

Favorite Folktales from Around the World Study Guide

Favorite Folktales from Around the World by Jane Yolen

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Telling Tales

Telling Tales Summary

The Man Who Had No Story is a story from Ireland. In this story a man named Brian O Braonachain goes to a place that everyone says is a fairy glen. When Brian gets there he is surrounded by a thick fog and sees a light far off. He follows the light and comes to a house where he is asked to tell a fairy tale by an elderly couple in the house. Brian says he does not know any fairy tales and they send him out to get some water from the well to earn his keep. When he goes to the well he is transported to a strange land where he must complete tasks. When he comes back to the elderly couple they tell him that he knows a fairy tale.

How Spider Obtained the Sky God's Stories originated in Africa. It is the story of a spider that wants the sky god's stories. The spider is told to bring several things to the sky god in exchange for the stories. The spider, with the help of his wife, is able to bring each of these things and do what no other has been able to do.

Helping to Lie is a German story about a nobleman who hires a servant with the understanding that the servant is to help him lie. The nobleman starts a story and when he needs help, he brings the servant in who explains the nobleman's stories but then the servant later tells the nobleman that he needs to not tell such outlandish stories any more.

The Ash Lad Who Made the Princess Say "You're a Liar!" is a Norway story about a king that offers his lying daughter as a reward to any that can tell a lie bigger than hers. A young boy is able to make her exclaim that he is a liar by saying that her father had been scurfy.

The Parson and the Sexton is another story from Norway. The parson in the story was a liar and was called by the king to come for questioning. Fearing what would happen, the parson put his wardrobe on the sexton and sent him in his stead. The sexton was very smart and eventually revealed himself to the king who declared that the parson become the sexton and the sexton take on the parson's duties.

The Tall Tales is a tale from Burma. In this story three lying brothers try to trick a prince into being their servant but are themselves tricked into being the prince's servants. The prince releases them with the condition that they can no longer lie.

Catherine, Sly Country Lass originated in Italy and is the story of a very smart country girl who becomes a queen. Her husband becomes angry and sends her home after she overrules the king's decisions. Catherine is told she can take one thing with her when she goes home and so she gets her husband drunk. In the morning, when he awakes, she has chosen him to take home. The king and Catherine make up and she is allowed to go home.

Telling Tales Analysis

The section, Telling Tales, is about different types of tales that are told. In some instances the word tales refers to telling stories or the search for stories. There are some of the stories within this section in which "takes" also mean lies. The other sections in the book will also have headings that will be indicative of the stories and their focus within that section. The different stories throughout the book will continue to tell what region of the world they are found in. Some of the stories will not be limited to one region and some will be associated with a culture rather than a particular place.

It is clear that some of the words and phrases used in the stories may not be words that are immediately recognized because of the differences in cultures. In the Man Who Had No Story there is a lot of talk about cutting rods to make baskets. While most people in modern times have most likely not done this, it is easily understood what is meant. The language in the stories will differ as well. When the stories are translated into English, it is understandable that some of the story might have changed in some respects, but the overall basis of the stories seem to have been kept intact.



The Very Young and the Very Old

The Very Young and the Very Old Summary

Glooscap and the Baby is an American Indian story about a good named Glooscap who conquered many great enemies and was sad because there were none left for him to fight. He is told about a Wasis, who has never been defeated. Glooscap tries to best Wasis, but Wasis is only a baby and responds to nothing that Glooscap does and so Glooscap leaves defeated.

The Brewery of Eggshells is an Irish story of a woman who has her baby replaced with an Imp. The woman is told to brew eggshells to see if the child truly is not hers. When she does this the infant begins to speak to her and just as she is about to kill the imp it vanishes and her own child is replaced.

Father of Eighteen Elves originates in Iceland and is the story of a woman who leaves her three year old for a short period of time and comes back to find him odd and refusing to speak. She is told how to trick the creature and over hears him telling of his eighteen children. She begins to beat the child until a woman comes in holding her child and takes her husband and leaves the boy.

The Fly is a story from Vietnam in which a young boy tricks a rich man into forgiving his family's debt.

The Two Pickpockets is a story from England. In this story two wonderfully talented pickpockets meet and get married. They intend for their children to be raised as pickpockets but their first son is deformed with a curled up fist and arm tight to his chest. They take him to the doctor and upon seeing the doctor's watch, the child stretches out his gnarled hand and when he opens his fist drops the midwife's gold wedding ring.

The Seventh Father of the House is from Norway. A man happens upon a fine house and asks an older looking gentleman if he might stay the night but is always told by this man, and five others, to go ask his father. The last person that the man meets is so shriveled he fits inside a horn but allows the man to stay the night.

The King's Favorite is a story from China. A beautiful young woman does things that might get others in trouble but is forgiven by the king each time. When she gets older and is not as pretty, the king remembers all the things that she should have got in trouble for.

Wagging My Tail in the Mud is another story from China. A king sends for a poet. They find him fishing in the river and the poet explains that the turtle at the castle, long dead, would be happier wagging his tail in the mud and so is the poet.



The Very Young and the Very Old Analysis

The stories in this section are focused on the age of at least one of the main characters. Some of the stories are very short and others are quite a bit longer. Sometimes the focus is on characters that do not actually have much to do with the story. An example of these are the children stolen by mythical creatures. The children are the focus of the story but the children are only seen when they are taken and when they are returned. The children themselves do not seem to actually do anything in the story.

Some of the stories have a very clear message and try to be focusing on a lesson or moral. Other stories do not seem to have a lesson and it seems likely that they were passed down as enjoyment or perhaps as part of superstitions. The stories that focus on the treatment of the elderly seem to have a message that a person's parents should be treated with respect because this is how your children will treat you.



True Loves and False

True Loves and False Summary

How Men and Women Got Together is an American Indian story about how men and women were created. They were first made as two separate tribes and it was seen later that they did very different things and so were put together.

The Little Old Woman with Five Cows originated in Siberia. In it a woman picks a weed that transforms into a beautiful girl whom a wealthy man wants to marry. The man takes her home but sends her on ahead while he does business and the girl does not follow the directions home. She happens upon the house of a hideous demon who rips the girl's face off and uses it as her own and goes to marry the man in the girl's place. After some time, the girl is reborn of the weed and the demon is killed when the truth is found out and the marriage takes place as planned.

The Prayer that was Answered is from Tibet and begins with a widowed woman with a daughter who is praying that her daughter happen into a wealthy marriage. There is a man who pretends to be a god and tricks the woman into giving her daughter to him, although he is not wealthy as he pretends to be. He takes the girl home but leaves her in a trunk on the side of the road while he gets his house ready to hold her captive if need be. A wealthy chieftain comes along and finds the girl and leaves a bear in her place. The girl is married to the wealthy chieftain, answering her mother's prayers. The poor man gets the bear home and is eaten alive.

The Merchant's Daughter and the Slanderer is from Russia. There is a boy that leaves home with a picture of his sister and a king happens to see it and decides to marry the girl. A guard, being jealous of the king, says that he knows the girl and that she lays with any man that happens along. The guard goes and bribes a beggar woman to help him get proof that the girl has lain with him and takes it back to the king and the brother is to be killed for lying to the king. The sister comes before the king but the guard does not know her and openly denies ever having seen the girl before he realizes it is the same girl he was supposed to have brought proof back of. The guard is killed and the brother goes free.

What Happened to Hadji comes from Turkey and is the story of a married man who tries to have an affair. His wife is able to trick him into being arrested but then saves him from being put into jail.

The next story is from England and is titled Mr. Fox. In this story there is a woman that picks a handsome suitor who turns out to be a killer of rich women. The girl is able to prove this and her brothers kill the man.

The Waiting Maid's Parrot is from China and is a story of a young girl who is to become part of the king's wives. She has a talking parrot who helps her fall in love with a young



man. The king finds out and beats the girl and has her buried alive. The parrot goes to get the lover and tells him where the girl is buried.

The White Cat is from France and is the story of a king who is trying to decide whom to give his kingdom to. He gives his sons three tasks. The youngest son each time is helped by a white cat who turns out to be a princess in the end. The princess gives the king her families land to divide among his sons, and the king continues ruling his own kingdom.

Sedna is an Eskimo story. In this story a young woman is taken away by a sky spirit to be his bride. She is cold and lonely there and is rescued by her father. When they are out in open water the sky spirit makes the waves begin to crash and the girl is shoved out of the boat by her father to save himself. He stabs her hands while she tries to grab onto the boat and the blood from her hands create the animals in the water. Sedna lives under the waves and has her father brought down to the bottom of the sea to live with her.

True Loves and False Analysis

The fact that cultures greatly influence the stories is seen more vividly in this section than some of the stories in the previous sections. It is seen in the section about love that it is considered bad luck to pretend to be a god, as in the story from Tibet, but in the story about the frog from Korea, the frog pretends to be a god at one point in the story and this is what helps him. The view of women in the story changes in different cultures and times as well. The story of Mr. Fox talks about how many different lovers that the girl has and says that it is too many to number. There is no real reason for this to be explained, since it seems to have no impact on the story. It seems to be a measure of her beauty that there are that many men that desire her. In the story of The Merchant's Daughter and the Slanderer from Russia the girl is said to be chaste as a dove and quiet. There is a picture of this girl but the thought of her being promiscuous is enough that the king is willing to kill over being lied to about it.

The times in which the stories are told is not given. While this information is not available, it seems that this would have a great impact on some of the stories. In the story, What Happened to Hadji, he is arrested for being seen alone with a woman who is not his wife. It is unclear if that law is as strict in recent years as it would have been in the past. The title of queens and kings helps the reader to understand that the time frames are further back but much will be left up to inferring.



Tricksters, Rogues, and Cheats

Tricksters, Rogues, and Cheats Summary

Tyll Ulenspiegel's Merry Prank comes from Germany. In this story Tyll is invited to come before the king to see who is more clever, Tyll or the two court jesters. After each is able to make a statement, it is seen that Tyll is more clever than the others.

The Hodja and the Cauldron originates in Turkey. The Hodja borrows a cauldron and finds that he loves the cauldron. The Hodja takes a small cauldron back saying the first had a baby and is too ill to travel. Soon after the Hodja brings the larger cauldron home. Hodja borrows the larger cauldron again but when the owner comes to retrieve it, the Hodja says that it died. The neighbor tries to complain but it is decided if the cauldron is able to have a baby it is able to die.

Being Greedy Chokes Anansi is from Jamaica. There is a land whose queen is also a witch and no one is allowed to say Five because that is the witch's true name. Any that say Five fall down dead. There comes a famine in the land and Anasi asks all that came by his house to count his yams and when they get to five, fall down dead and Anasi eats them. Anasi tries to get Guinea Fowl to count them but Guinea keeps messing up to the point that Anasi counts them as they should be and Anasi falls down dead at five and Guinea at Anasi.

Quevedo and the King come from Mexico. The king is upset with Quevedo because of his pranks and says that Quevedo must pull a great prank on the king and then grossly apologize for it. Quevedo hides and when the king comes out, he grabs the king in the private parts. The king is angry and Quevedo apologizes, explaining he thought the king was the queen.

Why the Hare Runs Away is from Africa. The earth is drying up and all the animals decide to cut off the tips of their ears and sell the fat to buy a hoe to dig a well. All the animals agree, but when it comes time the hare refuses to cut off his ear tips. The animals buy a hoe and dig a well and when the well is unattended the rabbit comes and muddies up the good water. The other animals leave a trap for the hare who gets caught in birdlime and the other animals come out to beat the hare.

Coyote Fights a Lump of Pitch is an American Indian story. The Coyote is caught by white man who is going to scald him for stealing when the Coyote is able to trick the Gray Fox into taking his place. The Grey Fox goes to get revenge but the Coyote is able to trick him again and runs away.

Crack and Crook comes from Italy and is the story of two thieves. The thieves are so good at their job that the king sets out to lay traps for them. Crook is caught in one of the traps and Crack cuts off Crook's head. The king sets forth a series of tests and



Crack succeeds at the tests and to stop him from stealing any more, the king marries Crack to the princess.

Tricksters, Rogues, and Cheats Analysis

Each of the stories found in the section labeled Tricksters, Rogues, and Cheats has a different moral. Often the trickster is fooled himself and there is a clear message throughout most of the stories that it is important to be wise and cunning. Despite this message there are stories where tricking people is considered wrong and the trickster ends badly, and stories where the trickster is heavily rewarded.

In many of the stories, the main characters are not given names, but titles or descriptions, such as King, or nobleman, or master thief. There are other stories in which several characters, or at least the main character, are given proper names to be identified by.

There are similarities between some of these stories and other common stories that have been told. The story Why the Hare Runs Away very much resembles Br'er Rabbit in that the Hare gets stuck in something that is similar to tar. This story also has some similarities to the fable where the hen cooks the bread and refuses to share because no one else did the work. The animals in the story do not share the water with the Hare because the Hare refused to cut off the tips of his ears and did not help dig. It is easy to see how these stories are adapted to other cultures and periods of time.



The Fool: Numbskulls and Noodleheads

The Fool: Numbskulls and Noodleheads Summary

The Three Sillies is a story from England. There is a young maid that has a gentleman suitor. She goes to the basement to get something for them to drink with dinner and weeps over a mallet she sees in the ceiling that might fall on a child she has someday and kill it. The mother and father of the girl weep along with her and when the gentleman sees this he leaves them, saying he will come back to marry the girl if he ever finds three people more silly than they are. He leaves them but soon finds that there are others much sillier than the three he left and comes back to marry the girl.

Nars-ed-Din Hodja in the Pulpit comes from Turkey and begins with the Hodja addressing his congregation. He asks them two different times if they know what he is going to say and both times the congregation says that they do know and so he leaves since they already know. The third time he asks, the congregation is split, with only half professing to know. The Hodja steps down and says the half that knows can explain it to the others.

The story of Lazy Jack comes from England. A boy is lazy and silly and refuses to work. His mother forces him to get a job and each time he loses or ruins whatever is given in payment. The last time he is trying to carry a donkey home to keep it safe and a young deaf and dumb girl, the only daughter of a rich man, sees the sight and laughs for the first time in her life. The rich man gives the daughter in marriage to Lazy Jack and Jack and his mother live in wealth until the mother dies.

Chelm Justice is from the Jewish culture. This story is of a man who has committed a crime and must be hanged. The town does not want the man hanged since he is the only one to mend their shoes. The judge sentences a roofer to die in his place since the village has two roofers.

Those Stubborn Souls, the Biellese is from Italy. The story is of a man who refuses to say God willing and the Lord hears him and forces him to spend six years in a swamp as a frog. The man is released from the swamp but still refuses to say God willing.

The Drovers Who Lost Their Feet is from Mexico. Three men have traveled until their feet hurt and they can no longer tell whose feet are whose. A stranger comes along and hits each of their feet and whoever yelps owns the feet that were hit.

The Fool: Numbskulls and Noodleheads Analysis

Several of the stories in the section titled The Fool: Numbskulls and Noodleheads, contain outlandish and outrageous deductions made by people. An example of this is Chelm Justice, where the judge decides to hang a roofer rather than the shoe repairman, since the town has two roofers. The story of Lazy Jack also seems to be

excessively ignorant, since each time the boy does just as his mother tells him to do the day before, but always is wrong. It seems that Lazy Jack is unable to think for himself.

As the stories continue, there are things that reoccur within cultures. An example of this is the role of the Hodja in more than one of the stories from Turkey. There are many cultures that focus heavily on peasants and royalty, and other cultures often use talking animals to relate stories. The stories are divided into sections based on what the story characters are involved in but it appears that the stories could have easily been divided into cultures as well.

Many of the stories were obviously intended for entertainment, but often it can be seen that the moral or lesson in the story mirrors real life. The ignorance in the stories can be said to be unbelievable but it seems that some of these stories may in some way have been based on real life.



Heros: Likely and Unlikely

Heros: Likely and Unlikely Summary

The Birth of Finn MacCumhail originates in Ireland and is the story of a young man who is said in a prophesy to be the one to overthrow the king. When the child is born his grandmother whisks him away. As Finn grows he lives in secret while his grandmother trains him and after a time he discovers the secret to knowledge is to bite the marrow in his thumb. Finn is able to use this knowledge to defeat the king and rule the king's champions.

Li Chi Slays the Serpent comes from China. There is a great serpent that demands young girls to feast on once a year. Li Chi volunteers herself to help out her parents and when the snake comes out to eat her, she kills the snake. The town is so thankful for her bravery that she and her family are rewarded with great riches.

The Devil with the Three Golden Hairs is from Germany. A young boy is born with the prophesy that he should marry the princess. The king hears this and tries to kill the boy but the boy is found and raised for many years. The king happens upon the boy again and writes a letter telling the boy to take it to the queen. The boy loses his way and sleeps at a house of robbers. While he sleeps, they read his note and find that the king has ordered the boy to be killed when he arrives. The thieves write a new note explaining the boy is to be married to the princess. When the king arrives at the castle, the boy is already wed to the princess and the king demands three golden hairs from the head of the devil in order to keep his daughter. The boy leaves and goes to see the devil but encounters two villages and a ferryman with problems on the way there that the boy promises to answer on his way home. When the boy reaches the devil's house, the devil's grandmother helps the boy get his three golden hairs and the answers to the problems that the boy is supposed to answer on the way home. The first the boy comes to on the way home is the ferryman. The boy tells him to put the oar in the hand of the next person to come to his boat and the ferryman will be free of his rowing. In the next two towns the boy is able to help the people fix their problems and in total receives four donkeys laden with gold. When the king sees what the boy brings he demands to know where he too can get that much wealth. The boy tells the king to go see the ferryman who will take him to the place where the boy got the gold. When the greedy king gets there he is given the oar and the ferryman is freed with the king being forced to row for eternity.

The Longwitton Dragon is a tale from England. This is a story of a well that gives health and vitality to all who drink from it. A dragon comes and claims the well and the people are no longer able to drink from it. A knight appears and fights the dragons for three days in a row but it is not until the knight notices the dragon constantly has his tail in the water that the knight understands how the dragon is able to heal so fast. The knight tricks the dragon into stepping away from the well and the dragon is finally killed.



Heros: Likely and Unlikely Analysis

There are stories in this section where the hero is brave and true, such as the knight in *The Longwitton Dragon*. This hero seems to be a typical hero, like Sir Lancelot and others of fables. There are others in the book that do not seem to be heroes as much as they seem to be very bright and perhaps even lucky. In *The Devil with the Three Golden Hairs*, it seems that the boy is born lucky and often the success he finds is due to fortune rather than any heroics on his part. The point where the boy in that story begins to show that perhaps he is more than lucky is where he is able to trick the king into going to the ferryman.

While the theme of this section is about heroes, it is easily seen how some of these stories could fit into other sections and some stories from other sections could easily be called hero stories. Also, many of the stories have been adapted into other stories and fables it would appear. In the story of *Molly Whuppie* there is a giant that says "Fee, fie, fo fum, I smell the blood of some earthly one," (p. 228). It seems that this is most likely the story that helped to create *Jack and the Beanstalk*.

Many of the stories, in this section and others, give further detail on where the stories come from. *The Flying Head* is an American Indian story but it also says that it is an Iroquois story and other stories specify that they are Apache or other. The Australian story in this section, *The Beginning of the Narran Lake*, is from the Aborigine culture. Knowing this helps the reader better understand the motives and thoughts behind the main characters.



Wonder Talkes, Tall Tales, and Brag

Wonder Talkes, Tall Tales, and Brag Summary

Talk is a story from Africa. In it a man is tending his yams when one talks to him. Soon several common things around his farm have spoken to him and he takes off running. He meets a fisherman, who, upon hearing the story has his fishing trap talk to him. They both run and meet a weaver. They relate their tale and the weaver's cloth speaks. The farmer, the fisherman and the weaver continue running and find a man standing in the river and the river talks to them. All four of them take off running and come to the chief. The chief sits down to listen and sends them all away. When they are gone, the chief's stool says that it is an amazing story about a talking yam.

The King of Ireland's Son is from Ireland and tells the story of the youngest prince, Art. Art goes into a different world and has to defeat a giant three times at a game of hide and seek, which Art does by hiding once in a horse's tail, once in the hole where the nail was in the horse's hoof and once in a hole left from a horse's tooth. Art is able to take home the princess that the giant has captured and there is a fantastic feast.

The Goose Girl is from Germany. It is the story of a young princess who leaves to be a bride to a prince in a far away kingdom. On the way she is threatened by her maid-in-waiting and forced to trade places with her. The maid-in-waiting makes the princess promise not to say anything or else the princess will die. When they arrive at the kingdom it is not long before the old king realizes that there is something unique about the servant the princess, unknown as an impostor, has brought. When the king discovers the truth, he asks the impostor princess what should be the punishment describing her own crimes. The impostor unknowingly sentences herself to death.

The Princess on the Glass Hill is a story from Norway. A young boy named Boots is able to win three of the king's challenges while keeping his identity secret. After winning the King's challenges, Boots is married to the princess.

The promises of the Three Sisters comes from Egypt. The king marries the youngest of three sisters who promises to give birth to twins who would have silver and golden hair. When she gives birth, her two jealous sisters try to drown the children. The children are raised by kind, poor people and later, after meeting several challenges, the truth of who the children are is revealed. The king has the aunts burned alive and restores his wife to his side.

Wonder Talkes, Tall Tales, and Brag Analysis

Most of the stories seen in the book are told in third person with no use of the first person. The King of Ireland's Son is an exception to this. In the end of the story the person telling the story says that he was at the wedding and says "I got a present," (p. 254), which suggests that the person was a first hand witness to what Art had been



through. There is no indication as to what role the person played in the rest of the story, however.

The story of the Princess on the Glass Hill appears to be similar to that of Cinderella in many respects. There is a young boy that is constantly put down by his two older brothers and they make fun of him for sitting in the ashes and tell him how he is not worthy. The young man also wins the princess' heart without anyone knowing who he truly is, much like Cinderella had in the story.

The stories in this section are more outrageous than some of the others found throughout the book. Their value seems to lie in entertainment, with less emphasis on a moral lesson. In this section of the book, most of the stories have talking objects and animals. In addition, it is quite common to find that everyday people have secrets and magical gifts.



Shape Shifters

Shape Shifters Summary

The Doctor and His Pupil comes from France. There is a young boy who is employed by a doctor with no instruction other than to dust a magical book that the doctor has. The doctor leaves and the boy learns everything he can from the book. The doctor figures out that the boy has been studying his book and the boy and the Doctor begin to shape shift into various creatures trying to outsmart each other. The boy is finally able to eat the Doctor when the boy changes into a fox while the Doctor is a chicken.

The Swan-Maiden originates in Sweden. A young hunter sees several swans land that transform into beautiful maidens. The hunter decides he wants one of them for his bride and so hides her feathers when she takes them off. She prays for them to be returned but the hunter takes her home. After they have been married seven years, the hunter tells her the truth and shows her the feathers. When they are placed in her hands, she transforms into a swan and flies out the window. The hunter dies a year later.

Sister Alionushka, Brother Ivanushka is from Russia. A brother is transformed into a goat and his sister cares for him. She is married by a king but then a sorceress ties a stone to the girl's neck and throws her into the sea. The king follows the goat, after it asking many times to go to the ocean, and hears the voice of his wife from the sea. The king pulls his wife out and releases her from her stone. The sorceress is burned at the stake.

The Balcksmith's Wife of Yarrowfoot is from Scotland. Two brothers work for a blacksmith. The younger brother begins to sicken and it is discovered that the wife of the blacksmith is really a witch and has been transforming the boy into a horse night after night. The older brother takes the place of the younger and once the witch has ridden him to their destination, he is able to get the bridle off. He traps her and puts the bridle on her and has proper horse shoes put on her. When they return home, she complains of being ill until a doctor is sent for. When the woman is inspected, the horse shoes nailed to her hands and feet are discovered and the brothers come forward to tell what has happened. The woman is burned at the stake.

The Seal's Skin is from Iceland. A man finds a fine seal skin and takes it home. When he returns to where he found it there is a woman standing naked weeping. He takes her home and keeps the seal skin locked in a chest. One day he forgets the key and she finds her seal skin. She weeps that she has children in the sea and on land. She is never seen again but there is a seal that visits the man and the children of his marriage often and throws them pretty shells and other presents.



Shape Shifters Analysis

Though all of these stories are from different cultures and parts of the world, it is easily seen how some of them are closely related. The story of The Seal's Skin and the story The Swan-Maiden are both about women able to change into beautiful, graceful creatures by putting on the skin of an animal. It is also seen that although the women seem to be happy in their marriage, it is not their first love and they return to where they began when they are able. The only difference in the actions of the two women in the stories is that the swan maiden is never mentioned again and her husband quickly dies. It could be that he dies of a broken heart but this is not revealed. The seal woman seems to be torn between the two worlds that she has been a part of and continues to come and visit her husband and children.

It seems that many of these stories could have been put into other sections since they have obvious themes of love and heroics, and sometimes a simple long-winded tale. The only common factor among these stories is the animal transition that a person goes through. Even the method by which the people change is different in all the stories. In some it is a simple action and the person is never changed back, in some the people wish to change and it seems it may be a gift that they possess from birth. In others there is mention of magic, sorcery and witches.



Not Quite Human

Not Quite Human Summary

The Well-Baked Man is a story from the Pima American Indians. The Magician that made man tries to make new beings that look like him. The coyote distracts him and the creatures come out very dark. This is where the Pueblo Indians come from.

The Finn Messenger is from Norway. A sailor has to leave his wife while she is with child. A man on his boat uses some type of magic and goes back to the sailor's house and fetches a unique object from the house, to prove he was there, and gives a report on how everyone is. When the sailor returns home, he finds it all to have been true.

Visilisa the Beautiful is from Russia. Visilisa's mother dies, but on her death bed gives a magical doll to Visilisa that will answer any question if fed. Visilisa uses the doll to save her life and free herself of a wicked step-mother. Visilisa also is able to marry a king because of the doll. Visilisa carries the doll in her pocket until she dies.

Bridget and the Lurikeen is from Ireland. Bridget is able to catch a Lurikeen and he is supposedly taking her to some gold. When they get to the castle, the Lurikeen gasps, saying the castle is on fire. Bridget is taken off guard and the Lurikeen is able to escape.

The Two Hunchbacks is from Italy. There are two brothers who both have humps on their backs. The older brother goes out and encounters old women who are singing a song. The brother introduces a new line into the song and the old women love it. They reward him by removing the hump from his back and hang it on a tree. The younger brother sees what has been done and goes to the old women and tries to introduce his own line into the song. The old women feel it has ruined their song and the rhyme, and as punishment take the hump on the tree and attach it to his front.

Then the Merman Laughed comes from Iceland. A fisherman catches a merman and takes him home. When his wife kisses him, he praises her, and when the dog comes to him, he scolds the dog and the merman laughs. The merman continues to laugh at the fisherman's foolishness and after three days the fisherman agrees to take the merman back to where he was caught. The merman explains that the man's wife wishes him dead and the dog loves the man more than his own life. The merman also says that the fisherman only has three days to live. Everything the merman says comes true.

Not Quite Human Analysis

Not Quite Human does not necessarily refer to a being or creature. It seems to be the focus of something behind the scenes that is the cause for what is going on. In the story of Visilisa, the beautiful the thing in the story that is not quite human appears to be the doll. Although this thing never is proven to be alive, it is obviously the focus of the story. There are also mythical creatures focused on throughout the stories. There are many

stories found throughout the book that could have easily have fit into this category because of their use of elves, imps and other creatures.

There are many stories that do not seem to have a moral or lesson. An example of this is The Finn Messenger story. In that story, there is a man who is worried about his family and one of the crew members goes to check on them. There is no indication that any life lesson is to be learned from this story. It may be that this is an older story that is intended to cause belief in these types of magicl. The truth of this story and others like it will be unexplained.



Folling the Devil

Folling the Devil Summary

The Peasant and the Devil comes from Germany. A peasant meets a little devil who tells him where a treasure is. The devil and the man strike a bargain to split what the man plants for a period of time, in return for what is taken. The man agrees but specifies what the devil will be able to have and then plants crops that leave the devil receiving nothing. In this way he tricks the devil.

Wicked John and the Devil is from the United States. A mean old man named John helps a beggar who comes by. The beggar turns into Saint Peter who gives John three wishes. John uses his wishes to be meaner to people and in the end the Devil is worried that John is going to be meaner than he is. When John dies, Saint Peter will not let him in and the Devil does not want him to come in either. The Devil gives John a little fiery coal and tells him to go start his own hell. That is the reason that there is a light that bobs around in the night between Virginia and Carolina.

The Bad Wife is from Russia. A man has a wife who does the opposite of everything he says is was very cruel to him. He finds a very deep pit one day and tricks her into the pit and goes home believing she will be kinder when he retrieves her. When he goes back to get her, he pulls out a little devil who begs him to not put him back in with the evil wife. The man and the imp go into Russia curing people that the imp jumps into until the man is quite wealthy. The imp goes into a noble man's daughter and warns the man to let him be this time. The man comes and the imp tries to eat him but the man says he is there to warn him that the evil wife is coming. The imp runs as fast as he can back to the deep hole to hide and there he remains with the evil wife.

Katcha and the Devil is from Czechoslovakia. A woman named Katcha is old and bitter and is asked to dance by a handsome man who turns out to be a devil. Katcha catches hold of him and will not let him go, to the point that the devil is frantic to be free. A shepherd helps the man, not knowing it is a devil, and the devil agrees to help the man in return. The governor and his two lords are to be taken to hell for their crimes against the people. The devil shows up and tells the shepherd that the two lords are to be given a second chance and tells the shepherd to show up and "save" them from the devil. The devil warns that the governor is to have no second chance and not to show up to help him. When the governor hears of how the two lords are helped, he begs for the shepherd's help. The shepherd agrees to try to help, despite the risk. When the devil shows up for the governor, the shepherd comes in to stop him. The devil is angry until the shepherd explains that Katcha is looking for him. The Devil leaves in great fear.

The Lawyer and the Devil is from Ireland. A poor man trades his soul to the devil in order to get his sons a good education. One becomes a priest, one a doctor and the third a lawyer. The devil comes to collect the old man's soul and the first two sons intervene and buy their father more time. The third son, the lawyer, comes when the



devil is back again and asks that the candle that burns be the time that his father has left; as long as there is a little candle left his father can remain. The devil agrees since there is not much candle there. The lawyer puts out the candle and quickly puts it in his pocket.

Folling the Devil Analysis

There are many different views of the devil from culture to culture. Some of the cultures make devils out to be creatures that are seemingly harmless, almost like trouble makers or pranksters rather than anything evil. Other cultures view them as creatures that keep their bargains but are not as smart as some men. In other stories the devil is able to outsmart the people and when a person is able to get out of their deal with the devil, it is at great cost to them, so that it is hard to say that they truly win.

Many of these stories focus on two different lessons. Some of the lessons focus on the need for a person to be quick thinking, and how being smart is better than being powerful. Other stories focus on the importance of not making a bargain without thinking it through. There are several characters in the stories that make rash promises, only to regret them later.

There are other sections in the book that many of these stories could have fit in. Once again, it is seen that the culture that these stories come from influences the way that they are seen and told.



The Getting of Wisdom

The Getting of Wisdom Summary

Truth and Falsehood comes from Greece. Truth is looking ragged and has not eaten in days since there are so few that know him any longer. Falsehood eats well and offers to help Truth out if he comes with him. Truth agrees and they go to a hotel where Falsehood accuses a boy working there of robbing him. The boy has his ears boxed and cries out for Truth. Truth from then on refuses to have anything to do with Falsehood even if he starves to death.

Getting Common Sense originates in Jamaica. Anansi wants to gather up all the common sense in the world and charge people for advising them. He gathers it all but has trouble climbing up the tree where he intends to hide the box. He drops it and all the common sense is scattered all over so that everyone gets a little bit.

Rich Man, Poor Man is a story from the Akamba in Africa. There is a rich man and a poor man and the poor man eats his tasteless dinner beside the rich man's house so that he can pretend his food smells as good as the rich man's. The rich man sues the poor man and it is ordered that the poor man is to pay the rich man the sound of a bleating goat. The rich man is only allowed to touch the goat if the poor man touches his food.

The story of the Lost Horse comes from China. A young man loses his prize horse which his father says might be a blessing. The horse returns and brings with it a fine horse. The father says this might be a disaster. The son falls off the fine looking horse and breaks his hip. The father says this might be a blessing. There is a war and all able bodied men are called to go to battle. Nine out of ten men are killed but the son is spared because of his broken hip.

It Could Always Be Worse is from Jewish culture. A man comes to the rabbi complaining about the home he lives in with his large extended family. The rabbi tells the man to bring all the farm animals into the house. The man does as he is told and the next day comes back complaining. The rabbi tells him to kick the chickens out of the house. The next day when the man comes to complain, the rabbi tells him to kick out the goat. The next day the man comes to complain, the rabbi tells him to kick out the cow. Several days later the man comes and tells the rabbi how wonderful and roomy his nice home is.

The Getting of Wisdom Analysis

The getting of wisdom does not necessarily require a magical method for attaining other worldly knowledge. It often refers to common sense. In the story of the rabbi who tells the man how to become happy with his current living conditions in "It Could Always Be Worse," the wisdom he imparts is simply the fact that things could be worse. There are



also life lessons in Djuha's Sleeve, wherein he says that he will not keep his clothes from dipping into the food since they respect his fine clothing more than him.

There are many different kinds of wisdom received in the various stories in this chapter. Some are intended to leave the hearer thinking on the meaning of them. The last story in this section is titled "The Happy Man's Shirt" and comes from Italy. In this story the king is trying to save his depressed son by trading shirts with a man who is truly happy. When the king finds such a man, the story ends with the revelation that the poor man has no shirt. While this story is very straightforward in many ways, the meaning behind the switching of the shirts and the fact that the happy man has no shirt will be left up to the reader to decipher.



Ghosts and Revenants

Ghosts and Revenants Summary

Orpheus and Eurydice comes from Greece. Orpheus and Eurydice are married but shortly thereafter Eurydice is bitten by a snake and dies. Orpheus travels to the land of the dead and sings a song for her return. The song is so beautiful that her return is granted but Orpheus is warned not to look at her until they are back in the land of the living. When they get near the land of the living, Orpheus forgets the warning and looks back in excitement, only to have Eurydice disappear from him forever.

The Spirit Wife is from the Zuni American Indians. A man loses his wife and tries to get her back from the spirit world. He is able to get her but is warned not to touch her until he reaches his home where they were born or else she will be lost to him forever. Upon seeing her, he cannot control himself and reaches his hand out to her. She weeps as she dies a second time that he did not love her enough to wait.

One Night in Paradise originates in Italy. In that story two men make a pact to be the best man at each other's wedding. One man dies but comes back from the dead to be the best man at his friend's wedding. The dead friend takes the groom to the hereafter so that the man may see it but only stays for a moment before returning. When he is back home he recognizes nothing and figures out he has been gone for three hundred years. Upon hearing this, he falls down dead.

A Pretty Girl in the Road comes from the United States. A man picks up a girl on the road and decides he loves her. After he drops her off, he goes to her house and is invited in, where it is explained that the couple's one and only daughter died some time before.

The Dream House comes from Ireland. A wealthy woman in Ireland dreams of the same house every night until it is quite a joke. She and her husband decide to move to England and the house they look at is the exact house from her dreams. They buy the house and then discover that she has been haunting the house for some time.

Ghosts and Revenants Analysis

Ghost stories seem to be found throughout history in every culture. The few that are given in this section of the book show the different ways that the subject of ghosts is looked at. Some ghosts are scary while others are comforting or even loving. Some of the stories, such as the one of Orpheus and Eurydice, might be well known because of the popular retelling of Greek and Roman stories. Some of the stories have a close relationship to other well known ghost stories and legends.

Ghost stories appear to be a subject of much interest because of the uncertainty of what happens after death. There is often the idea that human emotion may be enough to

keep a spirit bound to the earth well after their life is over. The emotion may be that of love, hate, revenge or a pledge that needs to be fulfilled. Despite the many different reasons, there is not a shortage of ghost stories to be found in any culture.



Death and the World's End

Death and the World's End Summary

The Duration of Life comes from Germany. God creates the world and gives each thing its allotted time on earth. He gives each thirty years but it is too much for the ass, the dog and the monkey, who beg for less. When man comes along he wants more than thirty so God gives him the time the other three did not want. So the first thirty years of a man's life is easy, the next eighteen are with heavy burdens, like the ass' burdens, the next twelve years are the dog's and the man lies in a corner growling with no teeth. At the end are the monkey's ten years and man is weak-headed and foolish and does silly things.

Woman Chooses Death is a Blackfoot American Indian story. Old Man creates woman and child and lets her decide if people live or die. She does not know anything and so picks up a stone and says if it floats people will live forever but if it sinks they will die. The stone sinks and so the choice is made.

Jump Into My Sack is from Italy. A young boy goes out into the world and is given a gift of a magical sack and a magical stick by a fairy. The boy spends his life doing good with the gifts and helping people. At the end of his life when he is old, he goes to see the fairy once again and because of his goodness she offers him youth and health but he rejects it, saying he is happy to die now that he has seen her again. With that Death appears and takes him.

Youth Without Age and Life Without Death originates in Turkey. A young man leaves his father's home in search of immortality. While he is gone he battles many mythical creatures. When he returns, his horse tries to get him to come back with him and the boy recognizes nothing although he has been away only a short time. When the horse is gone the boy begins to age heavily. He opens up a box and finds there his own death and so it takes him. If the young man had stayed away a short time longer, his own death would have died without him and he would have had his life without death.

Goha On the Deathbed is from Egypt. Goha is about to die and tells his wife to get dressed and made up in her finest. When she is done he explains that he knows that death always chooses the best and he hopes that death will take her instead of him.

Death and the World's End Analysis

There are many stories that relate to death and the end of the world. The author of the book spends a moment explaining that there are too many of these stories to put into the book. While these stories are focused on the end of the world and death, many of them start out with the way that the world began. Some of the stories are focused on the larger story of the entire world ending while others have a much smaller focus and look at one individual. There seems to be a theme in the story that a life that is well lived is

enough, and that death is nothing to be feared. In the story of Youth Without Age and Life Without Death, the beautiful boy spends all his life trying to find a way to be immortal and does not actually live his life. The boy in the story of Jump Into My Sack is content with the wonderfully long life he has lived and refuses to take the gift from the fairy of youth and life.

Many of the stories seem seem to be a prophesy or a recommendation of how to best enjoy the life that you have. Some of the stories appear to very similar to stories found in the Bible, Greek mythology, and other cultures from around the world. Though they are unique to themselves, they do have similarities that all point out the mortality of humans and finality of it.



Characters

Catherine appears in Catherine, Sly Country Lass

Catherine is a very smart girl. There are many wives in the stories that either have no name or are there only to torment their husbands. Catherine is very smart and is able to outsmart the king. This is unique in fairy tales, myths and legends since often women were to be seen and not necessarily heard. However, Catherine is willing to speak out against her husband's judgments even though he is the king.

Catherine also seems to be kind and compassionate as is demonstrated when the man comes to her about losing his calf because his calf had cow tied to the man's cart when it gave birth. It is never stated but with the way that Catherine acts when her husband, the king, sends her home, it appears she may love him. She takes him with her when she goes home, saying that since she was able to take home the thing she liked the best, she chose him. This may also be simple cleverness on her part.

Catherine's father warned her about her husband becoming angry with her after a time. This may indicate that her father realized how independent his daughter was or the changing whims of a king. Despite his warning, Catherine does well for herself.

Finn MacCumhail appears in The Birth of Finn MacCumhail

Finn has an unusual story starting before he was born. Finn's father is prophesied to die when he marries and so refuses to marry until he finds a woman so beautiful that he does not care if he dies or not. The woman is a princess and her father, the king, has had it prophesied that he will lose his kingdom to his daughter's son. With all this information given about the main character's lineage, it is easy to see how he is a person of interest.

Finn is raised by his grandmother and she hides him well but also teaches him well. It appears that she realizes the struggles that Finn will have to face in regards to his grandfather, the king. Finn grows quickly and becomes strong and smart. His grandmother has so much faith in him that she ultimately sacrifices herself in order that Finn might live.

Finn faces several challenges, including a match with a one eyed giant. Although Finn has a lot of help from those around him, his grandmother and Bran, it is clear that he is quick-witted. In the end, Finn is able to complete his destiny and take what is rightfully his.



Glooscap appears in Glooscap and the Baby

Glooscap is a god in American Indian legend. He has bested everything and is sad that there is nothing else for him to pitted against. Ultimately Glooscap looses his battle to a baby since he can get no response out of the child.

Hadji appears in What Happened to Hadji

Hadji is married but is not completely faithful to his wife. His wife is able to catch him and trick him into prison. She is able to save him from this fate and he realizes how smart his wife is.

Mr. Fox appears in Mr. Fox

Mr. Fox is the man that is courting Lady Mary. Mr. Fox is killed when Mary provides the hand of the lady that Mr. Fox killed.

Sedna appears in Sedna

Sedna is a beautiful young Eskimo girl who leaves to marry a man who claims to be rich. The man turns out to be a sky spirit and Sedna is cold and hungry with nothing to eat but fish. Sedna is killed by her father. The blood from her fingers produces the animals in the oceans. Sedna has her father and her dog brought to the bottom of the sea with her.

Anansi appears in Being Greedy Chokes Anansi

Anansi tricks people into saying the witch queen's name, Five, after which they fall dead and Anansi eats them. Anansi is tricked himself and eaten.

Lucy appears in The Pretty Girl in the Road

Lucy is the girl that is picked up by the traveler on a horse. When he goes to her house, he finds that the people did have a daughter but she died seven years earlier. The place he picked Lucy up was where her house had burned.

Djuha appears in Djuha's Sleeve

Djuha is refused admittance to a dinner until he has on nicer clothes. Djuha realizes that they respect his clothes more than him.



Goha appears in Goha On the Deathbed

Goha is dying and asks his wife to make herself up and dress in her nicest clothes. When she is done she sits by him and he explains that Death, it is said, takes the best. Goha hopes that upon seeing his wife made up in her finest, Death will take her and not Goha.



Objects/Places

Fly appears in The Fly

The fly is the thing that is used as a witness when the rich man offers to do away with the family's debt. The fly is unable to talk but the little boy is able to trick the man using the fly.

Bear appears in The Prayer That Was Answered

The bear in The Prayer That Was Answered is what is left in the beautiful maiden's place inside the trunk. When the man gets the trunk back to the house, he opens it, believing the beautiful girl to be inside, and is killed by the bear.

Parrot appears in The Waiting Maid's Parrot

The parrot turns out to be the sister of the maid. She takes messages back and forth between the maid and the young man until the maid is killed. The parrot brings them together.

Cauldron appears in The Hodja and the Cauldron

The Cauldron is borrowed and first said to have a baby. Later it is reported that the cauldron has died. Since the owner accepts that the cauldron had a baby, he cannot deny that it died. Anything capable of giving birth is capable of dying.

Doll appears in Vasilisa the Beautiful

The doll has magical powers although they are never described. The doll eats food that it is given and then answers any question that it is asked. After her mother gives it to her on her death bed, Vasilisa keeps the doll in her dress all her life.

Seal Skin appears in The Seal's Skin

The seal skin is what the man takes and then marries the girl it belongs to. She is forced to stay in human form until her skin is returned to her. Once she is able to transform back into a seal, she returns to the sea, never to return to land.



Book appears in The Doctor and His Pupil

The book is studied by the young boy who is paid to keep the book in good repair. The book has spells that teach transformation.

Three Golden Apples appears in The Princess on the Glass Hill

The golden apples are the rewards that the princess gives out to those that complete the tasks the king sets forth. It is Boots that completes each of these tasks and gets the three golden apples.

Sack appears in Jump Into My Sack

The sack in this story is given to the boy by a magic fairy. All the boy has to do is call for something and it is pulled into his sack. He uses the sack to help many people. He even pulls death itself into the sack. Once his life is over and he is old, the boy, now an old man, is told to burn the sack before he dies.

Stick appears in Jump Into My Sack

The stick is given to the boy by a magical fairy. The stick obeys anything the boy tells it to do. The stick is burned when the boy's life is over. It is used to do good for people.

Serpent appears in Li Chi Slays the Serpent

The serpent is a huge mythical creature that can communicate with those in the village through their dreams. It demands a young girl be sacrificed to it once a year. It is killed by Li Chi.

Themes

Life and Death

There is a constant reminder of the theme of life and death in the many different stories gathered in this book. The many stages of life are looked at in the section titled "The Very Young and The Very Old." There is often a view of how people change and the similarities that people encounter between their youth and their very old age. There are many stories that look at the beginning of life and what their individual culture has to say on the subject of the way that life begins. There are some stories that seem to lessen the value of life while others seem to put a very high value on it.

Other stories focus on death. Many characters in the stories spend their lives, short or long, trying to figure out a way to gain immortality. There are other characters that turn down a chance at longer life because they have had enough of the world and are looking forward to paradise, rest, or the hereafter. Even some of the animals seen in the story ask for a shorter time to toil on the earth so that they can have their reward faster. In some stories, death and life are looked at side by side; where there is life, there is death.

The Strength of Love

There is a reoccurring theme of love found throughout the stories. The most popular is of the love that happens between two people, often as man and wife. Many times the stories that have the theme of love between a man and a woman, exhibit the strength of that love by examining it after death. It is common for the love to go beyond death and for there to be a message from beyond the grave. It is also common for one of the characters to try to bring their loved one back from the dead.

Another aspect of love seen is that between family members. In the story "Jump Into My Sack," the young boy in that story always misses his eleven brothers, although his brothers did not treat their youngest brother well. Despite this, the love for his brothers is a constant subject for him. The love between parents and children is also looked at.

In addition to these kinds of love, there is another kind of love that is often looked at although it is not always named as love. This love is a love that a character has for themselves. This is shown with characters that strive for money, wealth, focus on their good looks and many that strive for immortality. While this is not named as self love, it appears that these characters focus so highly on themselves that it is easily seen how they can be construed as being in love with themselves.



The Desire for Power

The desire for power is seen in many different cultures in many different ways. It is common for some cultures to use gods and mythical creatures to symbolize the character seeking power. Sometimes the power is in the form of a kingdom or money. There are some stories where the power is a well with magic water inside. Although this is not something that gives the person the ability to control the world, it is desired and looked at as a type of power.

There are many princes and kings that fight for power throughout the story and it is common for a struggle to occur within a family. There are several brothers that are hindered, and some sisters, by their jealous siblings. These siblings are trying hard to get ahead at the cost of their family, and often come to a bad end.

There is also a desire magical or spiritual power. This power is seen in such stories as "The Doctor and His Pupil." Although it is never stated, it appears that the doctor wishes to have the young boy killed because he is able to get the knowledge from the book and knowledge is power. There is also another power struggle that happens between people in the story. There are wives and husbands that struggle with each other and many that are not as closely related, but the desire for power is clearly seen.



Style

Point of View

The point of view in these stories varies. The majority of the stories seem to be in third person, past tense. There are some stories that are told in the first person, as if the person telling the stories viewed them first hand, and talks as if they are in the process of doing something that pertains to the story in some way. An example of this is shown in *Young Without Age* and *Life Without Death*. At the end of this story the narrator says that he is still on his steed.

Since there are many different stories from many different cultures, there are both stories that are limited and omniscient in their point of view. There are many different cultures that are looked at for each story. It becomes clear that the culture plays a role in the point of view. Some of the cultures look down on anyone that would anger the gods or pretend to be a deity and that person is severely punished, while other cultures seemingly encourage it. There is also a distinct difference between certain cultures in regards to the role that women play and the point of view that is allowed to be seen from the women. In some of the stories the woman's point of view will be seen only rarely or not at all even though she seems to have a large impact on the story. There is a reoccurring theme between some of the cultures but the points of view will differ for each. Sometimes there will be only one main character but other times there will be several.

Setting

There are many different settings in the stories. The different cultures all have their own settings. There are settings that deal with real life and happenings that make the stories easily believable. There are also stories that take a closer look at deities, gods and afterlife. In many of these stories there are objects and people that are unique and specific to that culture. Sometimes it may be harder to recognize or understand these pieces of information if little is known about these cultures, since the author does not detail each culture. There are also some stories that focus purely on mythical settings. There are stories that contain magical dragons, talking animals and other magical transformations.

Some of the stories include brief mentions of historical facts or people. In many of the stories, the time is unknown to the reader. The language in the story and phrases will at times lend a clue as to the time frame.

Language and Meaning

The language in the story changes with each culture that is looked at. Some of the language is much more stiff and formal. In many of these, there are noble people or



deities talking. In other stories the language is very informal and common place. There are also creatures and people that seem to be ignorant or of low intelligence. These characters will speak differently than others. There are some creatures that only speak in rhyme and verses. The reason for this may be to make them seem different from humans. This trait is seen in both magical creatures and those that are dead.

Some of the stories have been translated from one language to another but there are also dialects that play a role in the language. There are many terms used in Irish tales that are unique to the culture, as in Jewish, Turkish and other stories. Some of these terms might not be immediately recognized but they are easily understood. The stories that are from the United States seem to be written with poor grammar and spelling. This is perhaps to emphasis the tone and time that they were written in. There is a brief section in the back to lend further information about the different cultures shown and to help the reader grasp any unclear meanings.

Structure

Favorite Folktales from Around the World contains 498 pages. There are thirteen different sections in the book. Each section has a title that gives an indication as to the theme of the story that is found within that section. Although many of these stories could be classified in more than one section, they are well organized. There are multiple stories found in each section. Each story is from a different culture from different parts of the world. In the front of the book there is an introduction that gives the reader a basis for the stories being introduced and the motivation and reason for remembering folktales. There is a section at the back that gives what information is known about each story. Some of the stories do not have much information to go along with them, perhaps because of their age. Other stories have a lot of information. Each one has listed the place where the author found the story and any other relative information available, such as date written and the original author. There is also a table of contents at the front of the book to help the reader navigate, should they know what they are looking for.

There are so many stories within the book that there is not room to write a summary on each one. Here is list of stories that were not covered: "The Wise Little Girl", "Clever Answers", "A Dispute In Sign Language", "Leopard, Goat, and Yam", "An Endless Story", "When One Man Has Two Wives", "The Old Man and His Grandson", "Half a Blanket", "Urashima the Fisherman", "The Spirit of the Van", "The Toad-Bridegroom", "Taken", "The Girl at the Shieling", "Deer Hunter and White Corn Maiden", "The Master Thief", "Peik", "The Monkey and the Crocodile", "The Race Between Toad and Donkey", "The King's Son Goes Bear Hunting", "John Brodison and the Policeman", "The Rabbi and the Inquisitor", "The Ugly Son", "Dividing the Goose", "The Men Who Wouldn't Stay Dead", "The Story of Campriano", "The Old Man and Woman Who Switched Jobs", "The Two Old Women's Bet", "A Stroke of Luck", "Nail Soup", "Old Dry Frye", "Bye-by", "The Barn is Burning", "The Orphan Boy and the Elk Dog", "Molly Whuppie", "The Beginning of the Narran Lake", "The Flying Head", "The Story of the Youth Who Went Forth to Learn What Fear Was", "The Magic Mirror of Rabbi Adam", "The Old Woman Who Lived in a Vinegar Bottle", "The Magic Pear Tree", "Faithful John", "Four Hound-



Dog Stories", "The Wounded Seal", "The Cat-Woman", "The Serpent-Woman", "The Snake's Lover", "Peregrin and the Mermaid", "The Ash Lad Who Had an Eating Match with the Troll", "How Mosquitoes Came to Be", "The Departure of the Giants", "Coals on the Devil's Hearth", "The Devil's Hide", "How El Bizarron Fooled the Devil", "Bearskin", "The Lad and the Devil", "Wiley and the Hairy Man", "His Just Reward", "Djuha's Sleeve", "King Matyas and His Scholars", "The Missing Axe", "What Melody Is the Sweetest?", "The Peddler of Swaffham", "The Beduin's Gazelle", "The Happy Man's Shirt", "The Peasant and the Fiend", "The Tinker and the Ghost", "Hold Him, Tabb", "Drinking Companions", "The Ostler and the Grave Robbers", "Death of a Miser", "Godfather Death", "The Hungry Peasant, God, and Death", "A Paddock in Heaven", "How a Man Found His Wife in the Land of the Dead", and "The End of the World."



Quotes

"So he made it known that the one who could lie so that he made her say, 'You're a liar!' would get both her and half the kingdom." (Telling Tales; The Ash Lad Who Made the Princess say "You're a Liar!", p. 28)

"It is the consequences of that love that are explored in folktales." (True Loves and False, p. 67)

"I cannot help thinking that a little dog, handsome, faithful and engaging, would be the very thing to make me happy, so I declare that he who brings me the most perfect little dog shall be my successor." (True Loves and False; The White Cat, p. 95)

"This story shows that what they say is right: 'Being greedy chokes the puppy.'" (Tricksters, Rogues, and Cheats; Being Greedy Chokes Anansi, p. 131)

"Then the hard-hearted robbers felt pity, and their leader tore up the letter and wrote another, saying, that as soon as the boy came, he should be married at once to the king's daughter." (Heroes: Likely and Unlikely, p. 213)

"Once upon a time, and a very good time it was too, when the streets were paved with penny loaves and houses were whitewashed with buttermilk and the pigs ran around with knives and forks in their snouts shouting: 'Eat me, eat me!' there lived a King of Ireland and he had three sons named Art, Neart and Ceart." (Wonder Tales, Tall Tales, and Brag; The King of Ireland's Son, p. 248)

"Your dog loves you as dearly as his own life, but your wife wishes you were dead, and she is a whore." (Not Quite Human; Then the Merman Laughed, p. 347)

"Today the giants are gone, but you may still see the great stones they used for foundations of their houses, and here or there people find the remains of the enormous tombs in which the giants were buried." (Not Quite Human; The Departure of the Giants, p. 352)

"The peasant had one day been working in his field, and as twilight had set in, was making ready for the journey home, when he saw a heap of burning coals in the middle of his field, and when, full of astonishment, he went up to it, a little black Devil was sitting on the live coals." (Fooling the Devil; The Peasant and the Devil, p. 358)

"At last she said, 'You loved me, but you did not love me enough; otherwise you would have waited. Now I shall die again.'" (Ghosts and Revenants; The Spirit-Wife, p. 427)

"But had he remained away but a little longer, his Death would have died, and he himself would have been living now." (Death and the World's End; Youth Without Age and Life Without Death, p. 465)



"The Sioux people used to say that if the old woman ever finishes her blanket strip, then at the very moment that she threads the last porcupine quill to complete the design, the world will come to an end." (Death and the World's End; The End of the World, p. 475)



Topics for Discussion

Discuss love. List three characters from three different stories in the book that seem to show a genuine love. In what ways did they express this love? What leads you to believe it was true love?

Describe Catherine's character from the story "Catherine, the Sly Country Lass." Is this story realistic? Explain why or why not.

In the story of "Glooscap and the Baby," explain what the story teller was trying to relate through that story? What was the moral or lesson from the story? Is there another story in the book that parallels this story or lesson?

In the story of the Toad-Bridegroom, the toad pretends to be a god giving a message and is rewarded for it. In the story of The Prayer that Was Answered the man that pretends to be a god giving a message is killed. Compare these two stories and the lessons gleaned from them.

Chelm Justice is very short. What is the point of this story? Is this a story that has a meaning that is well understood? Does the background on the Chelm help the reader to better understand this short story? Explain.

Pick out three different cultures that are repeatedly looked at throughout the book. What are the differences in the stories told from these three cultures. In what ways are they similar? Explain your answer.

In the section titled Shape Shifters, what common folklore is easily recognized? What folklore seems unique and is different? Explain your answers.

Pick a story in the book that you believe is mainly meant as entertainment and has no, or scant, life lesson in it. Explain your answer.