

Ukrainian Folk Tales



Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Originally published in London in 1964 by Rupert Hart-Davis from the famed original collections of Ivan Rudchenko, Ukrainian ethnographer, and Maria Lukiyanenko, Ukrainian historian and teacher, *Ukrainian Folk Tales* was republished in 1999 by Hippocrene Books. The dust jacket (front and back) is enhanced and enriched by the colorful woodcuts of Ukrainian-American award-winning artist Jacques Hnizdovsky (1915-1985), which depict characters from each of the folk tales. Some of these colored illustrations also appear as black and white enhancements to the folk tales; each folk tale is accompanied by black and white woodcuts illustrating scenes from the Ukrainian folk tales. Hnizdovsky has exhibited widely and his works are in the permanent collections of many museums worldwide. Born in the Ternopil region of Ukraine, he emigrated to the United States in 1949; after his death in 1985, he was buried at the Lychakivskiy Cemetery in Lviv, Ukraine. Translated very aptly by Marie Halun Bloch, who informs in her Translator's Note that eight of the twelve Ukrainian folk tales within are from the original collection of Ivan Rudchenko and the remaining four are from Maria Lukiyanenko's collection. Most of the stories were written down verbatim and are, therefore, as true a translation as could be expected. Found within the covers are a fox, wild board, bear, dog, cat, goat, wolf, sparrow and chanticleer who manage through "many surprising Slavic twists" to entertain and educate as "greed and gullibility are justly punished and quick wits and ingenuity triumph over brutish strength every time." Five stars plus for *Ukrainian Folk Tales*, which not only mirror human failings and foibles, and present a humorous commentary on life

in general, but are enhanced by illustrations by an American-Ukrainian award-winning artist Jacques Hnizdovsky. Addendum: Children may enjoy other books on Ukrainian topics, which I've reviewed--many of them have images taken by me in Ukraine. There are currently sixteen books listed on my Listmania list entitled, "Children's Corner--for the Young and the Young at Heart..." Sometimes, there are several editions of one book, so be sure to find the ones with a review by Mandrivnyk. Readers, you're invited to visit each of my reviews--most of them have photos that I took in Ukraine (over 600)--you'll learn lots about Ukraine and Ukrainians. The image gallery shows smaller photos, which are out of sequence. The preferable way is to see each review through my profile page since photos that are germane to that particular book/VHS/DVD are posted there with notes and are in sequential order. To visit my reviews: click on my pseudonym, Mandrivnyk, to get to my profile page; click on the tab called review; scroll to the bottom of the section, and click on see all reviews; click on each title, and on the left-hand side, click on see all images. The thumbnail images at the top of the page show whether photos have notes; roll your mouse over the image to find notes posted. Also, you're invited to visit my Listmania lists, which have materials sorted by subject matter.

I love this book. This book has so many interesting stories in it. Ukraine is such a nice country. Thank you.

An excellent collection of folktales, this book was originally published in England in the early 1960's. Graphic woodblock prints from the original publication make the pages of great interest. The tales themselves, although following standard folktale patterns, seem new and fascinating. There's a cumulative tale (like "The Old Woman and Her Pig") that uses a sparrow sitting on a stalk of grass and issuing a whole series of demands. Eventually the story unwinds, each person or thing does his assigned job, and the grass begins to sway and sing "Rockabye, bad little sparrow." There is a rooster (Chanticleer) whose friend the cat saves him from the fox--time after time; a billy goat and a sheep who work together to outwit the wolves who want to eat them; a cat (Pan Kotsky) who has all the other animals convinced that he will tear them to pieces. When they finally scatter, leaving Pan Kotsky alone in a tree, he warily comes down--scared to death! In another tale, even though God provides first a mare, then a ram and finally a pig for the wolf to eat, he never gets to eat them or the tailor that God points out as his last chance. A motif that recurs in one story is that of the old dog who has outgrown his usefulness--what shall he do now? In this case, a wolf arranges events so the dog can save his master's baby, and once again he is a favored pet. In return the dog sees that the

wolf gets food.

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