

MOROZKO

A Russian Folk Tale



Once there lived an old widower and his daughter. After some time, the man remarried. This time to an older woman who had a daughter from a previous marriage. The woman treated own daughter very well, praising her at every opportunity, but she despised her stepdaughter. She found fault with everything the girl did and made her work long and hard all day long.

One day, the old woman made up her mind to get rid of the stepdaughter once and for all.

She ordered her husband, “Take her somewhere far away. Don't take her to some relative's house. Take her into the biting cold of the forest, and leave her there.”

The old man grieved and wept but he knew that there was nothing could do; his wife always had her way.

So he took the girl into the forest and left her there. He turned his back to go home quickly so that he would not have to see daughter girl freeze in the cold of the forest.

The poor thing, sat there in the snow, with her body shivering and her teeth chattering!

Then Morozko (Father Frost), leaping from tree to tree, came upon her.

“Are you warm, dear?” he asked.

“Welcome, my dear Morozko. Yes, I am quite warm,” she said, even though she was cold to the bone.

At first, Morozko had wanted to freeze the life out of her with his icy grip, but he admired the young girl's strength and so he showed her mercy. He gave her a warm fur coat and downy quilts before he left.

In a while, Morozko returned to check on the girl. “Are you warm, dear?” he asked.

“Welcome again, my dear Morozko. Yes, I am very warm,” she said.

And indeed she was warmer. So this time Morozko brought a large box for her to sit on.

Once again he left to do the things he normally did in the dead of winter.

A little later, Morozko returned once more to ask how she was doing.

She was doing quite well now. She was not cold at all.

“How are you my dear. Are you warm enough?” Morozko asked.

“I am doing very well, thank you. Especially because of your generosity” the young girl replied.

This time Morozko gave her silver and gold jewelry to wear, with enough extra jewels to fill the box on which she was sitting!

Meanwhile, back at her father's hut, the old woman told her husband to go back into the forest and fetch the body of his daughter.

“Bring back what's left of her,” she ordered.

The old man did as he was told and went back into the woods.

Joy overwhelmed him when he saw his daughter was still alive, wrapped in a sable coat and adorned with silver and gold!

When he arrived home with his daughter and the box of jewels, his wife looked on in amazement.

“Harness the horse, you old goat, and take my daughter to that same spot in the forest and leave her there,” she said with greed in her eye.

The old man did as he was told.

Like the other girl at first, the old woman's daughter began to shake and shiver. In a short while, Morozko came by and asked her how she was doing.

“Are you blind?” she replied. “Can't you see that my hands and feet are quite numb? Curse you, you miserable old man!”

Dawn had hardly broken the next day when, back at the old man's hut, the old woman woke her husband and told him to bring back her daughter, adding, “Be careful with the box of jewels.”

The old man obeyed and went to get the girl.

A while later, the gate to the yard creaked. The old woman went outside and saw her husband standing next to the sleigh. She rushed forward and pulled aside the sleigh's cover. To her horror, she saw the body of her daughter, frozen by an angry Morozko. She began to scream and curse at her husband, but it was all in vain.

Later, the old man's daughter married a neighbor, had children, and lived happily. Her father would visit his grandchildren every now and then, and remind them always to respect Morozko, Old Man Winter.

VOCABULARY (*Match the word to its definition*)

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. widower _____ | a. mourned, sorrow |
| 2. doted _____ | b. noise from a rusty door |
| 3. grieved _____ | c. scold, punish with words |
| 4. shiver _____ | d. man whose wife has died |
| 5. fetch _____ | e. sled pulled by horses |
| 6. adorn _____ | f. give special attention to |
| 7. creak _____ | g. shake from being too cold |
| 8. sleigh _____ | h. beautify, decorate |
| 9. berate _____ | i. too much to handle |
| 10. overwhelmed _____ | j. get, retrieve |

TRUE OR FALSE

- | | |
|--|-------|
| 1. The old man had a son. | T / F |
| 2. The old man's first wife died. | T / F |
| 3. The old man remarried and young woman. | T / F |
| 4. The stepdaughter was friendly. | T / F |
| 5. The old man's daughter went to the beach. | T / F |
| 6. Morozko is father summer. | T / F |
| 7. The first daughter died in the cold. | T / F |
| 8. The second daughter died in the cold. | T / F |
| 9. The first daughter was given a fur coat. | T / F |
| 10. The stepmother wanted to be rich. | T / F |

MULTIPLE CHOICE:

1. What did Morozko give to the daughter of the old man? ____
 - a) jewels
 - b) ice
 - c) food
 - d) a new sleigh

2. Why did Morozko take care of the first daughter? ____
 - a) she was beautiful
 - b) she was tired
 - c) she was honest
 - d) she was kind

3. Why did the stepmother have the old man take his daughter to the forest?

 - a) she hated the daughter
 - b) she wanted to test the daughter
 - c) she loved the daughter
 - d) she liked the cold

4. What happened to the second daughter? ____
 - a) she was rich
 - b) she died
 - c) she became Morozko
 - d) she went home

COMPREHENSION: *(Write a complete sentence to answer the question.)*

1. What happened to the old man's first wife?

2. Why did the stepmother want to get rid of the stepdaughter?

3. What did the stepmother tell the old man to do?

4. Who found the stepdaughter in the forest?

5. What did Morozko give the stepdaughter?

6. Who went to find the stepdaughter in the forest?

7. What did the stepdaughter have in her box?

8. Why did the stepmother send her daughter into the forest?

9. What happened to the stepmother's daughter?

10. What happened to the daughter of the old man at the end of the story?
