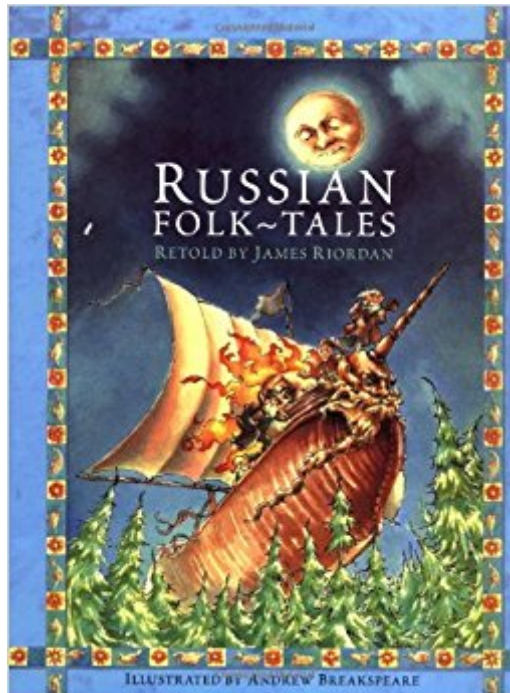




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Russian Folk Tales (Oxford Myths & Legends)



Synopsis

Written by award-winning children's author James Riordan, this book is a beguiling collection of stories set among the wide rivers and snow-covered forests and steppes of Russia--a land still shrouded in mystery in the eyes of the Western reader. The incomparable beauty of untamed nature and the Slavic gift for storytelling make for a captivating combination. Meet boyars and cossacks, kings and queens, merchants and minstrels, robbers and angels, witches and peasants. Ships fly through the air, princesses turn into frogs, a snowmaiden longs for a human heart, the mighty Firebird steals the golden apples. Folk tales, heroic sagas, legends and myths from villages and towns all across Russia--they are all here in this fascinating anthology. Evocative full-color illustrations accompany each story.

Book Information

Series: Oxford Myths & Legends

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Customer Reviews

Three compendiums cover folktales, sense and nonsense. James Riordan collects and translates Russian Folk Tales, illus. by Andrew Breakspeare, both well known ("Vasilissa"; "The Firebird") and lesser known ("The Animals' Revenge"), sometimes adding twists to Western tradition (the Frog Prince becomes a Princess here). Riordan adopts a storyteller's bravado ("Now here's a fine to-do, thought the cat, his face long as a fiddle," says Catofay Ivanovich when his master dumps him in the forest, deeming him past his prime). Lush full-bleed watercolors and vignettes capture the magic of the forest and a full range of characters and expressions. Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc.

Grade 1-5-An enjoyable and accessible collection of 10 traditional folktales, ranging from the familiar ("The Firebird" and "Vasilissa the Wise and Baba Yag ") to the obscure ("Bella and the Bear" and "The Rosy Apple and the Golden Bowl"). Riordan wisely kept the child audience in mind, making selections that emphasize family relationships, clever main characters, magical gifts, and punishment for evil. The reteller skillfully employs repetition and plays with the sound of language to create stories that beg to be shared aloud. As every good scholar should, he includes sources (many are taken from Alexander Afanasiev's classic 19th-century collection), along with notes that place each tale in the context of Russian culture. Breakspeare's highly stylized watercolor and pen-and-ink illustrations range from full-page renderings to tiny cameos, and do an inadequate job of conveying the action. In several instances, the drawings are misleading and depict characters and events not included in the tales. Browns, greens, and blues dominate the palette, but the colors are often so saturated that the pictures become muddy and indistinct. While the illustrations disappoint, the tales themselves provide an excellent introduction to Russian folklore for today's children. Denise Anton Wright, Alliance Library System, Bloomington, IL Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc.

As a native russian who spent her childhood reading a lot of folk tales I can tell that this book is very good translation of some of the tales. Author gives some information about background of Russian folk mythology and culture which is very helpfull for non-russian reader to understand the tales and russian culture in general. Love the poety of translation and beautiful ilustrations! My american husband enjoyed it very much! Would reccomend for kids to read.

I ready this through and then gave it to a friend of mine who is Ukranian. I think she was going to go home and read it to her mother, translating into Ukranian.

Wanted to give this to my young grandson for Christmas. The first tale was so horrifying I was shocked. Someone should warn that the stories are not for young children.

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