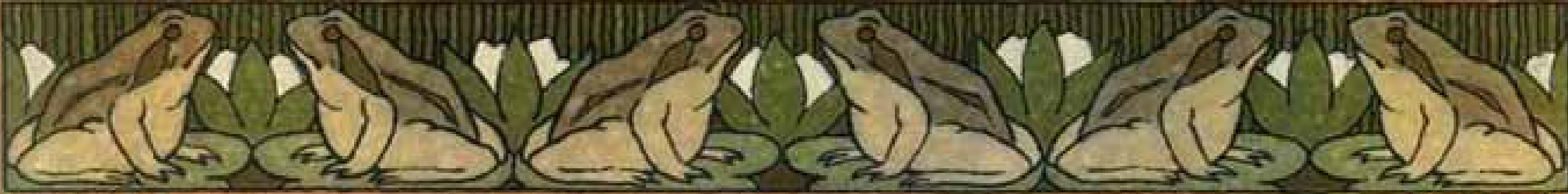




Baba Zaga's
Dancing Hut
and other fairy stories

a narrative
entertainment

by Dick Wedig



Setup

Each player draws or picks one of the primary character cards. Your job as player will be primarily to describe the acts, thoughts and deeds of this primary character (PC). This is a story about these primary characters, and you are responsible for this one in particular. Speak in their voice and narrate their actions. When other players are playing their PCs, you can describe details of the scene or setting, you can introduce and play a minor character (MC) or you can play your own PC, if they have been brought into the scene.

Fairy tales can be capricious and cruel. Recognize that the story may not always go your way and that your character may suffer. Always choose the most dramatically compelling option, even if it is worse for your character.

Each primary character card has a few questions. The first questions relate to your PC's desire. Your desire is what you hope to achieve in this story. Choose one of those two to ask and then do this:

- Ask the question out loud for all to hear.
- Draw from the fate deck and ask one other player how that card describes or symbolizes the answer to the question.
- Turn to a second player and have them offer a different interpretation of the fate card and how it applies.
- One of these interpretations is true. Choose whichever one you think makes for a more interesting story.

Once you know what you want, the player on your right tells you why you cannot possibly have that. This might be their character opposing yours, or it might be simply a fact of the world opposing you. That player is then in charge of presenting opposition to your character as you play the game.

Shuffle the complications cards. Place 5 of the complications into a pile. Remove the other complications from the game. You won't be using them. Shuffle the complications deck and draw facedown a number equal to the number of players minus one. Add the Beginnings card to this pile and shuffle it. Deal one card to each player. (If you did this right, there should be one for every player.) Players can look at their complication card, but should leave it facedown for now.

Scenes

At the start of each scene, the player with the Beginnings card chooses which primary character (not their own) the next scene will start with. They choose one of the available questions off that character and ask it out loud. Give the Beginnings card to that character's player. Then frame a scene that will address that question and hopefully answer it: describe where the scene is occurring and who is present and what is happening when it begins.

Collectively, everyone will now play out a scene working toward answering that question. Roleplay out the events of the question until it has been answered. Speak as your character, describe environments, act as needed for your character or as NPCs until we know the truth of the situation. You can introduce your PC or an NPC into the scene with the advice of the scene framer or the scene's protagonist. The player that framed the scene is in charge of describing the location and assigning people to play NPCs, whenever NPCs enter the scene.

At some point the question will be answered. Then you should work to quickly wrap up the scene and move on. You can always return to the situation in a later scene. If you ever get sidetracked from answering the question, gently remind your fellow players of the point of the scene and work to shift the scene back on topic.



Complications

Most players start with a complication card. Keep your initial complication draw hidden from the other players (you may look at it at any time.) During any scene, you can play your complication to make a twist in the story. You can have multiple complications per scene, but don't go crazy playing every single one in a given scene.

When you play a complication, do this:

- Interrupt a scene with the ritual phrase on the card. If the card was face-down, reveal it to everyone.
- Draw from the fate deck and ask one other player how that card describes or symbolizes the interruption.
- Turn to a second player and have them offer a different interpretation of the fate card and how it applies.
- One of these interpretations is true. Choose whichever one you think makes for a more interesting story.
- If you were revealing the complication card, then give it to that player that offered the correct interpretation. They keep the card faceup in front of them. If you were using a faceup complication, then discard it.
- The primary character that was most harmed or inconvenienced by the complication can draw a complication card from the deck, if there are any left in it. Typically, this will be the protagonist of the scene, but this need not be the case. (The group needs to reach a consensus on this.)

Endings

At some point in the story, you can turn your character card over to the second side. This transitions you into the ending portion of your story. Do this if:

- All your "Once Upon a Time" questions have been answered or
- All the complication cards have been played at least once, so they are all face up.

The game ends when all the all the complication cards have been played twice and are discarded. When the last complication is used up, finish up your scene and be finished.



Credits

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Baba Yaga

The mysterious witch

DESIRE:

- What disturbing ingredients do I need for my magic potions?
- Who do I want as my slave and why?

ONCE UPON A TIME:

- What malicious magic spell can I perform when I so desire?
- What gift or magic items or knowledge will I bestow upon those who need it?
- What impossible task will I place before another?



Ovidon

A soldier returning from war

DESIRE:

- How do I hope to raise myself out of my current poverty?
- What great feat do I hope to accomplish to prove my worth?

ONCE UPON A TIME:

- What enchanted item have I bought off of an old beggar?
- How was I wounded in the war and how does this wound hinder me still?
- what mystery will I discover the secret to?



Boschei

The immortal sorcerer

DESIRE:

- I require a bride with what unusual properties?
- How was I trapped despite my sorcerous powers? How do I hope to wreak vengeance on my captors?

ONCE UPON A TIME:

- What malicious magic spell can I perform when I so desire?
- How will I show mercy two times, but never three?
- What magical restriction prevents me from acting?



An Animal

An enchanted talking beast

DESIRE:

- How can I be made human again?
- What act of gratitude must I repay? To whom?

ONCE UPON A TIME:

- What advice or warning will I offer?
- What magical or unusual ability do I possess?
- How will my trust be betrayed or my warnings ignored?



A soldier in a brown tunic and red hat sits atop a black horse. The horse is decorated with red and gold harnesses. They are in a desert landscape with yellow hills and a sunset sky. A sword is planted in the ground in the foreground.

Ovidon

A soldier returned from war

HAPPILY EVER AFTER:

- How will I outwit the devil himself?
- Why will the king owe me a great debt?
- What moral lesson will I learn from all this?

An elderly woman with long, flowing white hair is shown in a forest. She wears a blue tunic with a red collar and a brown skirt. She is holding a long wooden staff or pole. The forest has gnarled trees and some green foliage.

Baba Yaga

The mysterious witch

HAPPILY EVER AFTER:

- What moral lesson should I learn from all this?
- What moral lesson have I taught to those around me, without their realizing?
- Who will boil in my soup pot before the tale is through?

A rooster with a red comb and wattle is shown in a forest. It is standing on a log. In the background, there are trees and a large, colorful, abstract shape that looks like a giant's foot or a large animal's head.

An Animal

An enchanted talking beast

HAPPILY EVER AFTER:

- Who was I as a human being before I was transformed?
- What long lost treasure do I know how to find?
- What reward will I receive that befits my (former) animal nature?

A dark, winged creature is shown running through a forest. It has a long, flowing mane or tail and is wearing a brown tunic. The creature is running towards the right. The forest has green foliage and trees.

Roschei

The doomed immortal

HAPPILY EVER AFTER:

- How shall I be imprisoned once again?
- What moral lesson will I fail to learn from all this?
- How will my power be stripped from me?

Marya Morevna

A girl dressed as a man

DESIRE:

- How shall I demonstrate that I am better than any man?
- Why do I hide my gender from those around me?

ONCE UPON A TIME:

- How will I fend off the unwanted romantic desires of another?
- How will I find life as a man different than as a woman?
- How will I demonstrate my prowess in battle?



Balda

The foolish peasant

DESIRE:

- What common idea or emotion do I not understand and want to learn about?
- How do I hope to win the love of my lady-love?

ONCE UPON A TIME:

- How will I demonstrate my great strength?
- How will I be taken advantage of?
- How will my foolishness help when cleverness would not?

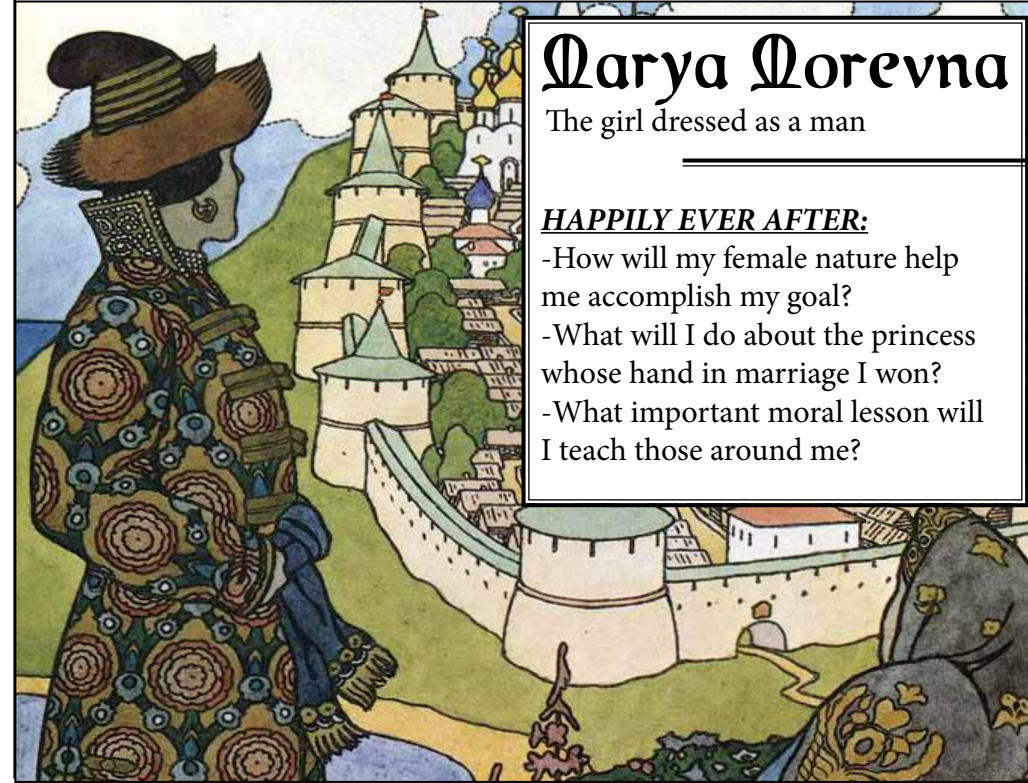


Balda

The fool shown to be wise

HAPPILY EVER AFTER:

- How will my foolishness be revealed as wisdom?
- What great feat will I unwittingly perform?
- How will my desire be fulfilled in an unexpected way?



Marya Morevna

The girl dressed as a man

HAPPILY EVER AFTER:

- How will my female nature help me accomplish my goal?
- What will I do about the princess whose hand in marriage I won?
- What important moral lesson will I teach those around me?

What won't be so easy...

complication

What will be costly

complication

What will have unexpected magical effects

complication

You will encounter great danger

complication

What taboo or secret rule does this break?

complication

Who does this anger?
Why?

complication

Why isn't that going to be possible?

complication

What impossible event interrupts this scene?

complication

What problem does our protagonist cause for themselves?

complication

BEGINNINGS

How does this scene begin?

Authority

Who will be endangered by this action?

complication

What unexpected consequence comes from this?

complication

What needs to be done before you can do this?

complication

What mistake does our protagonist make?

complication

How can this go wrong?

complication

What difficult choice does the protagonist have to face?

complication