does not fully convey their relationship; while she is indeed holding Tam as she is described as doing in the story, she does not appear to be holding him tightly. This unintended departure from the original story fundamentally changes the story that I am telling through my painting because it shifts the events taking place in the illustration from a woman holding a man

"close" as a sign of determination and affection to a woman simply holding a man who is part snake. However, the way that the pose of both Janet and Tam visually refers to the pieta helps to clarify their relationship and gives the pair an air of intimacy. Additionally, the painting is very dark overall and especially in its final, printed form. While this does establish the mysterious mood of the story it draws too much attention to the moon while making the painting difficult to read overall. In printed form, the overall darkness of the painting obscures some details that I felt were key to maintaining faithfulness to the source story, such as the color of Janet's hair and the way she is holding on to Tam. Given that my audience includes both those familiar with the story that I am attempting to convey as well as those unfamiliar with the story, this is problematic. Despite these deviations from my storytelling goals, the painting does contain most of the elements that I feel are necessary for understanding the basic frame of the story: a woman is holding a man who, thanks to his snake tail and the scales going up his neck, is in some way connected to the supernatural and a mysterious figure looks on the pair while lurking in the background.

Chapter Two: The Six Swans

(see figure 4)

The second story that I chose for this project is the German folktale "The Six Swans", which was originally collected by the Grimm brothers and later included in Andrew Lang's *The Yellow Fairy Book*, the source of the version of the story that I used. I originally wanted to stay away from all of the stories collected by the Grimm brothers because Grimm's fairytales are generally well-known and I wanted to choose more obscure stories that are not part of the Western cultural consciousness in order to expose both myself and my audience to a wider range of folktales. Despite these reasons for avoiding Grimm, I decided to include "The Six Swans" because of its interesting story surrounding the reasons behind the transformation that takes place in the story and its thematic similarities to the other stories that I chose, particularly "Tam Lin". Both stories feature heroines who must successfully complete an absurd ordeal in order to reclaim their loved ones from a supernatural threat.

With the goal of choosing a scene that depicts transformation in mind, the two choices available to me were when the stepmother initially transforms the six brothers into swans or the scene when the sister turns her brothers back into humans. While the first option involves just as much transformation as the second, I decided that the scene involving the sister returning her brothers to their human forms would be more interesting as a stand-alone illustration because the circumstances surrounding the transformation involve more emotional tension. When the brothers are being turned into

swans, the stakes are not very high; the transformation feels predictable, inevitable, and unstoppable. However, the stakes for the sister's attempt to transform her brothers are much higher—her attempt is the culmination of seven years of dedication and self-sacrifice at great expense to herself and her new family, and her failure would result in her death and permanent swan-hood for her brothers. Although the casual viewer of the illustration that I was working to produce would likely not know this, the drama and the chaos of the scene provided me with the opportunity to create a dynamic image. I was particularly inspired by a passage right before the sister returns her brothers to human form:

> When she was led to the stake she laid the shirts on her arm, and as she stood on the pile and saw the fire was about to be lighted, she looked around her and saw six swans flying through the air. Then she knew her release was at hand and her heart danced with joy. The swans fluttered around her and hovered low so that she could throw the shirts over them. (Lang 9)

This gave me several elements to include in the scene that I was about to construct: the sister tied to a stake, someone about to light the "pile" on fire, several swans, and the shirts draped over the sister's arm. It also gave the mood I was imagining for the scene some nuance. On the one hand, the scene is intensely dramatic and chaotic with the swans "flutter[ing]" and "hover[ing]" around their sister while she is about to be executed; however, the sister is calm because "her heart danced with joy" at the prospect of her "release".

Unlike "Tam Lin", "The Six Swans" has two illustrations by H.J Ford included alongside the story in the version collected in *The Yellow Fairy Book*: one illustrating the stepmother changing the brothers into swans, and one depicting the sister tossing her

dress down to the king asking the sister about her identity (figure 5). Ford's choice of scene is interesting because the scene that best represents the story as a whole and is the most interesting to me is the scene where the sister is trying to return her brothers to their original, human forms and not the scene where the stepmother is transforming the brothers into swans. While Ford's depiction of the scene captures the dynamism and chaotic tone that I wanted to include in my own painting of the later instance of transformation, I wanted to deviate from his depiction of transformation, which I found confusing. The brother who is transforming into a swan is doing so beginning from his head, which is through the neck hole of the shirt, and his arms which are wings. The rest of the shirt that is not already over his body points upwards to the stepmother and runs more or less parallel to the brother's swan neck and head. It is therefore not immediately obvious to the viewer what they're looking at—I mistook the brother for some type of bizarre plant the first time that I looked at the illustration, and it was only after puzzling over it for a minute or two that I was able to make out what was happening in the illustration. Comparing Ford's vision of the brothers' transformation into swans with my own view of their transformation gave me the goal of working to depict the brothers' transformation back into human form in a clear and straightforward manner.

With my goal of visual and narrative clarity in mind I moved on to making thumbnails. I had a clear image of what I wanted my painting to look like right from the start, so I explored fewer options while making thumbnails with this painting than I did with my painting for "Tam Lin". While the story provided information about most of what I ought to include in my painting in terms of characters and objects, it did not

describe the setting. I decided to set the scene in a town square with a crowd of onlookers to heighten the drama and theatricality of the execution about to take place when the brothers are transforming back into swans. I also knew that I wanted to have the sister tied at the stake as the central figure because of her importance in the story. One aspect of the scene that I did explore, however, was where to place viewers in the chaos I was picturing. I initially placed viewers in the middle of the crowd surrounding the stake and the swans by using spectators to obscure parts of the scene that was playing out. However, in order to accurately create a sense of depth I would have had to make the framing characters larger than the characters central to the story, which would have detracted from the central characters' visual importance. Instead of doing this I opted to immerse viewers in the scene by placing them closer to the action taking place in order to clearly use scale and the placement of the different figures on the picture plane to establish a hierarchy of importance. Ultimately, I ended up combining the placement of the figures in my first thumbnail with the perspective of the second. While I worked out my general composition in my thumbnails I was not able to detail the positions of many of the figures in the painting due to the thumbnails' small size.

I therefore moved on to the sketching phase and worked out the placement of everything in more detail and resolved any composition issues in my thumbnails. One of the things I focused on the most when creating the sketch for this piece was the movement of viewers' eyes throughout the piece; I wanted to guide viewers through the image while emphasizing the sister. I did this primarily through the placement and pose of all the different figures. The sister's lower body is vertical and mirrors the stake she is

tied to, but her upper body is on the diagonal, giving her pose energy while pointing towards the shirt she is throwing to her brother-swan. The shirt leads the viewer to the swan that is flying on the viewer's right while creating tension—the shirt is forever up in the air, leaving the matter of if it successfully lands on the brother unresolved. The swan flying on the right is connected to the figures below it by the staff that one of the guards is holding, which draws the eye especially to the swan that is transforming into a man directly below the flying swan. The triangular silhouette of the transforming swan-man leads the viewer's eye up to the pointing guard, who in turn leads the eye back to the sister with his outstretched arm. The overall triangular shape of the sister and the stake also leads the viewer towards the swan in the air to the viewers' left as well as the threat of the guard holding fire behind the sister; however, the eye cannot rest there because the gaze of the guard and the diagonal of the torch that he is holding point back to the sister. The constant movement of the viewers' eyes helps to reinforce the chaos of the situation, while leading viewers to all of the important details of the scene. The sequence of the sister, the shirt in the air, the swan in the air, and the swan transforming into a man is especially important because it works like a formula to demonstrate the transformative powers of the shirts and guides the viewer through the transformation process.

Unlike the painting that I created for "Tam Lin", I decided to set this painting during the day. For inspiration I looked at several paintings of people being burnt at the stake, including *The Burning of Avvakum* (1897) by Grigoriy Myasoyedov and *Joan of Arc's Death at the Stake*, by Hermann Stilke (1843), as well as the scene where Esmerelda is being burnt at the stake in the 1996 Disney adaptation of *The Hunchback of*

Notre Dame (figs.6&7). I was especially inspired by the dramatic lighting in *Joan of Arc's Death at the Stake* and worked to incorporate similar lighting and colors into my work, particularly the overall warm tone, the cool darks and warm lights, and the dramatic sky. The dramatic clouds work as a mirror for the dramatic situation that is unfolding in my painting and help to tie the colors of the piece together as a whole because I used them as a starting point when selecting all of the other colors for the piece. One issue that I faced when I began to paint the figures was the question of what they should wear; while "Tam Lin" has at least some hints as to what the characters in the story are wearing, "The Six Swans" only describes the magical shirts used by the stepmother to turn the brothers into swans and the shirts that the sister uses to turn them back into humans. I therefore searched for some visual reference of what the figures in my painting ought to wear. I was especially interested in how to clothe the guardsbecause I reasoned that the sister should be wearing something rather simple due to her impending execution. After a detour through German national costume that I ultimately rejected as being too ornate and to modern, I came across pictures from a painting in Schrannenplatz (the old name for Marienplatz, a town center in Munich, Germany) by an unknown artist in 1636 on *La Couturière Parisienne Costume History*, a website run by A. Bender (figure 8). I was particularly inspired by a section of the painting that Bender refers to as "Commoners and soldiers", which depicts two soldiers in orange tunics with white collars, blue trousers, knee-high boots, and brown hats with upturned fronts. Additionally, this section of the painting includes two middle class ladies and a peasant woman wearing a loose white shirt and a green skirt with a wide waistband that is the

same color as the skirt. The clothing fit in with my vision for the painting at this point, so I used the different types of clothing for all of the figures, dressing the guards in the uniforms of the soldiers and the sister in the peasant woman's clothing, reasoning again that the people responsible for her execution would not want to burn good, royal clothing along with her. The next challenge was the color of the shirts that the sister was using to change her brothers back into humans, which the story only describes as being made out of "star-flower". I interpreted this to mean aster, a plant with star-like flowers. I more generally theorized that the shirts would most reasonably be made out of the whole plant and should therefore be green. This also works to connect the magical shirts with the sister through the green of her skirt and visually oppose the orange of the uniforms of the guards.

Aside from the overall pose of the figures and their clothing, another thing that I wanted to use to communicate the story in my piece is the facial expression of the different figures. As a whole, I wanted the guards to communicate shock and surprise to contrast with the rather peaceful expression of the sister. This contrast works to increase the emotional turmoil present in the scene and conveys confidence on the sister's part, which is especially important in light of the fact that her "heart danced with joy" because "her release was at hand"(Lang 9). I felt that the contrasting emotions visible on the figures' faces would contribute to the overall chaos of the scene and allow the viewer to connect with the figures, which would in turn increase the emotional impact of the piece.

Overall, I feel that this piece is highly successful both on its own artistically and as a means of conveying the basic story of "The Six Swans", especially when compared

to the success of the painting that I made for "Tam Lin". As a whole, the composition is more effective and works to clearly represent a scene in which an execution is about to occur while the woman who is about to be executed tosses a shirt onto a swan. Additionally, the composition works to establish the narrative in the piece through the use of multiple diagonals that keep the viewer's eye moving throughout the piece. The wide tonal range helps the painting read clearly so that the events taking place are easy to discern while allowing for greater value contrast, which works to create a sense of drama. The composition, pose, and expressions of the various figures all work together to capture the chaos surrounding the sister's near-execution and the return of the brothers to human form. Despite these successes I could have communicated some aspects of the story to viewers more clearly. While my idea of having the sequence of the sister, shirt, swan, and transforming swan guide viewers through the sequence of events that leads to the brothers' process of transformation seems to be somewhat effective, it would be more clear if I had included the end product—a fully human man—as part of the progression instead of ending the sequence with a partially transformed man who is still mostly a swan. Additionally, it is not quite clear what the torch-carrying guard has to do with the scene; while it is fairly obvious that he is coming to set the pyre on fire his relationship to the rest of the scene is ambiguous, especially in comparison of the main action of the sister throwing the shirt to the swan.

Chapter Three: The Seal's Skin

(see figure 9)

The third story that I chose for this project is the Icelandic folktale "The Seal's Skin". Unlike the stories that I chose to depict for first two paintings, I was not familiar with this story prior to my search for stories to include in my project, though I was familiar with the idea of seals that shed their skins to take human form on land. However, I was intrigued by the way the story played out, and interested in the contrast between this story and the previous two stories that I chose. I also chose this story because I viewed it as a thematic bridge between "Tam Lin" and "The Six Swans", where an external supernatural being causes a transformation-related problem that the heroine of the story must solve, and "East of the Sun and West of the Moon" and "The Death of Koshchei the Deathless" where the heroine and hero of the story cause the problem that they must then solve. There is no external supernatural force to cause problems for either of the characters in "The Seal's Skin", but neither do the characters bring calamity upon themselves; instead, their problem is inherent to the dynamics of a relationship between a supernatural being and a human. It is a very short story, taking up only about a page in *Best –Loved Folktales of the World* by Johanna Cole, where I found the story. The short length of the story fits in with the more intimate scope of the story; there are no impossible feats that the heroine must accomplish to save a beloved or a family member, only a couple trying to make the best of a bad situation. As such, the transformation in this story is much less dramatic—in fact, all of the transformation happens "offscreen"

and it is up to the reader to infer what is taking place. The challenge of hinting at transformation without directly portraying it intrigued me and finalized my decision to illustrate this story.

I was less clear about the direction that I wanted to take with this painting. Despite its short length, the story did not contain one single moment that captured the thematic essence or essential problem of the story; instead, the "problem" is spread throughout the story in several key moments. One moment that I considered illustrating is the moment that leads to the rest of the story when the fisherman picks up the seal skin from the rocks by the sea, or the moment when he chooses to comfort the crying seal whose skin he had taken. I decided against illustrating either of these scenes because without the context of the story, these particular events lose their significance and simply become moments about a man interacting with what he finds on the beach. I then contemplated moments near the end of the story, hoping that they might be able to better stand alone from the rest of the story. I considered illustrating the scene that takes place after the seal finally gets the key from the fisherman to the chest that contains her skin: "She had taken the key and examined the chest, and there she had found the skin; she had been unable to resist the temptation, but had said farewell to her children, put the skin on, and flung herself into the sea" (Cole 383-384). While this moment is certainly dramatic, I felt that it did not represent the story as a whole very well because of the way that I interpreted this story. Unlike the previous moments of triumphant transformation in "Tam Lin" and "The Six Swans" the seal's transformation does not mark a release from supernatural captivity; instead it marks a sad return of the inevitable. The language that

describes the seal's feelings about her transformation captures her reluctance as well as the inevitability of her actions: she is "unable to resist the temptation" her skin represents, and she is described as having "flung" herself into the sea, which has the connotation of violence rather than joy. I therefore turned to the aftermath of the seal's return to the sea, but that did not capture the story for me either because while the picture of a seal that "looked as if it had tears running from its eyes" circling the fisherman's boat was emotionally charged, it still did not get at the heart of the relationship between the seal and the fisherman. After rejecting all of these scenes a small section of the story caught my eye: "She grew fond of him, but did not get on so well with other people. Often she would sit alone and stare out to sea. After some while the man married her, and they got on well together, and had several children" (Cole 383). These few lines captured the story as a whole for me because they encapsulate the relationship between the seal and the fisherman: they "get on well together" and are "fond" of each other, but the seal remains alone because of her desire to return to the sea. By choosing to illustrate this moment, I was able to capture the wistfulness of the story as a whole and relate the situation between the seal and the fisherman in a more complete way than I would have been able to had I picked one of the more specific scenes in the text.

Given that the textual inspiration for my painting was rather vague, I sketched out several thumbnails to get a feel for how I wanted to portray the scene I envisioned. I briefly considered painting a portrait of the seal and the fisherman, but I quickly decided that it would narrow down what I could include in the scene to the point that I would not be able to communicate the story to viewers. Instead, I opted to give viewers an interior

shot of the couple's house and let the spatial relationships between the different figures communicate their relationship to each other. I experimented with having the seal sitting down and gazing out the window while the fisherman stood behind her in order to fit with the story's description of the seal often staring at the sea and to depict the fisherman as a force that holds her back from the sea. However, this did not include all of the elements that I felt were important, so I explored the idea of placing the fisherman and the seal on opposite sides of the window with the chest containing the seal skin on a shelf over the seal's head. This separated the fisherman and the seal too much and made their relationship to each other unclear. I then experimented withplacing their children in the scene to further demonstrate the multiple forces tugging at the seal, and with placing the fisherman between the seal and the window that looks out on the sea to represent his role as one of the factors keeping her from the sea. I finally combined these elements into one composition. The seal gazes out upon the sea while the fisherman stands between her and the sea and one of their children sits on the chest that contains the seal's skin on the viewers' left. I settled on this because it contains multiple elements that reflect the complexity of the relationship between the seal and those around her: she is loved by the fisherman, but is not able to give up her love of the sea, while her love of her children also works to contain her desire to return to the sea.

With this composition in mind, I moved on to the sketching process. In my thumbnail, I only depicted the figures from the waist up; when sketching I switched to a full-body picture in order to show more of their house and give viewers more of a sense as to where this scene is taking place. I also refined the pose of the different figures,

particularly the seal and the fisherman. In my thumbnail I simply sketched them standing next to each other but I quickly decided that it would be better to have the fisherman hugging the seal from behind to visually represent his role as restricting her freedom while simultaneously communicating his love for her. The fisherman's feelings towards the seal are further represented by his gaze towards her head; however, the seal's pose and gaze demonstrate her more distant attitude towards both the fisherman and his house. The seal does not fully reciprocate the fisherman's hug and instead stands facing the window and looks out at the sea with her hands somewhat absentmindedly on the fisherman's arms. This gesture is purposefully ambiguous: the seal is either returning the fisherman's affection while dividing her attention between the fisherman and the sea or she is acknowledging the restraint of the fisherman's arms. The ambiguity of their relationship suggested by the gestures of the seal and the fisherman extends into their size relationship as well, the seal's smaller size makes her seem more vulnerable and fragile, which makes the fisherman seem both domineering and protective by comparison. Unlike "The Six Swans" I focused much less on using the composition of the piece to move viewers' eyes through the piece in a fast, fluid manner because the focus of the story that I was attempting to tell is more contemplative and less based on action. There are almost no strong diagonals in this piece aside from the landmasses that can be seen out the window, which function to guide the viewer's eye from the half of the painting that contains the seal and the fisherman to the half that contains the boy and the chest. The other elements of the painting are generally vertical and suggest isolation by stopping the motion of viewers' eyes one each discreet object. The isolation is further intensified by

the window in the middle of the painting, which catches viewers' attention with of its bright values while visually dividing the seal and the fisherman from their child. As a result each figure feels caught up in their own world and only somewhat aware of the presence of the other figures. Such emotional isolation makes the emotional connection suggested by the shared silhouette of the fisherman and the seal strange, and hopefully causes viewers to question the situation of the figures portrayed in the scene. This emotional coldness is reflected by the overall cold, desaturated colors of the piece, which make the situation feel bleak and hopeless.

I began the painting process by once again looking around for inspiration, particularly for the setting. I came across several photographs of the fishing village in Bolungarvík, Iceland, which I used as the basis of the house that the seal and the fisherman occupy. It was somewhat challenging to envision the interior of their house based solely on exterior photographs, but I reasoned that the building materials of the house visible on the outside of the house would show through on the interior. The shape of the houses in Bolungarvík suggested that the interior of the house would be rather cramped and dark, leading to my decision to use fairly dark, desaturated browns and cold greys for the interior of the house, which contrast nicely with the brighter blues and greys I used for the sea and sky seen out the window. When I began to paint in the clothing of the figures I once again looked around for inspiration. I first looked at Icelandic national costumes but decided against dressing the figures in the national costumes because they felt too ornate and modern, especially given my mental image of the fisherman as being somewhat poor and living in a rural area. I therefore turned to the Viking clothing that I

have seen at the various Irish, Scottish, and Celtic festivals that I have attended, particularly the apron dresses worn by women Viking reenactors and various photographs of clothing worn by and sold to these reenactors on the internet. I was not especially concerned with the authenticity or historical accuracy of the clothing because my goal was not to paint something historically accurate; rather, I was looking for clothing that best helped me tell the story that I was trying to tell visually. Once I settled on the design of the clothing I used the clothing of all of the figures to demonstrate which figure "belongs" with what part of the environment represented in the painting. The fisherman is dressed in earth tones and greens to connect him with the house and the idea of land while the woman is dressed in blues and white to connect her with the sea and the sky seen out of the window and to make her contrast with the interior of the house around her. I chose to dress their child in both blue and brown to show his connection to both worlds, but gave him a more similar coloring to the fisherman overall to show his human nature.

Unlike the previous paintings that I did, I tried to make the magical elements more subtle in order to focus the viewer's attention more on the relationships of the figures rather than any specific event taking place. To this end, I concentrated on connecting the seal with her skin visually in order to suggest her relationship to the skin rather than giving her over seal features. Her hair is much greyer than the hair of either the fisherman or the child in order to reflect the grey color of her seal skin. Furthermore, the freckles on her face reflect the spots on her skin peeking out of the chest, as do her large, dark eyes. With her eyes especially I was going for a slightly unnaturally large and

dark look in order to hint at her otherworldly nature. I also provided clues about the seal's supernatural nature by depicting the child as playing with a stuffed seal and by placing seals in the sea outside of the window.

Overall, I think this piece is relatively successful given that I was working to convey the emotional content of "The Seal's Skin" rather than any particular moment in the story to viewers. The piece is solid artistically and feels like a cohesive whole. However, all of the elements of the painting feel isolated and very still, which obscures the complex relationships that exist between the different figures as a result. If I had placed the figures in more dynamic poses or somehow guided viewers' eyes around the painting better the different elements—especially the figures—would feel more connected to each other. A greater sense of connectedness would make the relationships between the figures clearer by making them feel more like a family. Additionally, the lack of compositional flow contributes to the ambiguity of what is taking place in the painting and obscures the importance of the seal skin in the corner. Viewers unfamiliar with the story on which I based this painting will likely recognize that it is a painting of a family, but the nuances of the painting are not obvious enough to discern without knowledge of the story or a desire to look at and analyze all of the details of the painting. Furthermore, the desaturated colors and relatively small value range of the painting as a whole make it feel rather flat and somewhat uninteresting visually; saturating important parts of the painting, like the seal, would add visual interest to the painting and help focus the viewer's attention on important parts of the painting. This lack of visual interest also works against the story that I am trying to communicate with the painting because it

makes the story seem simple and does not encourage the viewer to look at the painting for an extended period of time or contemplate the importance of various details in the painting.

Chapter Four: East of the Sun and West of the Moon

(see figure 10)

The fourth story that I chose to illustrate is the Norwegian story of "East of the Sun and West of the Moon", which I also found in *Best-Loved Folktales of the World*, compiled by Johanna Cole. While I initially included this story because of the transformation of the White Bear/Prince, I later came to realize that my choice to illustrate this story represented a distinct turning point in how I thought of the project as a whole. With the first few stories that I selected I was very focused on choosing stories with distinct moments of tension and magical transformation central to the climax of the story. I began to move away from this idea somewhat with my choice to include "The Seal's Skin", but I was still very concerned with the idea of the inherent magical nature of the main problem of the story. "East of the Sun and West of the Moon" marked a shift away from this focus on stories that emphasized the supernatural and towards a focus on the idea of the human condition and the problems that come about as a result of the human condition, particularly curiosity.

The route I took to decide which scene to illustrate from "East of the Sun and West of the Moon" was very different from the decision-making process I took when I was working on my three previous illustrations. It was far less linear and involved going back and forth between looking at the text, sketching thumbnails, and considering how the thumbnails represented the text. I also contemplated how the illustration would fit with the paintings that I had already completed as well as the fifth painting that I was

going to produce. My difficulty with choosing a scene came from the way "East of the Sun and West of the Moon" is structured: it is long, episodic, and filled with multiple dramatic moments that each capture only one aspect of the story. The beginning of the story reads rather like "Beauty and the Beast", but after the daughter commits the forbidden act and looks at the White Bear in his human form when he sleeps, the story transitions to a quest narrative full of repetitive episodes and supernatural aid. This structure made fulfilling my goal of finding a short scene that would be representative of the story as a whole and work visually as a solid illustration that could stand on its own difficult. I initially considered painting an image that did not necessarily depict a particular moment in the text but instead captured some of the elements of the story, such as the quest that the youngest daughter goes on to retrieve the White Bear from his mother. To this end, I drew several thumbnails that focused on different aspects of the youngest daughter's quest. The first few quest-related thumbnails I drew dealt with the scope of the quest that the youngest daughter had to undertake, with the youngest daughter dwarfed by vast landscapes filled with towering mountains and long, winding paths inspired by the length of the youngest daughter's journey. I then experimented with portraying more of the obstacles the youngest daughter has to overcome at the end of her journey before she is finally able to accomplish her objective and retrieve the White Bear from his mother. I visually represented this with images of the White Bear trapped in a castle or tower and the youngest daughter in front of it trying to figure out how to save the White Bear. Aside from the thematic and narrative ambiguity of all of these ideas, they were also problematic because they all had the youngest daughter most logically

facing away from viewers to convey her focus on her objective. If I went with any of these options, I would have had to choose between having the youngest daughter engage viewers or the journey or obstacle in front of her. If I had chosen to have the daughter face away from viewers the resulting painting would be weaker because it would prevent viewers from connecting with the youngest daughter, which could easily lead to viewers focusing equally on her environment and ultimately destroying the narrative clarity of the painting. Depicting the youngest daughter as being accessible to the audience at the expense of her objective would have meant weakening her connection to the story, possibly to the point where the painting would not convey a distinct narrative at all. I therefore returned to the source text to look for a more solid basis for a painting.

Upon further consideration of the text and how it fit with the other stories that I had chosen, I realized that aside from the obvious thematic similarities that I was looking for when choosing stories, there were other, perhaps more interesting, connections between the themes of the stories. I realized in particular that a strong thematic connection existed between "East of the Sun and West of the Moon" and "The Death of Koshchei the Deathless" in respect to the role that the protagonist plays in terms of furthering the action in the story. In both stories, the protagonist acts against a command and causes a supernatural misfortune to befall the protagonist's loved one, which marks a turning point in each story that results in the protagonist going on a quest in order to undo the effects of the supernatural misfortune the protagonist caused. Once I realized that the idea of capturing the youngest daughter's journey was not going to allow me to produce a painting that would faithfully represent "East of the Sun and West of the Moon," I moved

towards the idea of capturing the dramatic turning point of the story when the youngest daughter upsets the happiness she has found with the White Bear:

> There came a man and lay down beside her; but at the dead of night, when she heard he slept, she got up and struck a light, lit the candle, and let the light shine upon him, and so she saw that he was the loveliest Prince one ever set eyes on, and she fell so deep in love with him on the spot, that she thought she couldn't live if she didn't give him a kiss there and then. And so she did, but as she kissed him, she dropped three hot drops of tallow on his shirt, and he woke up. (Cole 290)

I envisioned this scene with the youngest daughter in bed next to the White Bear while looking at him and holding up a candle. In my thumbnails I explored the point of view from which viewers would look at the scene, experimenting first with an angle that placed viewers to the side of the bed and roughly level with the White Bear's face and then with moving to a more bird's eye view. I decided against using this bird's eye perspective in favor of placing viewers on level with the White Bear because I felt that it gave the scene a much more intimate feel byputing viewers in the same situation as the youngest daughter.

After finally settling on what scene I ought to depict and on a composition for that scene, I moved on to the sketching phase. The sketching process was fairly easy in comparison to some of my earlier paintings because of the simplicity of the scene that I wanted to portray: it only had two figures and was set in a relatively simple environment. This simplicity led me to focus especially on the silhouettes of the figures because I wanted to give them a graphic quality to draw attention to the important elements of the scene: the youngest daughter, her candle, and the White Bear. I used both large and small elements to help direct viewers' eyes to the important parts of the painting and create a somewhat suspenseful atmosphere. While the single silhouette formed by the

youngest daughter and the White Bear seems to suggest unity, the diagonal thrust of the youngest daughter's body is dynamic and active and contrasts with the motionlessness and passivity suggested by the horizontal thrust of the White Bear's body. On a smaller level, the direction of the youngest daughter's gaze as well as her hair help guide the viewers' eyes from the youngest daughter to the White Bear's face while the diagonal of the White Bear's arm helps direct viewers back up to the youngest daughter's face. This keeps the viewers' eyes on the couple as a whole while minimizing attention on other, less important parts of the scene. I did deviate from the original text somewhat when sketching the scene; while the youngest daughter drips tallow on the White Bear when she leans over to kiss him, I sketched out the tallow dripping during her discovery of the appearance of the White Bear's human shape. I did this because I wanted to communicate the youngest daughter's surprise to viewers—which would have been very difficult to do if she was leaning over and obscuring her face—rather than adhere strictly to the text and create an image that would be less clear. The woman's surprised expression and the drips of tallow in midair combine to create suspense and form a less ambiguous visual when taken out of context than the image of a woman leaning over to kiss a man and dripping tallow on him would be. If I had stuck to the text in a more rigid manner, the emotional tone of the image would have changed.

Thanks to the relatively simple sketch, I was able to quickly move on to the painting stage. I began by laying down a warm brown color under my sketch to create a warm, intimate atmosphere and reflect the colors of candlelight. I then roughly painted in the colors for the youngest daughter, choosing mainly warm off-white colors and ivories

for her shirt. I chose to dress the youngest daughter in a plain nightgown with warm but pale colors to reflect her relative innocence and sacrificial nature up until this point of the story. I initially gave the White Bear a purple night shirt to reflect his social status as a prince and to provide strong contrast to all of the warm yellows and golds in the rest of the picture but switched to a blue because the purple contrasted too strongly with the gold and looked out of place. However, the blue still provides plenty of contrast and helps to set him apart from the scene and suggest his importance. After settling on the basic colors for the piece, I quickly established a general value scheme that would also work to lead viewers' attention around the picture. I made the areas around the candle, youngest daughter's head, and White Bear brighter than the rest of the painting in order to create tonal contrast that in turn highlights their importance. This also sets up a relatively realistic lighting situation and makes the figures seem more real to viewers. When I was coming up with the White Bear's appearance, I decided to follow a similar tactic as I used for my painting based on "The Seal's Skin" and give viewers visual clues about the animal into which he transforms. I did this mainly through his white hair, eyebrow, and eyelash color because he is always referred to as the "White Bear" throughout the story, even when he "[throws] off his bear shape at night" (Cole 288). This also works to help direct viewers' attention to the White Bear because the white contrasts strongly with the relatively dark and low-contrast scene around him. Additionally, the overall high contrast helps to create a sense of drama, which works with the tension of the scene to set the emotional tone.

Painting the environment around the figures was also fairly straightforward because unlike the stories that I previously worked with, "East of the Sun and West of the Moon" gives a description of parts of the setting. The description of the bedroom where the youngest daughter's curiosity gets the better of her is extremely opulent: "…she came into a chamber, where there was a bed made, as fair and white as anyone would wish to sleep in, with silken pillows and curtains, and gold fringe. All that was in the room was gold or silver… (Cole 288). I originally overlooked the description of the bed being "fair and white" and made it gold to go along with the rest of the room and capture the sheer amount of wealth that the gold and silver signify. However, upon rereading the story I realized my mistake and changed the bed to be paler, but with a gold undertone. In keeping with the idea of the bedroom displaying extravagant wealth, I painted the blankets on the bed in a manner that suggests that they are thick and plush. When it came to painting the wall behind the figures and the visible parts of their bed, I once again had to decide how strictly I ought to adhere to the text. If "all in the room was gold or silver" I would logically need to portray the pieces of the bedpost and the wall as being made of a precious metal. However, portraying them as such could distract from the important part of the scene—the figures. I therefore chose to depict them as being made of dark wood, so that they would fade into the background and not compete with the figures.

I think this is one of my most artistically successful pieces. My use of a wide tonal range allowed me to create a piece with more visual interest than most of my previous pieces and in some ways better focus viewers' attention on the narratively important elements of the piece. Additionally, I successfully managed to create a warm

yet suspenseful mood through my use of color and composition. On a narrative level I think that the piece is successful and represents the scene of a woman surprised by the appearance of the man lying next to her in bed that I was trying to portray in a way that is fairly clear. While a viewer unfamiliar with "East of the Sun and West of the Moon" would likely not understand the full significance of the scene, the illustration does capture the mood of surprise and intimacy that I was working to create. However, those unfamiliar with the story might be confused by the appearance of the White Bear—his facial features overall suggest youth, but his white hair could easily be misinterpreted as being representative of old age rather than his supernatural nature. There are enough details that a viewer who is familiar with the story of "East of the Sun and West of the Moon" ought to be able to pinpoint the scene in the context of the story, though the fact that there is not any obvious reference to the White Bear as being a bear might hinder this recognition.

Chapter Five: The Death of Koshchei the Deathless

(see figure 5)

The final story that I chose for this project was "The Death of Koshchei the Deathless", a Russian folktale collected by Andrew Lang in his *Red Fairy Book*. I chose this story largely because, as was the case with "Tam Lin", I wanted to use a wide variety of lesser-known folktales in this project, and this story fit the bill perfectly. The story is also filled with instances of magical transformation both benign (as is the case with Prince Ivan's brothers-in-law) and malicious (as is the case with the witch's horse and foal).

As was the case with "East of the Sun and West of the Moon", I was unsure for quite a long time what scene would best represent "The Death of Koshchei the Deathless" because the story is lengthy and contains many different subsections that can stand on their own. I initially considered incorporating the different independent scenes into one painting by creating a montage or by choosing one scene and including elements that represent the rest of the story as elements in the background. The first scene I fastened upon for this montage concept was the scene where Prince Ivan is being resurrected by his brothers-in-law after he is torn apart by Koshchei. I was drawn to the scene because of its obvious elements of transformation in the form of Prince Ivan's brothers-in-law and the sheer absurdity of the scene. The three brothers, each in bird form, gather all of the pieces of Prince Ivan as well as the water of life and the water of death. They then take the remains of Prince Ivan, wash them, put them together in "fitting order", sprinkle the

pieces of Prince Ivan with the water of death in order to make Prince Ivan's body whole again, and finally sprinkle him with the water of life to revivify him. While I found this passage entertaining and representative of both the absurdity and the structural repetition of the story, I felt that it was impossible to pick out one clear image from this scene that would work to represent the story as a whole to an audience unfamiliar with "The Death of Koshchei the Deathless". Unfortunately, aside from this scene a single, clear event that was also representative of the story did not stand out to me. Returning to the idea of transformation was difficult because of the sheer amount of transformation that occurs throughout the story, ranging from Prince Ivan's brothers-in-law to the witch's mare and foal near the end of the story. It was only when I had solidified the ideas behind the rest of my paintings, specifically "East of the Sun and West of the Moon",that I was able to decide upon a scene.

My decision to focus on the idea of the heroine of "East of the Sun, West of the Moon" creating a problem that she must then solve helped resolve the question of what I ought to paint for this story because only one scene in "The Death of Koshchei the Deathless" is thematically similar. Within the context of the stories that I had already chosen to illustrate, the moment when Prince Ivan accidentally helps Koshchei recover his strength and escape his imprisonment (and inadvertently causes the kidnapping of his wife, Marya Morevna) represents a continuation of this theme of going against orders that also exists in "East of the Sun, West of the Moon". Additionally, this theme of the heroine and hero actively (albeit accidentally) creating their own magical problem serves as a conceptual contrast to the idea of an external magical problem simply happening to

someone in "Tam Lin" and "The Six Swans". Despite the similarities to the predicament that the heroine of "East of the Sun and West of the Moon" causes, the extent of Prince Ivan's transgressions are more severe because he does not ignore a general command of his wife's as the heroine of "East of the Sun and West of the Moon" does. Instead he does what Marya Morevna specifically tells him not to do when she leaves for war: "'Go about everywhere, keep watch over everything; only do not venture to look in that closet there.' He couldn't help doing so. The moment Marya Morevna had gone he rushed go the closet, pulled open the door, and looked in—there hung Koshchei the Deathless, fettered by twelve chains." (Lang 44). Like the heroine of "East of the Sun and West of the Moon" Prince Ivan's curiosity gets him in trouble because it is what leads him to disobey his wife and go as far as giving the old man hanging and "fettered by twelve chains" the water he asks for three times. This leads to disaster: "…when he had swallowed his third bucketful he regained his former strength and gave his chains a shake, and broke all twelve at once. 'Thanks Prince Ivan!' cried Koshchei the Deathless, 'now you will sooner see your own ears than Marya Morevna!' and out of the window he flew in the shape of a terrible whirlwind" (44). I was struck by the drama of Koshchei transforming into a whirlwind and then flying out of the window, and decided that I wanted to have that action as a central part of my illustration.

Unlike all of the other scenes I illustrated, the text that I was using as the source of "The Death of Koshchei the Deathless" included an illustration of the particular scene that I was going to illustrate. In this case, the illustration is done by Lancelot Speed as what appears to be an engraving (figure 12). It depicts Prince Ivan, clad in a winged

helmet, tunic-like shirt, hose, and pointed-toe boots, holding a bucket and throwing water into a recession in the wall while standing with his back to the viewer with a door off to the side. In the recession of the wall is an old man—Koshchei—wearing a tunic with his hands chained above his head, scowling at Prince Ivan. I departed from Speed's depiction of the scene when thinking about my own portrayal for a number of reasons, the first of which being the composition of the image. The figures of Prince Ivan and Koshchei both have an overall vertical thrust, which makes the whole image seem rather calm and static rather than the emotive and dynamic scene that I pictured when thinking about this scene. I also found Prince Ivan's pose to be problematic because it separates the viewer from Prince Ivan's reaction to Koshchei by preventing viewers from seeing the expression on Prince Ivan's face while the overall verticality of Prince Ivan's pose precludes viewers from gleaning any sense of Prince Ivan's emotional state through his body language. My other issue with Speed's representation of the scene is the Classical feel of the piece, which is especially apparent in the style of Prince Ivan and Koshchei's clothing. Prince Ivan's clothing especially perplexed and distracted me, because the winged helmet seems to be a reference to common representations of Hermes/Mercury. While the story does begin with the phrase "In a certain kingdom", leaving the setting totally open to whatever location the audience (or artist) may wish, I was surprised that Speed did not work to reference the culture in which the story originated. I was especially perplexed because the story does hint at the "certain kingdom" being culturally Russian in the form of names like "Prince Ivan", "Koshchei", and "Marya Morevna". It later occurred to me that perhaps I had misread the illustration; if so, the illustration actually portrays Prince Ivan

giving Koshchei water before he regains his strength. My confusion points to an ambiguity about when Speed's scene takes place in the context of the story, which as a viewer familiar with the story was both frustrating and confusing. The goals I had in mind when I began to sketch out thumbnails for this illustration were therefore to create an illustration that was dynamic, captured the emotional reaction of Prince Ivan to Koshchei, referenced the story's cultural origins through the figures' clothing, and clearly pointed to a particular scene in the story.

When I first began to draw thumbnails I imagined a scene fairly different from Speed's. I focused on the idea of Prince Ivan recoiling as Koshchei breaks free of his chains and hovers off of the ground and looms over Prince Ivan. While the text describes Koshchei as being held in a "closet", which could suggest the recession in the wall in Speed's illustration, I envisioned the "closet" being a small, out of the way room with Koshchei hanging on a wall. I sketched out all of these elements in my thumbnails and while paying particular attention to the way the viewers' eyes would likely move throughout the image. I initially placed Koshchei on the left of the image with a surprised Prince Ivan dropping the bucket of water he used to revive Koshchei on the right, but I realized that a Western audience would be more likely to "read" the scene from left to right and look at Koshchei first. I therefore flipped the composition so that viewers would look at Prince Ivan first, take in his emotion, and then follow his gaze to look at Koshchei. This creates suspense because it delays the viewers' focus on Koshchei while Prince Ivan's expression and pose work to build anticipation regarding what could inspire that sort of shock. After working out the general placement of the figures I experimented

with Koshchei's pose. I initially depicted him hanging from the wall with his arms outstretched in a pose somewhat reminiscent of someone being crucified. However, this pose seemed too passive and not intimidating enough to inspire the sort of shock I wanted Prince Ivan to portray through his face and pose. I therefore sketched out a final thumbnail that portrayed Koshchei with his arms closer to his body and bent in a more aggressive, triumphant pose.

Once I had worked out the composition of the piece I moved on to the sketching phase and drew the basic details of the room in which the scene was going to take place. Because the story describes Koshchei as being held in a "closet," I wanted to give the room a cramped and out-of-the-way feel by hinting that the "closet" branches off from a narrow hallway, though the window in the scene offsets this feeling somewhat. Once I established the environment of the scene, I determined how I ought to pose the figures. In order to communicate Prince Ivan's shock to viewers through his body language, I experimented with several poses portraying Prince Ivan twisting away from Koshchei, before settling on the more straight-on pose in the final painting. I briefly considered painting Prince Ivan with his back to the viewer in order to have the painting make the most spatial sense, but I almost immediately dismissed this because it would cause the same problem of closing viewers off from Prince Ivan's expression that I disliked about Speed's depiction of the scene. While I had mostly determined Koshchei's pose at this point, I was a little unsure about the way he ought to be hovering and what this would mean for the pose of his arms—should his legs be together or should Koshchei have his knees bent to look as if he was crouching in midair? Should his arms be out at his sides

with his palms up in a triumphant gesture, or should they be rigid with his hands curled into fists in a threatening gesture? I settled on drawing him hovering with his legs held together and his ankles relaxed, and with his arms somewhat bent and curled into fists to communicate both his aggression and freedom. The two figures' poses work together to help the viewer's eye travel around the composition: Prince Ivan's pose points to Koshchei ever so slightly and his gaze directs the viewer to Koshchei's face, while Koshchei's arms lead the viewer back to Prince Ivan. The chains around Koshchei also help move viewers' eyes between Koshchei and Prince Ivan by pointing towards Koshchei.

I began painting by laying down some cool greenish-greys to create an atmosphere that was somewhat bleak and mysterious. These greys were initially fairly dark, but I later reworked them to be lighter because after printing my earlier paintings I discovered that they were turning out much darker than they had appeared on-screen. Lightening the values I started with had the added benefit of allowing me to work with a much larger value range. I then went on to establish the clothing of both Prince Ivan and Koshchei. I based the appearance of both Prince Ivan and Koshchei on the appearance of Russian tsars: Prince Ivan is based on the appearance of Peter the Great in a *Peter the Great* (1981) by Sergei Kirillov, and Koshchei is based on of the appearance of Ivan the Terrible in *Ivan the Terrible Meditating at the Deathbed of His Son* (1861) by Vyacheslav Grigorievich Schwarz (fig. 13 & 14). I did this because I wanted to connect the story to its cultural origins through the clothing of the different figures in the painting. Grigorievich depicts Ivan as wearing a long, red coat with gold trim and a gold belt, a

slightly darker red robe with black fur trim around the neck, a black fur hat, and black boots. Krillov depicts Peter the Great in a loose, white shirt with red breeches, a lighter red sash above his pants, and black knee-high boots. I adopted most of Peter the Great's clothing for Prince Ivan to give him a more modern feel than Koshchei, but changed his pants to a blue color to set Prince Ivan apart from Koshchei. I initially gave Prince Ivan a blue sash as well, but I changed it to red; the large amount of bright red that I had used for Koshchei's clothing meant that he visually overpowered Prince Ivan and adding red in Prince Ivan's sash as well as adding red embroidery to his shirt allowed him to hold equal power over the viewer's focus. Additionally, the red sash increased the color contrast in Prince Ivan which also helped draw the viewer's attention to him.

This piece is fairly successful overall, both as an artistic piece and as a means of communicating a story. The pose and expressions of both Prince Ivan and Koshchei work to communicate both surprise and intimidation, while the relatively high contrast of the lighting gives the piece drama, as do the breaking chains around Koshchei. Additionally, the illustration contains enough information that viewers familiar with the story should be able to recognize that the painting is indeed representative of "The Death of Koshchei the Deathless" and pinpoint what scene the painting depicts. However, to viewers who have not read the story, the piece will be slightly confusing. While the man in front of the window is clearly surprised at the intimidating man floating before the wall in front of him, viewers who are unfamiliar with the story will likely have to fill in the details of the story themselves in order to form a coherent narrative. Additionally, while Koshchei's pose is imposing, it would be more imposing if I had painted him in a more crouched

pose rather than his current, stiff pose. His current pose brings to mind flying superheroes like Superman rather than old sorcerers which does seem to be a little odd and could pull a viewer out of the world of the painting.

Conclusion: From Linguistic Cues to Concrete Visuals

When I started this process, I had one goal in mind: to create a series of illustrations that would faithfully retell European folktales in visual form. I accomplished this goal with mixed success. Some of my pieces, such as the one that represents "The Six Swans", effectively portray the original story by capturing the tone and spirit of the story; others, like the illustration that I created for "Tam Lin" do not clearly communicate the story that they are based on but work fairly well as stand-alone pieces of artwork. During the process of creating these paintings, I gained insight into the value of illustration as a means of communicating a pre-existing story. There is far more to creating an illustration than simply drawing or painting—that is the easy part. The real challenge is all of the interpretive work that illustrators must perform before they even put pencil to paper (or in my case, stylus to tablet). Illustrators must work to analyze the text to reach the heart of the story while keeping in mind the audience to which they are going to speak.They must consider the best way to take the themes and important elements in a story and communicate them non-verbally. This process requires illustrators to think about stories in a different way than they might as a passive audience; in order to create a successful illustration an illustrator must become an active, critical participant in the storytelling process. Illustration is therefore a collaborative process between the illustrator and the text.Illustrators must work to both interpret the written text and

consider how complex ideas ought to be communicated while filling in the "gaps" that the text does not address that are key to visually representing a scene.

The product of this collaboration is a piece of artwork that represents something between a new story and the story the illustrator is working to represent. Take, for example, the piece I created to represent "East of the Sun and West of the Moon": while it does depict a scene from the story, I deviated from a strict retelling of the text in order to allow the illustration to stand on its own. In order to do this, I had to consider a number of things, some of which are referenced in the story and some of which are not: how does the youngest daughter feel towards the White Bear in his bear form? What is their relationship? How does she feel about the man lying next to her in bed? Does she know that the man is the White Bear, or is she too overcome with his beauty to care? For the most part, these types of questions are not answered in the story because their answers do not advance the plot; however, they are important to consider when creating in an illustration that involves the youngest daughter and the White Bear because they affect how the youngest daughter and White Bear ought to be portrayed. If these sorts of questions are not taken into consideration when planning an illustration, the illustration will likely be emotionally flat, which could lead to viewers either interpreting it differently than the artist intended it to be interpreted or not connecting with the illustration. Despite my consideration ofthese questions when illustrating each story, I feel that some of my illustrations, are to some degree unsuccessful as a means of communicating a story to viewers because I did not portray my answers to these questions clearly. I feel that this is the reason why *Tam* Lin is my least successful piece.

While I interpret the relationship between Janet and Tam as a loving one, and Janet's fulfillment of Tam's request to rescue him from the fairies as being done because of her concern for his well-being, this is not very apparent in the piece that I created. Instead, Janet simply appears to be holding a snake-man with no obvious motive for doing so. This undermines the themes of love and determination allowing humans to overcome supernatural malice that I attempted to engage in the creation of the piece. However, in the context of my project as a whole, these shortcomings highlight my growth as an artist when the ambiguous emotional content of *Tam Lin* is compared to the clearer emotional tone in *The Death of Koshchei the Deathless*.

Personally, this endeavor allowed me to grow both as an artist and as a consumer of stories. In the work I had completed before starting on this project, I most often painted figures alone and frequently without any context. While my work was illustrative to some extent, my lack of deliberate consideration as to what I wanted my audience to take away from the artwork meant that any sort of meaning was unclear; a picture of a dragon was merely a picture of a dragon, a picture of a girl was merely a picture of a girl. This project has led me to be much more intentional about what I want to communicate to viewersIs the dragon supposed to be friendly? Threatening? A representative of some sort of dragon-culture? How can I communicate this to my audience? It has shown me the importance of including enough detail in an illustration to allow effective communication to take place. As a part of this new-found intentionality I became more adept at using (or attempting to use) composition as a means of story-telling, going beyond using it to simply make a piece with a merely functional composition to one that actively directs the

viewer around the piece to guide viewers through the story that I am trying to communicate. This project also led me to develop a process that allows me to create a consistent product. I tend to take a long time to complete a detailed painting, and because of this I would lose and rediscover my painting process with each piece. This in turn made the prospect of starting a new piece intimidating because I would "forget" how to start a piece and feel lost as a result. However, working to create a series within a finite period of time while maintaining a sense of cohesiveness caused me to develop a way of working that helped me to overcome the intimidation I would feel when starting a new piece. Overall, this project has demonstrated to me just how much thought it takes to produce an illustration that has substance behind it, and that putting in thought and deliberation before starting an illustration leads to a much stronger illustration from both an artistic and communicative perspective.

While my journey through the process of illustration was particularly interesting to me because it revealed the thought involved in both consuming and producing stories, I was surprised at the extent of interpretation and participation that an audience must do as readers of text and as viewers of visual art, especially with folktales and fairytales. The stories themselves are incredibly brief and give surprisingly little detail about the setting or characters, instead focusing on action and only including visual detail when it is important to the plot of the story. Therefore, almost all detail—both visual and narrative—is left to the audience's imagination. While working on the illustrations for these stories, I often found myself perplexed that the text did not give any indication as to what the characters wore, or where this story takes place, or what the characters look like.

However, while an illustration can provide information about all of these things, the story that it represents almost always becomes more ambiguous than it was in its original, textual format. This is not a bad thing. It allows viewers to engage a story in a different way than is possible with text by asking them to take on an even more active role in telling the story. Just as illustrators must ask themselves "What am I trying to communicate?" when starting work on a piece, viewers of an illustration must ask themselves "What is going on here?" and then produce an answer. Illustration, particularly illustration based on stories, is therefore another way of interpreting text for both the artist and the viewer that works to engage both parties in a unique, imaginative way.

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Figures

Figure 1. *La Belle Dame sans Merci* by Gabriel Rosetti. 1855. Pen and pencil. Wikipedia Web. 14 Mar 2014.

Figure 2. *La Belle Dame sans Merci* by Frank Dicksee. c. 1902. Oil on Canvas. Wikipedia Web. 14 Mar 2014.

Figure 3. *Tam Lin* by Rachel Sellers. 2013. Digital.

Fugure 4. *The Six Swans* by Rachel Sellers. 2013. Digital.[1]

[1] The brick texture in this image is a modified version of a stock texture created by AG81 on deviantART. It can be found at http://www.deviantart.com/art/Brick-Seamless-160259435 .

Figure 5. *The Six Swans Changed Into Swans by Their Stepmother* by H. J. Ford. 1894. *The Yellow Fairy Book*. New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1894. 5. Print.

Figure 6.. *The Burning of Avvakum* by Grigoriy Myasoyedov. 1897. Painting. Wikipedia Web. 14 Mar 2014.

Figure 7. *Joan of Arc's Death at the Stake* by Hermann Stilke. 1843. Painting. Wikipedia Web. 14 Mar 2014.

Figure 8. “Commoners and Soldiers” detail from painting in Schrannenplatz, Munich, Germany by unknown artist. 1636. Bender, A. "Munich Costume Before 1800." *La Couturière Parisienne Costume History*. Web. 2 Mar 2014.

Figure 9. *The Seal's Skin* by Rachel Sellers. 2014. Digital.

Figure 10. *East of the Sun and West of the Moon* by Rachel Sellers. Digital. 2014.

Figure 11. *The Death of Koshchei the Deathless* by Rachel Sellers. Digital. 2014.[2]

[2] The brick texture in this image is a modified version of a stock texture created by cfrevoir on deviantART. It can be found at http://cfrevoir.deviantart.com/art/Seamless-Brick-Wall-Texture-94579094 .

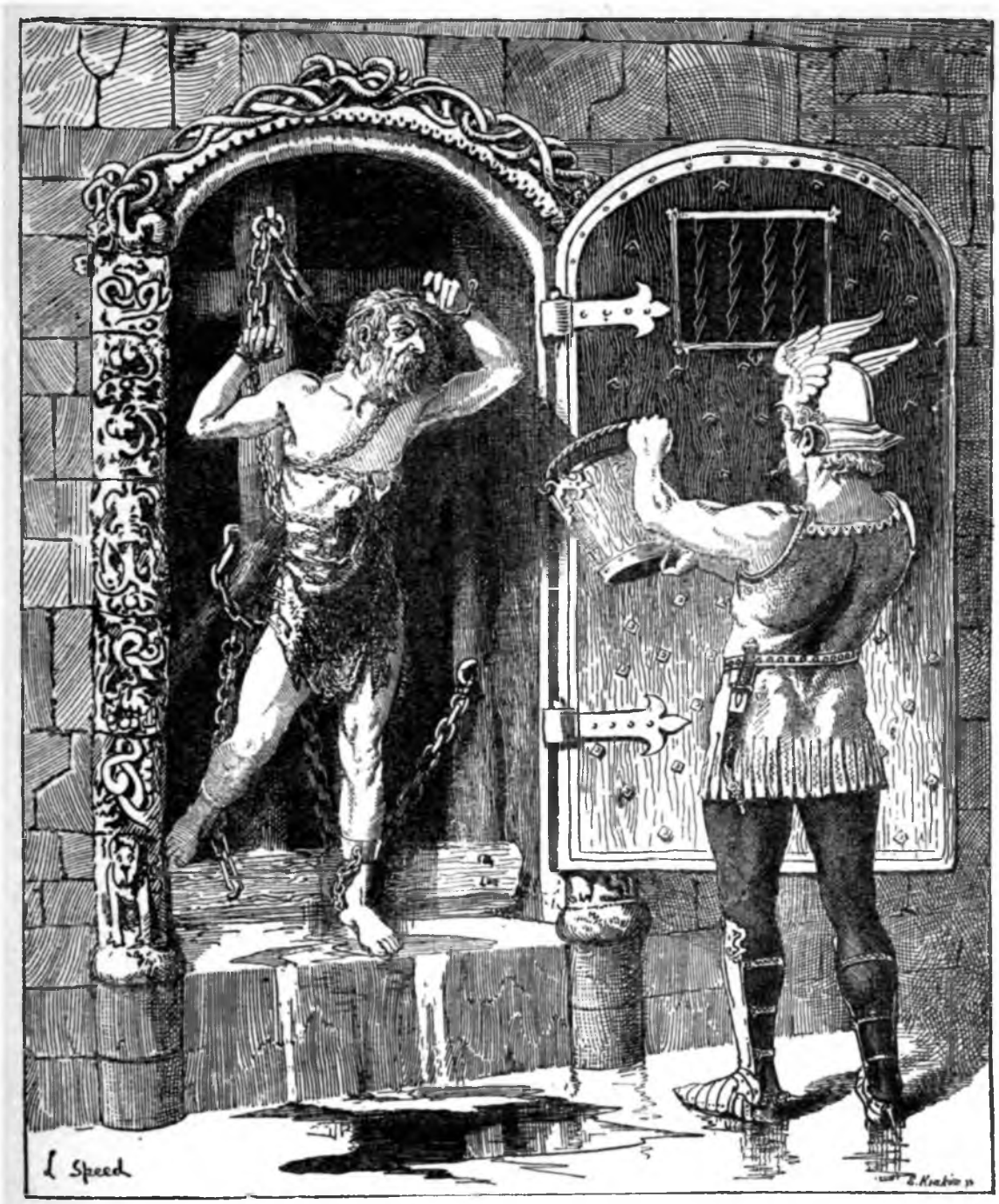

Figure 12. *10th impression 1907* by Lancelot Speed. 1890. *The Yellow Fairy Book*. New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1894. 45. Print

Figure 13. *Peter the Great* by Sergei Krillov. 1981. Painting. Wikipedia Web. 14 Mar 2014.

Figure 14. *Ivan the Terrible Meditating at the Deathbed of His Son* by Vyacheslav Grigorievich Schwarz. 1861.Painting. Wikipedia. Web. 14 Mar. 2014.

Appendices

Appendix A: "Tam Lin" by Robert Burns[3]

O I forbid ye, maidens a',
That wear gowd on your hair,
To come, and gae by Carterhaugh,
For young Tom-lin is there.

There's nane that gaes by Carterhaugh
But they leave him a wad;
Either their rings, or green mantles,
Or else their maidenhead.

Janet has kilted her green kirtle,
A little aboon her knee;
And she has broded her yellow hair
A little aboon her bree;
And she's awa to Carterhaugh
As fast as she can hie.

When she came to Carterhaugh
Tam Lin was at the well,
And there she fand his steed standing
But away was himsel.

She had na pu'd a double rose,
A rose but only tway,
Till up then started young Tom-lin,
Says, Lady, thou's pu' nae mae.

Why pu's thou the rose, Janet?
And why breaks thou the wand?
Or why comes thou to Carterhaugh
Withouthen my command?

Carterhaugh it is is my ain,

[3] Note that I took all of the spellings (i.e. "Tam Lin" instead of "Tom-Lin") and some description that I used in the body of my text from the variant found on the Bob Hayes and the Jolly Beggars songbook.

My daddy gave it me;
I'll come and gae by Carterhaugh
And ask nae leave at thee.'

Janet has kilted her green kirtle,
A little aboon her knee;
And she has broded her yellow hair
A little aboon her bree;
And she's awa to Carterhaugh
As fast as she can hie.

Four and twenty ladies fair
Were playing at the ba,
And out then cam fair Janet,
Ance the flower amang them a'.

Four and twenty ladies fair
Were playing at the chess,
And out then came fair Janet,
As green as onie glass.

Out then spak an auld grey knight,
Lay o'er the castle-wa',
And says, Alas, fair Janet for thee
But we'll be blam'd a'.

Haud your tongue, ye auld-fac'd knight,
Some ill death may ye die,
Father my bairn on whom I will,
I 'll father nane on thee.'

Out then spak her father dear,
And he spak meek and mild,
And ever alas, sweet Janet, he says,
I think thou gaes wi' child.

If that I gae wi child, father,
Mysel maun bear the blame;
There 's ne'er a laird about your ha,
Shall get the bairn's name.

If my Love were an earthly knight,
As he's an elfin grey;

I was na gie my ain true-love
For nae lord that ye hae.

The steed that my true-love rides on,
Is lighter than the wind;
Wi' siller he is shod before,
Wi' burning gowd behind.

Janet has kilted her green kirtle,
A little aboon her knee;
And she has broded her yellow hair
A little aboon her bree;
And she's awa to Carterhaugh
As fast as she can hie.

When she came to Carterhaugh,
Tam Lin was at the well,
And there she fand his steed standing,
But away was himsel.

She had na pu'd a double rose,
A rose but only tway,
Till up then started young Tom-lin,
Says, Lady thou pu's nae mae.

Why pu's thou the rose, Janet,
Amang the groves sae green,
And a' to kill the bonie babe,
That we gat us between.

O tell me, tell me, Tom-lin she says,
For's sake that died on tree,
If e'er ye were in holy chapel,
Or Christendom did see.'

Roxbrugh he was my Grandfather
Took me with him to bide,
And ance it fell upon a day
That wae did me betide.

Ance it fell upon a day,
A cauld day and a snell,
When we were frae the hunting come,
That frae my horse I fell.

The Queen o' Fairies she caught me,
in yon green hill to dwell,
And pleasant is the fairy-land
But, an eerie tale to tell!

Ay at the end of seven years,
They pay a tiend to hell;
I am sae fair and fu' o flesh
I'm fear'd it be mysel.

But the night is Halloween, Lady
The morn is Hallowday;
Then win me, win me, an ye will,
For weel I wat ye may.

Just at the mirk and midnight hour
The fairie folk will ride,
And they that wad their truelove win,
At Miles Cross they maun bide.'

But how shall I thee ken, Tom-lin,
O how my truelove know.
Amang sae mony unco knights
The like I never saw

O first let pass the black, Lady,
And syne let pass the brown
But quickly run to the milk-white steed,
Pu ye his rider down:

For I'll ride on the milk-white steed
And ay nearest the town.
Because I was an earthly knight
They gie me that renown.

My right hand will be glov'd, lady,
My left hand will be bare;
Cockt up shall my bonnet be,
And kaim'd down shall my hair;
And thae's the tokens I gie thee,
Nae doubt I will be there.

They'll turn me in your arms, lady,

Into an ask and adder,
But hald me fast and fear me not,
I am your bairn's father.

They'll turn me to a bear sae grim,
And then a lion bold;
But hold me fast and fear me not,
As you shall love your child.

Again they'll turn me in your arms
To a red het gaud of airn;
But hold me fast and fear me not,
I'll do to you nae harm.

And last they 'll turn me, in your arms,
Into the burning lead;
Then throw me into well-water,
O throw me in wi' speed!

And then I'll be your ain truelove,
I'll turn a naked knight:
Then cover me wi' your green mantle,
And cover me out o sight.

Gloomy, gloomy was the night,
And eerie was the way,
As fair Jenny in her green mantle
To Milescross she did gae.

About the middle o' the night
She's heard the bridles ring;
This lady was as glad at that
As any earthly thing.

First she let the black pass by,
And syne she let the brown;
And quickly she ran to the milk-white steed
And pu'd the rider down.

Sae weel she minded what he did say
And young Tom-lin did win;
Syne cover'd him wi' her green mantle
As blythe's a bird in spring.

Out then spak the queen o Fairies,
Out o' a brush o' broom;
'Them that hae gotten young Tom-lin
Hae gotten a stately groom.

Out then spak the queen o' Fairies,
And an angry queen was she;
Shame betide her ill-fard face,
And an ill death may she die,
For she's ta-en awa the boniest knight
In a' my companie.

But had I kend, Tom-lin,' she says,
What now this night I see,
I wad has ta'en out thy twa grey een,
And put in twa een o' tree.

Appendix B: "The Six Swans"[4]

A king was once hunting in a great wood, and he hunted the game so eagerly that none of his courtiers could follow him. When evening came on he stood still and looked round him, and he saw that he had quite lost himself. He sought a way out, but could find none. Then he saw an old woman with a shaking head coming towards him; but she was a witch.

'Good woman,' he said to her, 'can you not show me the way out of the wood?'

'Oh, certainly, Sir King,' she replied, 'I can quite well do that, but on one condition, which if you do not fulfil you will never get out of the wood, and will die of hunger.'

'What is the condition?' asked the King.

'I have a daughter,' said the old woman, 'who is so beautiful that she has not her equal in the world, and is well fitted to be your wife; if you will make her lady-queen I will show you the way out of the wood.'

The King in his anguish of mind consented, and the old woman led him to her little house where her daughter was sitting by the fire. She received the King as if she were expecting him, and he saw that she was certainly very beautiful; but she did not please him, and he could not look at her without a secret feeling of horror. As soon as he

[4] This is reproduced from *The Yellow Fairy Book* by Andrew Lang. See works cited page for complete bibliographic information

had lifted the maiden on to his horse the old woman showed him the way, and the King reached his palace, where the wedding was celebrated.

The King had already been married once, and had by his first wife seven children, six boys and one girl, whom he loved more than anything in the world. And now, because he was afraid that their stepmother might not treat them well and might do them harm, he put them in a lonely castle that stood in the middle of a wood. It lay so hidden, and the way to it was so hard to find, that he himself could not have found it out had not a wise-woman given him a reel of thread which possessed a marvellous property: when he threw it before him it unwound itself and showed him the way. But the King went so often to his dear children that the Queen was offended at his absence. She grew curious, and wanted to know what he had to do quite alone in the wood. She gave his servants a great deal of money, and they betrayed the secret to her, and also told her of the reel which alone could point out the way. She had no rest now till she had found out where the King guarded the reel, and then she made some little white shirts, and, as she had learnt from her witch-mother, sewed an enchantment in each of them.

And when the King had ridden off she took the little shirts and went into the wood, and the reel showed her the way. The children, who saw someone coming in the distance, thought it was their dear father coming to them, and sprang to meet him very joyfully. Then she threw over each one a little shirt, which when it had touched their bodies changed them into swans, and they flew away over the forest. The Queen went home quite satisfied, and thought she had got rid of her step-children; but the girl had not run to meet her with her brothers, and she knew nothing of her.

The next day the King came to visit his children, but he found no one but the girl.

'Where are your brothers?' asked the King.

'Alas! dear father,' she answered, 'they have gone away and left me all alone.'

And she told him that looking out of her little window she had seen her brothers flying over the wood in the shape of swans, and she showed him the feathers which they had let fall in the yard, and which she had collected. The King mourned, but he did not think that the Queen had done the wicked deed, and as he was afraid the maiden would also be taken from him, he wanted to take her with him. But she was afraid of the stepmother, and begged the King to let her stay just one night more in the castle in the wood. The poor maiden thought, 'My home is no longer here; I will go and seek my brothers.' And when night came she fled away into the forest. She ran all through the night and the next day, till she could go no farther for weariness. Then she saw a little hut, went in, and found a room with six little beds. She was afraid to lie down on one, so she crept under one of them, lay on the hard floor, and was going to spend the night there. But when the sun had set she heard a noise, and saw six swans flying in at the window. They stood on the floor and blew at one another, and blew all their feathers off, and their swan-skin came off like a shirt. Then the maiden recognised her brothers, and overjoyed she crept out from under the bed. Her brothers were not less delighted than she to see their little sister again, but their joy did not last long.

'You cannot stay here,' they said to her. 'This is a den of robbers; if they were to come here and find you they would kill you.'

'Could you not protect me?' asked the little sister.

'No,' they answered, 'for we can only lay aside our swan skins for a quarter of an hour every evening. For this time we regain our human forms, but then we are changed into swans again.'

Then the little sister cried and said, 'Can you not be freed?'

'Oh, no,' they said, 'the conditions are too hard. You must not speak or laugh for six years, and must make in that time six shirts for us out of star-flowers. If a single word comes out of your mouth, all your labour is vain.' And when the brothers had said this the quarter of an hour came to an end, and they flew away out of the window as swans.

But the maiden had determined to free her brothers even if it should cost her her life. She left the hut, went into the forest, climbed a tree, and spent the night there. The next morning she went out, collected star-flowers, and began to sew. She could speak to no one, and she had no wish to laugh, so she sat there, looking only at her work.

When she had lived there some time, it happened that the King of the country was hunting in the forest, and his hunters came to the tree on which the maiden sat. They called to her and said:

'Who are you?'

But she gave no answer.

'Come down to us,' they said, 'we will do you no harm.'

But she shook her head silently. As they pressed her further with questions, she threw them the golden chain from her neck. But they did not leave off, and she threw them her girdle, and when this was no use, her garters, and then her dress. The huntsmen

would not leave her alone, but climbed the tree, lifted the maiden down, and led her to the King. The King asked,

'Who are you? What are you doing up that tree?'

But she answered nothing.

He asked her in all the languages he knew, but she remained as dumb as a fish. Because she was so beautiful, however, the King's heart was touched, and he was seized with a great love for her. He wrapped her up in his cloak, placed her before him on his horse. and brought her to his castle. There he had her dressed in rich clothes, and her beauty shone out as bright as day, but not a word could be drawn from her. He set her at table by his side, and her modest ways and behaviour pleased him so much that he said, 'I will marry this maiden and none other in the world,' and after some days he married her. But the King had a wicked mother who was displeased with the marriage, and said wicked things of the young Queen.

'Who knows who this girl is?' she said; 'she cannot speak, and is not worthy of a king.'

After a year, when the Queen had her first child, the old mother took it away from her. Then she went to the King and said that the Queen had killed it. The King would not believe it, and would not allow any harm to be done her. But she sat quietly sewing at the shirts and troubling herself about nothing. The next time she had a child the wicked mother did the same thing, but the King could not make up his mind to believe her. He said:

'She is too sweet and good to do such a thing as that. If she were not dumb and could defend herself, her innocence would be proved.'

But when the third child was taken away, and the Queen was again accused, and could not utter a word in her own defence, the King was obliged to give her over to the law, which decreed that she must be burnt to death. When the day came on which the sentence was to be executed, it was the last day of the six years in which she must not speak or laugh, and now she had freed her dear brothers from the power of the enchantment. The six shirts were done; there was only the left sleeve wanting to the last.

When she was led to the stake, she laid the shirts on her arm, and as she stood on the pile and the fire was about to be lighted, she looked around her and saw six swans flying through the air. Then she knew that her release was at hand and her heart danced for joy. The swans fluttered round her, and hovered low so that she could throw the shirts over them. When they had touched them the swan-skins fell off, and her brothers stood before her living, well and beautiful. Only the youngest had a swan's wing instead of his left arm. They embraced and kissed each other, and the Queen went to the King, who was standing by in great astonishment, and began to speak to him, saying:

'Dearest husband, now I can speak and tell you openly that I am innocent and have been falsely accused.'

She told him of the old woman's deceit, and how she had taken the three children away and hidden them. Then they were fetched, to the great joy of the King, and the wicked mother came to no good end.

But the King and the Queen with their six brothers lived many years in happiness and peace.

Appendix C: "The Seal's Skin"

Note that I did not include this story because I could not find a version of the text that was in the public domain. Please refer to the copy of the story found in *Best-Loved Folktales of the World* by Joanna Cole or a similar translation of the story found on The Viking Rune website at http://www.vikingrune.com/selkies-folktale/ .

Appendix D: "East of the Sun and West of the Moon"[5]

Once upon a time there was a poor husbandman who had many children and little to give them in the way either of food or clothing. They were all pretty, but the prettiest of all was the youngest daughter, who was so beautiful that there were no bounds to her beauty.

So one day, 'twas late on a Thursday evening in autumn, and wild weather outside, terribly dark, and raining so heavily and blowing so hard that the walls of the cottage shook again--they were all sitting together by the fireside, each of them busy with something or other, when suddenly some one rapped three times against the window-pane. The man went out to see what could be the matter, and when he got out there stood a great big white bear.

"Good-evening to you," said the White Bear.

"Good-evening," said the man.

"Will you give me your youngest daughter?" said the White Bear; "if you will, you shall be as rich as you are now poor.

Truly the man would have had no objection to be rich, but he thought to himself: "I must first ask my daughter about this," so he went in and told them that there was a great white bear outside who had faithfully promised to make them all rich if he might but have the youngest daughter.

[5] This version of "East of the Moon and West of the Sun" is from Andrew Lang's The *Blue Fairy Book*; I did not reproduce the version found in *Best-Loved Folktales of the World* by Joanna Cole because it was not in the public domain. See works cited page for complete bibliographic information.

She said no, and would not hear of it; so the man went out again, and settled with the White Bear that he should come again next Thursday evening, and get her answer. Then the man persuaded her, and talked so much to her about the wealth that they would have, and what a good thing it would be for herself, that at last she made up her mind to go, and washed and mended all her rags, made herself as smart as she could, and held herself in readiness to set out. Little enough had she to take away with her.

Next Thursday evening the White Bear came to fetch her. She seated herself on his back with her bundle, and thus they departed. When they had gone a great part of the way, the White Bear said:

"Are you afraid?"

"No, that I am not," said she.

" Keep tight hold of my fur, and then there is no danger," said he.

And thus she rode far, far away, until they came to a great mountain. Then the White Bear knocked on it, and a door opened, and they went into a castle where there were many brilliantly lighted rooms which shone with gold and silver, likewise a large hall in which there was a well-spread table, and it was so magnificent that it would be hard to make anyone understand how splendid it was. The White Bear gave her a silver bell, and told her that when she needed anything she had but to ring this bell, and what she wanted would appear. So after she had eaten, and night was drawing near, she grew sleepy after her journey, and thought she would like to go to bed. She rang the bell, and scarcely had she touched it before she found herself in a chamber where a bed stood ready made for her, which was as pretty as anyone could wish to sleep in. It had pillows

of silk, and curtains of silk fringed with gold, and everything that was in the room was of gold or silver, but when she had lain down and put out the light a man came and lay down beside her, and behold it was the White Bear, who cast off the form of a beast during the night. She never saw him, however, for he always came after she had put out her light, and went away before daylight appeared.

So all went well and happily for a time, but then she began to be very sad and sorrowful, for all day long she had to go about alone; and she did so wish to go home to her father and mother and brothers and sisters. Then the White Bear asked what it was that she wanted, and she told him that it was so dull there in the mountain, and that she had to go about all alone, and that in her parents' house at home there were all her brothers and sisters, and it was because she could not go to them that she was so sorrowful.

"There might be a cure for that," said the White Bear, "if you would but promise me never to talk with your mother alone, but only when the others are there too; for she will take hold of your hand," he said, "and will want to lead you into a room to talk with you alone; but that you must by no means do, or you will bring great misery on both of us."

So one Sunday the White Bear came and said that they could now set out to see her father and mother, and they journeyed thither, she sitting on his back, and they went a long, long way, and it took a long, long time; but at last they came to a large white farmhouse, and her brothers and sisters were running about outside it, playing, and it was so pretty that it was a pleasure to look at it.

"Your parents dwell here now," said the White Bear; "but do not forget what I said to you, or you will do much harm both to yourself and me."

"No, indeed," said she, "I shall never forget;" and as soon as she was at home the White Bear turned round and went back again.

There were such rejoicings when she went in to her parents that it seemed as if they would never come to an end. Everyone thought that he could never be sufficiently grateful to her for all she had done for them all. Now they had everything that they wanted, and everything was as good as it could be. They all asked her how she was getting on where she was. All was well with her too, she said; and she had everything that she could want. What other answers she gave I cannot say, but I am pretty sure that they did not learn much from her. But in the afternoon, after they had dined at midday, all happened just as the White Bear had said. Her mother wanted to talk with her alone in her own chamber. But she remembered what the White Bear had said, and would on no account go.

"What we have to say can be said at any time," she answered. But somehow or other her mother at last persuaded her, and she was forced to tell the whole story. So she told how every night a man came and lay down beside her when the lights were all put out, and how she never saw him, because he always went away before it grew light in the morning, and how she continually went about in sadness, thinking how happy she would be if she could but see him, and how all day long she had to go about alone, and it was so dull and solitary.

"Oh!" cried the mother, in horror, "you are very likely sleeping with a troll! But I will teach you a way to see him. You shall have a bit of one of my candles, which you can take away with you hidden in your breast. Look at him with that when he is asleep, but take care not to let any tallow drop upon him."

So she took the candle, and hid it in her breast, and when evening drew near the White Bear came to fetch her away. When they had gone some distance on their way, the White Bear asked her if everything had not happened just as he had foretold, and she could not but own that it had.

"Then, if you have done what your mother wished," said he, "you have brought great misery on both of us."

"No," she said, "I have not done anything at all."

So when she had reached home and had gone to bed it was just the same as it had been before, and a man came and lay down beside her, and late at night, when she could hear that he was sleeping, she got up and kindled a light, lit her candle, let her light shine on him, and saw him, and he was the handsomest prince that eyes had ever beheld, and she loved him so much that it seemed to her that she must die if she did not kiss him that very moment. So she did kiss him; but while she was doing it she let three drops of hot tallow fall upon his shirt, and he awoke.

"What have you done now?" said he; "you have brought misery on both of us. If you had but held out for the space of one year I should have been free. I have a step-mother who has bewitched me so that I am a white bear by day and a man by night; but now all is at an end between you and me, and I must leave you, and go to her. She lives in

a castle which lies EAST OF THE SUN AND WEST OF THE MOON, and there too is a princess with a nose which is three ells long, and she now is the one whom I must marry."

She wept and lamented, but all in vain, for go he must. Then she asked him if she could not go with him. But no, that could not be.

"Can you tell me the way then, and I will seek you--that I may surely be allowed to do!"

"Yes, you may do that," said he; "but there is no way thither. It lies EAST OF THE SUN AND WEST OF THE MOON, and never would you find your way there."

When she awoke in the morning both the Prince and the castle were gone, and she was lying on a small green patch in the midst of a dark, thick wood. By her side lay the self-same bundle of rags which she had brought with her from her own home. So when she had rubbed the sleep out of her eyes, and wept till she was weary, she set out on her way, and thus she walked for many and many a long day, until at last she came to a great mountain. Outside it an aged woman was sitting, playing with a golden apple. The girl asked her if she knew the way to the Prince who lived with his stepmother in the castle which lay EAST OF THE SUN AND WEST OF THE MOON, and who was to marry a princess with a nose which was three ells long.

"How do you happen to know about him?" inquired the old woman; "maybe you are she who ought to have had him."

"Yes, indeed, I am," she said.

"So it is you, then?" said the old woman; "I know nothing about him but that he dwells in a castle which is EAST OF THE SUN AND WEST OF THE MOON. You will be a long

time in getting to it, if ever you get to it at all; but you shall have the loan of my horse, and then you can ride on it to an old woman who is a neighbor of mine: perhaps she can tell you about him. When you have got there you must just strike the horse beneath the left ear and bid it go home again; but you may take the golden apple with you."

So the girl seated herself on the horse, and rode for a long, long way, and at last she came to the mountain, where an aged woman was sitting outside with a gold carding-comb. The girl asked her if she knew the way to the castle which lay EAST OF THE SUN AND WEST OF THE MOON; but she said what the first old woman had said:

"I know nothing about it, but that it is EAST OF THE SUN AND WEST OF THE MOON, and that you will be a long time in getting to it, if ever you get there at all; but you shall have the loan of my horse to an old woman who lives the nearest to me: perhaps she may know where the castle is, and when you have got to her you may just strike the horse beneath the left ear and bid it go home again." Then she gave her the gold carding-comb, for it might, perhaps, be of use to her, she said.

So the girl seated herself on the horse, and rode a wearisome long way onward again, and after a very long time she came to a great mountain, where an aged woman was sitting, spinning at a golden spinning-wheel. Of this woman, too, she inquired if she knew the way to the Prince, and where to find the castle which lay EAST OF THE SUN AND WEST OF THE MOON. But it was only the same thing once again.

"Maybe it was you who should have had the Prince," said the old woman.

"Yes, indeed, I should have been the one," said the girl.

But this old crone knew the way no better than the others--it was EAST OF THE SUN AND WEST OF THE MOON, she knew that, "and you will be a long time in getting to it, if ever you get to it at all," she said; "but you may have the loan of my horse, and I think you had better ride to the East Wind, and ask him: perhaps he may know where the castle is, and will blow you thither. But when you have got to him you must just strike the horse beneath the left ear, and he will come home again."

And then she gave her the golden spinning-wheel, saying: "Perhaps you may find that you have a use for it."

The girl had to ride for a great many days, and for a long and wearisome time, before she got there; but at last she did arrive, and then she asked the East Wind if he could tell her the way to the Prince who dwelt EAST OF THE SUN AND WEST OF THE MOON.

"Well," said the East Wind, "I have heard tell of the Prince, and of his castle, but I do not know the way to it, for I have never blown so far; but, if you like, I will go with you to my brother the West Wind: he may know that, for he is much stronger than I am. You may sit on my back, and then I can carry you there."

So she seated herself on his back, and they did go so swiftly! When they got there, the East Wind went in and said that the girl whom he had brought was the one who ought to have had the Prince up at the castle which lay EAST OF THE SUN AND WEST OF THE MOON, and that now she was traveling about to find him again, so he had come there with her, and would like to hear if the West Wind knew whereabout the castle was.

"No," said the West Wind; "so far as that have I never blown; but if you like I will go with you to the South Wind, for he is much stronger than either of us, and he has roamed far and wide, and perhaps he can tell you what you want to know. You may seat yourself on my back, and then I will carry you to him.".

So she did this, and journeyed to the South Wind, neither was she very long on the way. When they had got there, the West Wind asked him if he could tell her the way to the castle that lay EAST OF THE SUN AND WEST OF THE MOON, for she was the girl who ought to marry the Prince who lived there.

"Oh, indeed!" said the South Wind, "is that she? Well," said he, "I have wandered about a great deal in my time, and in all kinds of places, but I have never blown so far as that. If you like, however, I will go with you to my brother, the North Wind; he is the oldest and strongest of all of us, and if he does not know where it is no one in the whole world will be able to tell you. You may sit upon my back, and then I will carry you there."

So she seated herself on his back, and off he went from his house in great haste, and they were not long on the way. When they came near the North Wind's dwelling, he was so wild and frantic that they felt cold gusts a long while before they got there.

"What do you want?" he roared out from afar, and they froze as they heard. Said the South Wind: "It is I, and this is she who should have had the Prince who lives in the castle which lies EAST OF THE SUN AND WEST OF THE MOON. And now she wishes to ask you if you have ever been there, and can tell her the way, for she would gladly find him again."

"Yes," said the North Wind, "I know where it is. I once blew an aspen leaf there, but I was so tired that for many days afterward I was not able to blow at all. However, if you really are anxious to go there, and are not afraid to go with me, I will take you on my back, and try if I can blow you there."

"Get there I must," said she; "and if there is any way of going I will; and I have no fear, no matter how fast you go."

"Very well then," said the North Wind; "but you must sleep here to-night, for if we are ever to get there we must have the day before us."

The North Wind woke her betimes next morning, and puffed himself up, and made himself so big and so strong that it was frightful to see him, and away they went, high up through the air, as if they would not stop until they had reached the very end of the world. Down below there was such a storm! It blew down woods and houses, and when they were above the sea the ships were wrecked by hundreds. And thus they tore on and on, and a long time went by, and then yet more time passed, and still they were above the sea, and the North Wind grew tired, and more tired, and at last so utterly weary that he was scarcely able to blow any longer, and he sank and sank, lower and lower, until at last he went so low that the waves dashed against the heels of the poor girl he was carrying.

"Art thou afraid?" said the North Wind.

"I have no fear," said she; and it was true.

But they were not very, very far from land, and there was just enough strength left in the North Wind to enable him to throw her on to the shore, immediately under the

windows of a castle which lay EAST OF THE SUN AND WEST OF THE MOON; but then he was so weary and worn out that he was forced to rest for several days before he could go to his own home again.

Next morning she sat down beneath the walls of the castle to play with the golden apple, and the first person she saw was the maiden with the long nose, who was to have the Prince.

"How much do you want for that gold apple of yours, girl?" said she, opening the window.

"It can't be bought either for gold or money," answered the girl.

"If it cannot be bought either for gold or money, what will buy it? You may say what you please," said the Princess.

"Well, if I may go to the Prince who is here, and be with him to-night, you shall have it," said the girl who had come with the North Wind.

"You may do that," said the Princess, for she had made up her mind what she would do.

So the Princess got the golden apple, but when the girl went up to the Prince's apartment that night he was asleep, for the Princess had so contrived it. The poor girl called to him, and shook him, and between whiles she wept; but she could not wake him. In the morning, as soon as day dawned, in came the Princess with the long nose, and drove her out again. In the daytime she sat down once more beneath the windows of the castle, and began to card with her golden carding-comb; and then all happened as it had happened before. The Princess asked her what she wanted for it, and she replied that it

was not for sale, either for gold or money, but that if she could get leave to go to the Prince, and be with him during the night, she should have it. But when she went up to the Prince's room he was again asleep, and, let her call him, or shake him, or weep as she would, he still slept on, and she could not put any life in him. When daylight came in the morning, the Princess with the long nose came too, and once more drove her away. When day had quite come, the girl seated herself under the castle windows, to spin with her golden spinning-wheel, and the Princess with the long nose wanted to have that also. So she opened the window, and asked what she would take for it. The girl said what she had said on each of the former occasions--that it was not for sale either for gold or for money, but if she could get leave to go to the Prince who lived there, and be with him during the night, she should have it.

"Yes," said the Princess, "I will gladly consent to that."

But in that place there were some Christian folk who had been carried off, and they had been sitting in the chamber which was next to that of the Prince, and had heard how a woman had been in there who had wept and called on him two nights running, and they told the Prince of this.

So that evening, when the Princess came once more with her sleeping-drink, he pretended to drink, but threw it away behind him, for he suspected that it was a sleeping-drink. So, when the girl went into the Prince's room this time he was awake, and she had to tell him how she had come there.

"You have come just in time," said the Prince, "for I should have been married to-morrow; but I will not have the long-nosed Princess, and you alone can save me. I will

say that I want to see what my bride can do, and bid her wash the shirt which has the three drops of tallow on it. This she will consent to do, for she does not know that it is you who let them fall on it; but no one can wash them out but one born of Christian folk: it cannot be done by one of a pack of trolls; and then I will say that no one shall ever be my bride but the woman who can do this, and I know that you can."

There was great joy and gladness between them all that night, but the next day, when the wedding was to take place, the Prince said,

"I must see what my bride can do." "That you may do," said the stepmother.

"I have a fine shirt which I want to wear as my wedding shirt, but three drops of tallow have got upon it which I want to have washed off, and I have vowed to marry no one but the woman who is able to do it. If she cannot do that, she is not worth having."

Well, that was a very small matter, they thought, and agreed to do it. The Princess with the long nose began to wash as well as she could, but, the more she washed and rubbed, the larger the spots grew.

"Ah! you can't wash at all," said the old troll-hag, who was her mother. "Give it to me."

But she too had not had the shirt very long in her hands before it looked worse still, and, the more she washed it and rubbed it, the larger and blacker grew the spots.

So the other trolls had to come and wash, but, the more they did, the blacker and uglier grew the shirt, until at length it was as black as if it had been up the chimney.

"Oh," cried the Prince, "not one of you is good for anything at all! There is a beggar-girl sitting outside the window, and I'll be bound that she can wash better than any of you! Come in, you girl there!" he cried.

So she came in.

"Can you wash this shirt clean?" he cried.

"Oh! I don't know," she said; "but I will try."

And no sooner had she taken the shirt and dipped it in the water than it was white as driven snow, and even whiter than that.

"I will marry you," said the Prince.

Then the old troll-hag flew into such a rage that she burst, and the Princess with the long nose and all the little trolls must have burst too, for they have never been heard of since. The Prince and his bride set free all the Christian folk who were imprisoned there, and took away with them all the gold and silver that they could carry, and moved far away from the castle which lay EAST OF THE SUN AND WEST OF THE MOON.

Appendix E: "The Death of Koshchei the Deathless"[6]

In a certain kingdom there lived a Prince Ivan. He had three sisters. The first was the Princess Marya, the second the Princess Olga, the third the Princess Anna. When their father and mother lay at the point of death, they had thus enjoined their son: 'Give your sisters in marriage to the very first suitors who come to woo them. Don't go keeping them by you!'

They died, and the Prince buried them, and then, to solace his grief, he went with his sisters into the garden green to stroll. Suddenly the sky was covered by a black cloud; a terrible storm arose.

'Let us go home, sisters!' he cried.

Hardly had they got into the palace, when the thunder pealed, the ceiling split open, and into the room where they were came flying a falcon bright. The Falcon smote upon the ground, became a brave youth, and said:

'Hail, Prince Ivan! Before I came as a guest, but now I have come as a wooer! I wish to propose for your sister, the Princess Marya.'

'If you find favour in the eyes of my sister. I will not interfere with her wishes. Let her marry you, in God's name!'

The Princess Marya gave her consent; the Falcon married her and bore her away into his own realm.

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Days follow days, hours chase hours; a whole year goes by. One day Prince Ivan and his two sisters went out to stroll in the garden green. Again there arose a storm-cloud, with whirlwind and lightning.

'Let us go home, sisters!' cries the Prince. Scarcely had they entered the palace when the thunder crashed, the roof burst into a blaze, the ceiling split in twain, and in flew an eagle. The Eagle smote upon the ground and became a brave youth.

'Hail, Prince Ivan! Before I came as a guest, but now I have come as a wooer!'

And he asked for the hand of the Princess Olga. Prince Ivan replied:

'If you find favour in the eyes of the Princess Olga, then let her marry you. I will not interfere with her liberty of choice.'

The Princess Olga gave her consent and married the Eagle. The Eagle took her and carried her off to his own kingdom.

Another year went by. Prince Ivan said to his youngest sister:

'Let us go out and stroll in the garden green!'

They strolled about for a time. Again there arose a storm-cloud, with whirlwind and lightning.

'Let us return home, sister!' said he.

They returned home, but they hadn't had time to sit down when the thunder crashed, the ceiling split open, and in flew a raven. The Raven smote upon the floor and became a brave youth. The former youths had been handsome, but this one was handsomer still.

'Well, Prince Ivan! Before I came as a guest, but now I have come as a wooer! Give me the Princess Anna to wife.'

'I won't interfere with my sister's freedom. If you gain her affections, let her marry you.'

So the Princess Anna married the Raven, and he bore her away into his own realm. Prince Ivan was left alone. A whole year he lived without his sisters; then he grew weary, and said:

'I will set out in search of my sisters.'

He got ready for the journey, he rode and rode, and one day he saw a whole army lying dead on the plain. He cried aloud, 'If there be a living man there, let him make answer! Who has slain this mighty host?'

There replied unto him a living man:

'All this mighty host has been slain by the fair Princess Marya Morevna.'

Prince Ivan rode further on, and came to a white tent, and forth came to meet him the fair Princess Marya Morevna.

'Hail, Prince!' says she; 'whither does God send you? and is it of your free will or against your will?'

Prince Ivan replied, 'Not against their will do brave youths ride!'

'Well, if your business be not pressing, tarry awhile in my tent.'

Thereat was Prince Ivan glad. He spent two nights in the tent, and he found favour in the eyes of Marya Morevna, and she married him. The fair Princess, Marya Morevna, carried him off into her own realm.

They spent some time together, and then the Princess took it into her head to go a warring. So she handed over all the house-keeping affairs to Prince Ivan, and gave him these instructions:

'Go about everywhere, keep watch over everything; only do not venture to look into that closet there.'

He couldn't help doing so. The moment Marya Morevna had gone he rushed to the closet, pulled open the door, and looked in—there hung Koshchei the Deathless, fettered by twelve chains. Then Koshchei entreated Prince Ivan, saying:

'Have pity upon me and give me to drink! Ten years long have I been here in torment, neither eating nor drinking; my throat is utterly dried up.'

The Prince gave him a bucketful of water; he drank it up and asked for more, saying:

'A single bucket of water will not quench my thirst; give me more!'

The Prince gave him a second bucketful. Koshchei drank it up and asked for a third, and when he had swallowed the third bucketful, he regained his former strength, gave his chains a shake, and broke all twelve at once.

'Thanks, Prince Ivan!' cried Koshchei the Deathless, 'now you will sooner see your own ears than Marya Morevna!' and out of the window he flew in the shape of a terrible whirlwind. And he came up with the fair Princess Marya Morevna as she was going her way, laid hold of her and carried her off home with him. But Prince Ivan wept full sore, and he arrayed himself and set out awandering, saying to himself, 'Whatever happens, I will go and look for Marya Morevna!'

One day passed, another day passed; at the dawn of the third day he saw a wondrous palace, and by the side of the palace stood an oak, and on the oak sat a falcon bright. Down flew the Falcon from the oak, smote upon the ground, turned into a brave youth, and cried aloud:

'Ha, dear brother-in-law! how deals the Lord with you?'

Out came running the Princess Marya, joyfully greeted her brother Ivan, and began inquiring after his health, and telling him all about herself. The Prince spent three days with them; then he said: 'I cannot abide with you; I must go in search of rny wife, the fair Princess Marya Morevna.'

'Hard will it be for you to find her,' answered the Falcon. 'At all events leave with us your silver spoon. We will look at it and remember you.' So Prince Ivan left his silver spoon at the Falcon's, and went on his way again.

On he went one day, on he went another day, and by the dawn of the third day he saw a palace still grander than the former one and hard by the palace stood an oak, and on the oak sat an eagle. Down flew the Eagle from the oak, smote upon the ground, turned into a brave youth, and cried aloud:

'Rise up, Princess Olga! Hither comes our brother dear!'

The Princess Olga immediately ran to meet him, and began kissing him and embracing him, asking after his health, and telling him all about herself. With them Prince Ivan stopped three days; then he said:

'I cannot stay here any longer. I am going to look for my wife, the fair Princess Marya Morevna.'

'Hard will it be for you to find her,' replied the Eagle. 'Leave with us a silver fork. We will look at it and remember you.'

He left a silver fork behind, and went his way. He travelled one day, he travelled two days; at daybreak on the third day he saw a palace grander than the first two, and near the palace stood an oak, and on the oak sat a raven. Down flew the Raven from the oak, smote upon the ground, turned into a brave youth, and cried aloud:

'Princess Anna, come forth quickly! our brother is coming.'

Out ran the Princess Anna, greeted him joyfully, and began kissing and embracing him, asking after his health and telling him all about herself. Prince Ivan stayed with them three days; then he said:

'Farewell! I am going to look for my wife, the fair Princess Marya Morevna.'
'Hard will it be for you to find her,' replied the Raven. 'Anyhow, leave your silver snuff-box with us. We will look at it and remember you.'

The Prince handed over his silver snuff-box, took his leave, and went his way.

One day he went, another day he went, and on the third day he came to where Marya Morevna was. She caught sight of her love, flung her arms around his neck, burst into tears, and exclaimed:

'Oh, Prince Ivan! why did you disobey me and go looking into the closet and letting out Koshchei the Deathless? '

'Forgive me, Marya Morevna! Remember not the past; much better fly with me while Koshchei the Deathless is out of sight. Perhaps he won't catch us.'

So they got ready and fled. Now Koshchei was out hunting. Towards evening he was returning home, when his good steed stumbled beneath him.

'Why stumblest thou, sorry jade? Scentest thou some ill?'

The steed replied:

'Prince Ivan has come and carried off Marya Morevna.'

'Is it possible to catch them?'

'It is possible to sow wheat, to wait till it grows up, to reap it and thresh it, to grind it to flour, to make five pies of it, to eat those pies, and then to start in pursuit—and even then to be in time.'

Koshchei galloped off and caught up Prince Ivan.

'Now,' says he, 'this time I will forgive you, in return for your kindness in giving me water to drink. And a second time I will forgive you; but the third time beware! I will cut you to bits.'

Then he took Marya Morevna from him, and carried her off. But Prince Ivan sat down on a stone and burst into tears. He wept and wept—and then returned back again to Marya Morevna. Now Koshchei the Deathless happened not to be at home.

'Let us fly, Marya Morevna!'

'Ah, Prince Ivan! he will catch us.'

'Suppose he does catch us. At all events we shall have spent an hour or two together.'

So they got ready and fled. As Koshchei the Deathless was returning home, his good steed stumbled beneath him.

'Why stumblest thou, sorry jade? Scentest thou some ill? '

'Prince Ivan has come and carried off Marya Morevna.'

'Is it possible to catch them? '

'It is possible to sow barley, to wait till it grows up, to reap it and thresh it, to brew beer, to drink ourselves drunk on it, to sleep our fill, and then to set off in pursuit—and yet to be in time.'

Koshchei galloped off, caught up Prince Ivan:

'Didn't I tell you that you should not see Marya Morevna any more than your own ears?'

And he took her away and carried her off home with him. Prince Ivan was left there alone. He wept and wept; then he went back again after Marya Morevna. Koshchei happened to be away from home at that moment.

'Let us fly, Marya Morevna!'

'Ah, Prince Ivan! he is sure to catch us and hew you in pieces.'

Let him hew away! I cannot live without you.'

So they got ready and fled.

Koshchei the Deathless was returning home when his good steed stumbled beneath him.

'Why stumblest them? Scentest theu any ill?'

'Prince Ivan has come and has carried off Marya Morevna.'

Koshchei galloped off, caught Prince Ivan, chopped him into little pieces, put them into a barrel, smeared it with pitch and bound it with iron hoops, and flung it into the blue sea. But Marya Morevna he carried off home.

At that very time the silver articles turned black which Prince Ivan had left with his brothers-in-law.

'Ah!' said they, 'the evil is accomplished sure enough!'

Then the Eagle hurried to the blue sea, caught hold of the barrel, and dragged it ashore; the Falcon flew away for the Water of Life, and the Raven for the Water of Death.

Afterwards they all three met, broke open the barrel, took out the remains of Prince Ivan, washed them, and put them together in fitting order. The Raven sprinkled them with the Water of Death—the pieces joined together, the body became whole. The Falcon sprinkled it with the Water of Life—Prince Ivan shuddered, stood up, and said:

'Ah! what a time I've been sleeping!'

'You'd have gone on sleeping a good deal longer if it hadn't been for us,' replied his brothers-in-law. 'Now come and pay us a visit.'

'Not so, brothers; I shall go and look for Marya Morevna.'

And when he had found her, he said to her:

'Find out from Koshchei the Deathless whence he got so good a steed."

So Marya Morevna chose a favourable moment, and began asking Koshchei about it. Koshchei replied:

'Beyond thrice nine lands, in the thirtieth kingdom, on the other side of the fiery river, there lives a Baba Yaga. She has so good a mare that she flies right round the world on it every day. And she has many other splendid mares. I watched her herds for three days without losing a single mare, and in return for that the Baba Yaga gave me a foal.'

'But how did you get across the fiery river?'

'Why, I've a handkerchief of this kind—when I wave it thrice on the right hand, there springs up a very lofty bridge, and the fire cannot reach it.'

Marya Morevna listened to all this, and repeated it to Prince Ivan, and she carried off the handkerchief and gave it to him. So he managed to get across the fiery river, and then went on to the Baba Yaga's. Long went he on without getting anything either to eat or to drink. At last he came across an outlandish bird and its young ones. Says Prince Ivan:

'I'll eat one of these chickens.'

'Don't eat it, Prince Ivan!' begs the outlandish bird; 'some time or other I'll do you a good turn.'

He went on farther and saw a hive of bees in the forest.

'I'll get a bit of honeycomb,' says he.

'Don't disturb my honey, Prince Ivan!' exclaims the queen-bee; 'some time or other I'll do you a good turn.'

So he didn't disturb it, but went on. Presently there met him a lioness with her cub.

'Anyhow, I'll eat this lion cub,' says he; 'I'm so hungry I feel quite unwell!'

'Please let us alone, Prince Ivan!' begs the lioness; 'some time or other I'll do you a good turn.'

'Very well; have it your own way,' says he.

Hungry and faint he wandered on, walked farther and farther, and at last came to where stood the house of the Baba Yaga. Round the house were set twelve poles in a circle, and on each of eleven of these poles was stuck a human head; the twelfth alone remained unoccupied.

'Hail, granny!'

'Hail, Prince Ivan! wherefore have you come? Is it of your own accord, or on compulsion?'

'I have come to earn from you an heroic steed.'

'So be it, Prince! You won't have to serve a year with me, but just three days. If you take good care of my mares, I'll give you an heroic steed. But if you don't—why, then you mustn't be annoyed at finding your head stuck on top of the last pole up there.'

Prince Ivan agreed to these terms. The Baba Yaga gave him food and drink, and bade him set about his business. But the moment he had driven the mares afield, they cocked up their tails, and away they tore across the meadows in all directions. Before the Prince had time to look round they were all out of sight. Thereupon he began to weep and to disquiet himself, and then he sat down upon a stone and went to sleep. But when the sun was near its setting the outlandish bird came flying up to him, and awakened him, saying:

'Arise, Prince Ivan! The mares are at home now.'

The Prince arose and returned home. There the Baba Yaga was storming and raging at her mares, and shrieking:

'Whatever did ye come home for?'

'How could we help coming home?' said they. 'There came flying birds from every part of the world, and all but pecked our eyes out.'

'Well, well! to-morrow don't go galloping over the meadows, but disperse amid the thick forests.'

Prince Ivan slept all night. In the morning the Baba Yaga says to him:

'Mind, Prince! if you don't take good care of the mares, if you lose merely one of them—your bold head will be stuck on that pole!'

He drove the mares afield. Immediately they cocked up their tails and dispersed among the thick forests. Again did the Prince sit down on the stone, weep and weep, and then go to sleep. The sun went down behind the forest. Up came running the lioness.

'Arise, Prince Ivan! The mares are all collected.'

Prince Ivan arose and went home. More than ever did the Baba Yaga storm at her mares and shriek:

'Whatever did ye come back home for?'

'How could we help coming back? Beasts of prey came running at us from all parts of the world, and all but tore us utterly to pieces.'

'Well, to-morrow run off into the blue sea.'

Again did Prince Ivan sleep through the night. Next morning the Baba Yaga sent him forth to watch the mares.

'If you don't take good care of them,' says she, 'your bold head will be stuck on that pole!'

He drove the mares afield. Immediately they cocked up their tails, disappeared from sight, and fled into the blue sea. There they stood, up to their necks in water. Prince Ivan sat down on the stone, wept, and fell asleep. But when the sun had set behind the forest, up came flying a bee, and said:

'Arise, Prince! The mares are all collected. But when you get home, don't let the Baba Yaga set eyes on you, but go into the stable and hide behind the mangers. There you will find a sorry colt rolling in the muck. Do you steal it, and at the dead of night ride away from the house.'

Prince Ivan arose, slipped into the stable, and lay down behind the mangers, while the Baba Yaga was storming away at her mares and shrieking:

'Why did ye come back?'

'How could we help coming back? There came flying bees in countless numbers from all parts of the world, and began stinging us on all sides till the blood came!'

The Baba Yaga went to sleep. In the dead of the night Prince Ivan stole the sorry colt, saddled it, jumped on its back, and galloped away to the fiery river. When he came to that river he waved the handkerchief three times on the right hand, and suddenly, springing goodness knows whence, there hung across the river, high in the air, a splendid bridge. The Prince rode across the bridge and waved the handkerchief twice only on the left hand; there remained across the river a thin, ever so thin a bridge!

When the Baba Yaga got up in the morning the sorry colt was not to be seen! Off she set in pursuit. At full speed did she fly in her iron mortar, urging it on with the pestle, sweeping away her traces with the broom. She dashed up to the fiery river, gave a glance,

and said, 'A capital bridge!' She drove on to the bridge, but had only got half-way when the bridge broke in two, and the Baba Yaga went flop into the river. There truly did she meet with a cruel death!

Prince Ivan fattened up the colt in the green meadows, and it turned into a wondrous steed. Then he rode to where Marya Morevna was. She came running out, and flung herself on his neck, crying:

'By what means has God brought you back to life?'

'Thus and thus,' says he. 'Now come along with me.'

'I am afraid, Prince Ivan! If Koshchei catches us you will be cut in pieces again.'

'No, he won't catch us! I have a splendid heroic steed now; it flies just like a bird.'

So they got on its back and rode away.

Koshchei the Deathless was returning home when his horse stumbled beneath him.

'What art thou stumbling for, sorry jade? Dost thou scent any ill?'

'Prince Ivan has come and carried off Marya Morevna."Can we catch them?'

'God knows! Prince Ivan has a horse now which is better than I.'

'Well, I can't stand it,' says Koshchei the Deathless. 'I will pursue.'

After a time he came up with Prince Ivan, lighted on the ground, and was going to chop him up with his sharp sword. But at that moment Prince Ivan's horse smote Koshchei the Deathless full swing with its hoof, and cracked his skull, and the Prince made an end of him with a club. Afterwards the Prince heaped up a pile of wood, set fire to it, burnt Koshchei the Deathless on the pyre, and scattered his ashes to the wind. Then Marya

Morevna mounted Koshchei's horse and Prince Ivan got on his own, and they rode away to visit first the Raven, and then the Eagle, and then the Falcon. Wherever they went they met with a joyful greeting.

'Ah, Prince Ivan! why, we never expected to see you again. "Well, it wasn't for nothing that you gave yourself so much trouble. Such a beauty as Marya Morevna one might search for all the world over—and never find one like her! '

And so they visited, and they feasted; and afterwards they went off to their own realm.