

O Printing

This print and play version is made for you to print and cut into cards yourself.

I suggest that you print the cards 6 or 8 to a sheet of paper, then cut them to the appropriate size. You can print the cards on sturdy cardstock. Or you could print them on regular paper and put them into card sleeves, the sort used for collectible card games, possibly with old CCG cards as backing to make them somewhat sturdier.

Rusalka

*A narrative
entertainment*

by Nick Wedig

3-6 players
~2-3 hours





1 Rusalka

On the night of the full moon, the rusalka dance by the edge of their enchanted pool. On these nights, people from the village come to ask their aid. The rusalka possess many strange magical talents, but their gifts always come with a price.

The rusalka are the spirits of drowned women. The rusalka remember only fragments of the life they once lived. With time, they can unravel the mysteries of who they once were.

2

Prelude

Rusalka is a storytelling game for 1-6 players. Each player will roleplay as one of the rusalka. You will also take turns portraying the mortals who come to the pool to request help from the rusalka. Playing the game should take 2-4 hours. You will also need some paper and pencils. To begin play, every player selects a theme deck. Each theme deck has one identifier card, with name and appearance, four petitioner cards, and eight answer cards.

Example

*Alicia, Reese and Esteban gather together to play a game of **Rusalka**. Alicia has played before. Esteban read the rules while Reese is totally unfamiliar with the game. Alicia and Esteban explain the premise of the game. Then each player selects a theme deck. Alicia liked the **Sacrifice** theme previously, so she chooses to use that again. Esteban likes the cards in the **Moonlight** theme, so he chooses that. Reese picks **Mists** basically at random.*

3

Preparation

Take a blank sheet of paper and draw a map of the rusalka's pool on it. Each theme deck has a question to answer about the pool. Add that to the map.

Describe your rusalka's appearance, using the details on your card if you wish.

Choose one player to be the petitioner for the first scene. Shuffle together the answer cards from all the theme decks in play. Deal 5 cards to each player, except the first petitioner player.



Example

Esteban begins by taking a blank sheet of paper and drawing an irregular shape for the pond. He then draws a burrow for a giant black crocodile that lives in the pool.

Reese adds a cave with an entrance under the water, where their rusalka hides souvenirs they collect from each petitioner.

Alicia draws a little shrine on the south edge of the pond, where bowls of soup and bread have been left as offerings to the rusalka.

4

Petitioners

Take the petitioner cards from all the theme decks in play and separate the petitioners by Act. The first petitioner player draws three random Act 1 cards, three Act 2 cards, three Act 3 cards and two Act 4 cards.

When you are the petitioner player, select one of the petitioner cards of the current Act and roleplay as that petitioner in the scene.



Example

Alicia decides to be the first petitioner. She takes cards from each of the three decks and sorts them by Act. Since there are three people playing, she keeps all 3 cards of each rank, except for Act 4, where she only keeps two (randomly chosen).

In the first scene, Alicia roleplays as the petitioner, a traveler lost in the fog, while the other players play their rusalka.

5 Acts

If there is only one petitioner card of the current Act, then the Act ends and the next begins. The petitioner player discards that lone card. Each player draws an answer card, except the petitioner.

An indeterminate amount of time passes between Acts. It could be days, months, years, decades, even centuries. The petitioner player describes one way the passage of time changes the rusalka's pool. They mark that change on the map.

Example

After a few scenes, there is only one Spring petitioner card left. So Esteban discards that card. Then he draws on the map, showing how the shrine of offerings has fallen into disrepair. Alicia and Reese each draw a card and add it to their hand.

6

Scenes

The game consists of a series of scenes. In each scene, one player portrays the petitioner, an outsider who comes to the rusalka pool seeking some reward, while the other players roleplay their rusalka.

At the end of the scene, each player passes their hand to the player on their left. You still are playing the same rusalka each scene, but the swirling of magical energy means that you have different gifts available to you each scene. The petitioner role also rotates to the player on the left.



Example

For the first scene, Alicia will play the petitioner, choosing one of the petitioner cards from her hand. Reese and Esteban will play their individual rusalka. At the end of the scene, Alicia passes the petitioner cards to Reese. Reese passes their hand of answers to Esteban, and Esteban passes his hand to Alicia. In the next scene, Esteban still plays the same rusalka as before. Alicia plays a rusalka not present before, and Reese plays the mortal seeking the aid of the rusalka.

7

Requests

Most petitioners are mortals who have come to beg a magical gift from the water-spirits. The petitioner player fleshes out the information on the card, telling everyone what the petitioner asks for and how they request it. They roleplay a brief scene, showing how the petitioner approaches the rusalka and how they make their request. Some petitioners are fearful, or pleading, or desperate. Some are demanding or forceful or entitled.

Example

Reese plays a wounded traveler, lost in the fog. They describe the traveler as an elderly man, a tinker who goes from town to town peddling tin goods. They describe the blood caked to their side from an unfortunate encounter with a boar. Reese describes the old man sitting by the pond, unaware of its magic. The old man thinks aloud of his wish to find his way out of the forest.

Alicia and Esteban describe their rusalka magically manifesting before him.

8

Answers

Once the petitioner arrives at the pond, the rusalka players are free to describe their characters appearing at any time, in any way that they choose.

Each rusalka must choose and present one answer card in response to the petitioner's request. Each answer card has two parts: a response to the request and a flashback. The rusalka player should present their response, in the voice of their character, based on the card they have chosen.

Example

Alicia describes how the moonlight reflected in the pond ripples and shifts until the traveler finds himself before Solomiya, Alicia's rusalka. Playing an answer card from her hand, Alicia describe Solomiya answering the wanderer's plea. "I can let you pass through obstacles as insubstantial as the fog. This will let you leave the forest and find your home."

Esteban's rusalka offers a wolf's pelt, that will transform its wearer into a wolf. With it, the traveler can seek his home by scent.

9

Flashbacks

Every rusalka was once a human woman, before they drowned and became water spirits. As they interact with the petitioner, the rusalka recall pieces of their lives. After giving the petitioner their offer, the rusalka player briefly describes a moment from when their rusalka was a living woman. The rusalka player has complete freedom in this moment to narrate any events they choose, so long as the flashback answers the question on their card.

Example

After giving her offer to the petitioner, Alicia answers the flashback question on that card: “What terrible secret did you learn as you secretly watched the person you most trusted?” She describes her rusalka Solomiya as a young woman approaching her lover’s home. Within she heard discussion between her lover and a strange man. So Solomiya listened and learned that her girlfriend was in fact one of the king’s secret police, who had arrested Solomiya’s parents as traitors to the crown.

10 Decisions

The petitioner then accepts whichever offered gifts they want from the rusalka. The petitioner player can choose one offer, no offers, or multiple offers, as they wish. They should choose the offers that make for the most interesting story, not necessarily the best fate for the petitioner.

The petitioner player and the rusalka players whose answers were chosen collaborate to describe how the gifts of the rusalka change their life for better or worse. Then you end the scene, and pass cards.



Example

Reese describes the wounded traveler accepting the offers of both rusalka, to transform into a wolf and to pass through obstacles like mist. Esteban describes how the traveler passes through the forest without problem. He returns to his home village. Alicia narrates how once returned, the man finds he cannot remove the magic wolf's pelt: his hand passes right through it, like mist. And so he can never become human again. Reese describes the people of the village forever wondering why they are haunted by the ghost of a wolf.

11 Endings

Once one scene ends, you pass cards to the player on your left, then begin a scene. The player who now has the petitioner cards then begins the next scene, describing their petitioner and how they approach the rusalka pool. Repeat this process until you have a scene for a rank 4 petitioner.

After the rank 4 petitioner's scene is completed, the game ends. Each player can, if they choose, add an epilogue for their rusalka, the village, or any character of their choosing.



Example

In a final scene, Alicia played a witch who left with a rusalka as her new servant. The other rank 4 petitioner is discarded, and the game draws to a conclusion.

Each player describes an epilogue, as they choose. Reese describes their rusalka in service to the witch. Alicia describes the witch using her new magical pet to summon a tidal wave that destroys the village. Esteban describes the wolf-ghost, formerly human, haunting the desolate waste where the village stood.

Credits

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To see other games and things I've created, please check out:

- nickwedig.libraryofhighmoon.com
- <https://wheretofind.me/@nickwedig>
- <https://nickwedig.itch.io/>

Playtesters

Ken Breese, Menachem Cohen, Sabrina Culbertson-Zitzelberger, Kate Davoli, Zelma Elm, Iris Explosion, John Holt, Amanda McLoughlin, Jason Morningstar, Richard Ruane, Julia Schifini, Amber Wedig, and many other people whose names I have forgotten or never learned. My apologies to those people for forgetting them.

Illustrations are from public domain sources, mostly by **Arthur Rackham**.

Sacrifice

Appearance:

(Choose one or more)

Wounds that never heal,
a headdress with religious
symbols, tattoos of ritual
significance, the skeletal
thinness of a starving person





Sacrifice

***Answer now:** What offerings have been left to the water spirits at the altar on the southern edge of the pool? Mark your answer on the map.*

***Names:** Nezhdan, Bodashka, Olena, Yuliya*



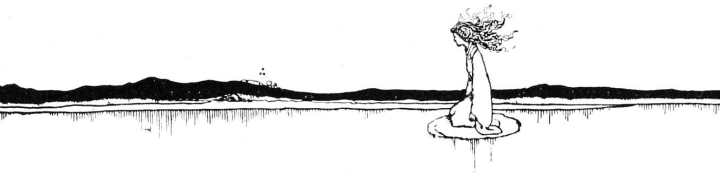
1

Sacrifice

A child whose farm is failing because the fields grow no food. Her parents told her the spirits wouldn't help, but she has come anyway.

Is she confident or frightened? What has she brought as an offering to the forbidden spirits?

Petitioner





2

Sacrifice

A young woman, chosen by lot to be a human sacrifice when the next solstice comes.

How is she marked as the sacrificial victim? Does she seek to escape her fate or does she embrace her destiny?



3

Sacrifice

Someone who has given up everything they had.

What position of privilege or power did they hold before sacrificing the role? What desire was so all-consuming that they gave up everything to achieve it? Why do they now need the help of the rusalka?



The elderly village priest, here to perform the ancient ceremony.

4

Sacrifice

Who do they have bound and prepared to be a ritual human sacrifice? (Use a previously established mortal NPC if possible. The rusałka can assent or deny the requests from either the priest or the sacrifice.)

Assent

Sacrifice

You will give the petitioner what they want, but they must sacrifice something they hold dear.

Flashback: *What caused you to abandon your hopes and dreams?*

Gift

Sacrifice

You will give the petitioner the ability to harm their enemies however they so choose, but the petitioner will suffer the same harm as well.

Flashback: How did you sacrifice your own happiness to spite those you hated?

Gift

Sacrifice

You will make the petitioner young again, so that they remain youthful for all eternity.

Flashback: How old were you when you drowned?



Gift

Sacrifice

You will create a drought
and blight the crops.

*Flashback: Why do you wish
to see the fields devoured and
the village destroyed?*

Gift

Sacrifice

You will make plants grow,
impossibly fast, beyond
what any farmer can
control.

*Flashback: When the fields
failed to yield fruit, why did
the people of the village
blame you?*

Price

Sacrifice

At the end of a year, the petitioner will have to drown themselves, or find someone to take their place.

Flashback: What did the village priest pray for as he held you beneath the water until you drowned?

Price

Sacrifice

You will give the petitioner what they want, but only if they forsake forever the person or thing that they most love.

Flashback: Who did you love? How did you lose them?

Refusal

Sacrifice

You give the petitioner nothing, for they have failed to make the proper sacrifices, and you will stop one other rusalka from granting the request, as well.

Flashback: How were you and that rusalka opposed to each other in life?

Tides

Appearance:

(Choose one or more)

Seaweed instead of hair, the tail of a fish, speech and skin that mark you as a foreigner, teeth like those of a shark



Tides

Answer now: *Where have the tides worn away at the pool, weakening the walls until they are threatening to collapse? Mark your answer on the map.*

Names: Khalida, Nakemi, Iseul, Fatima



Tides

A fisherwoman who hungers for something more. She has heard tales of wealth and wonder beyond anything in her unremarkable life. She hopes the rusalka can make her life glamorous and exciting.

What everyday part of her life does she truly value without realizing?

A decorative vertical border on the left side of the page. It features a large, stylized number '2' in a dark grey color. Below the number, the word 'Tides' is written in a smaller, italicized font. The background of the border is light grey with intricate, white, swirling patterns that resemble waves or tides. There are also faint, stylized illustrations of fish and other marine life integrated into the design.

2

Tides

A merchant from far across the ocean. She hopes to use the rusalka to increase her personal wealth.

How are does her appearance and behavior mark her as foreign to the village? How does she hope to profit from the rusalka's magic?



A man whose son has been lost at sea. His vessel was supposed to have returned home months ago, but there is still no sign of it. The man fears the worst, but has no ability to do anything.

*Where was the son's vessel bound?
Why was the voyage so perilous? Why
does the father blame himself?*

A decorative vertical border on the left side of the page. It features a large, stylized number '4' in a dark grey color. Below the number, the word 'Tides' is written in a smaller, italicized font. The background of the border is light grey with intricate, swirling patterns and small illustrations of fish and shells.

4

Tides

An admiral, whose navy has conquered the village. If there is sorcery in this village, they want to control it.

Who do they have as a captive guiding them to the pool? What underlings do they bring with them to the pool?

Assent

Tides

The ability the petitioner seeks lies in an item deep beneath the waves, and it will require a dangerous journey into the deep to get it back.

Flashback: What did you use the artifact for in your own life, and why did you cast it into the sea?

Assent

Tides

You will give the petitioner what they want, and they will achieve more than they desired, so much that it causes problems.

Flashback: What achievement in your life was most significant?

Gift

Tides

You can create rain,
thunderstorms, hurricanes
and floods, the most
powerful this village has
seen in a hundred years.

*Flashback: Why did you take
the boat out alone into the
thunderstorm, on the night
that you died?*

Gift

Tides

You will teach the
petitioner how to spin
straw into gold, wool into
food and flax into pure
shadow.

*Flashback: In what far-off
land did you learn this
magical talent?*

Gift

Tides

You will change the petitioner's aspect, so that their appearance creates dread in the hearts of any who lay eyes upon them.

Flashback: When you sailed as a pirate, what fearsome deeds were you renowned for?

Gift

Tides

You will control the waters
for the petitioner,
commanding the tides to
stand still, parting the sea,
and making rivers change
their course.

*Flashback: Why did you
travel across the ocean to be
among these strangers in life,
and then in death?*

Refusal

Tides

You cannot give the
petitioner what they want,
but you can tell them how
to find what they seek on
the far side of a vast ocean.

*Flashback: How did you
once possess what the mortal
seeks, and how did you lose
it?*

Refusal

Tides

The petitioner has insulted
you and your fellow
rusalka, and therefore you
will give them nothing.

*Flashback: Who here among
the rusalka did you once feel
fierce loyalty toward, and
why?*

Mists

Appearance:

(Choose one or more)

Translucent skin, silent movement wherever you go, face hidden by layers of veil, glows faintly with a silvery light



Mists

Answer now: What part of the rusalka's pool has never been seen by living men's eyes? What lies hidden within?

Names: Vasilisa, Zhdan, Ruslana,
Bratomila



I

Mists

A wounded traveler, lost in the fog and the darkness of the forest.

What emergency forced them to go alone into the unfamiliar forest?

What method of navigation did they employ that has now failed them?

How did they become injured? What danger still pursues them through the trees?



2

Mists

An old woman, who has seen everything she had fade away through the passage of years.

What piece of the past does she want restored to her?



3

Mists

A wanderer who has lost their memory.

What clue to their identity did they have that led them to this village and this hidden pool? Which rusalka recognizes them?



4

Mists

An alchemist who is a know liar.
None of his words can be trusted.

What does he claim to seek? What does he really seek to obtain from the rusalka? How will deceiving them aid the alchemist in his goal?

Gift

Mists

You will change the petitioner's appearance so that none will know who they are.

Flashback: Why did you disguise yourself to hide your identity from one of the other rusalka?

Gift

Mists

You will enchant one place
of the petitioner's choosing,
so that it is forever
shrouded in mists, and
none can find it except for
those that know the secret
charm.

*Flashback: When you first
came to the rusalka pool, who
were you trying to hide from?*

Assent

Mists

You will give the petitioner what they want, but they will regret their request.

Flashback: *What warning did you fail to heed?*

Gift

Mists

You will make it so that the petitioner can pass through walls and obstacles, as silent and insubstantial as the fog.

Flashback: What terrible secret did you learn as you secretly watched the person you most trusted?

Gift

Mists

You will teach the petitioner a charm that turns fowls drinking water, turns food poisonous and makes the air painful to breathe.

Flashback: Who poisoned you? Why did they want you dead?

Price

Mists

You will give the petitioner the magical talent that they need, but once they use it they will fade away into mist.

Flashback: What optimistic belief did hold in life and how was it shown to be mistaken?

Price

Mists

You will give the petitioner what they want, but they will be blind for the rest of their days.

Flashback: What should you have seen in your life, but you only recognize now that you are dead?

Refusal

Mists

You will tell the petitioner
“I wish I could help you,
but this situation is beyond
my magical capabilities.”

*Flashback: Why are you
lying to this mortal, hiding
the fact that you could help?*

Reflection

Appearance:

(Choose one or more)

Silver pools where your eyes should be, long and straight white hair, feet that never touch the ground, always nude



Reflection

***Answer now:** What lies hidden beneath the surface of the reflecting pool, on the western edge of the rusalka's home? Mark your answer on the map.*

***Names:** Odynets, Galyna, Natalka,
Tretyak*



I

Reflection

A glassblower who must make an impossible item. They imprudently boasted to the king, who now demands this miraculous artifact.

What amazing deed did they promise their creation could perform? What terrible fate will befall them if they fail to fulfill their impossible promise?



2

Reflection

A man whose lover has vanished. The pair had an argument, and the younger of the two men ran off into the forest. The elder man has been searching for his lover for days, but cannot find him.

*What were the two arguing about?
What danger does the man fear befell
his lover?*



3

Reflection

A musician who knows the ancient songs. She asks nothing of the rusalka, except for the spirits to be her audience as she plays the zither.

What stories do the old songs tell? How do these stories recall the stories of the rusalka themselves?



4

Reflection

A woman who wishes to capture a rusalka to replace her dead wife. She does not care what the rusalka wishes.

Which rusalka most resembles her dead spouse? How does she plan to keep a rusalka under her control?

Assent

Reflection

You will give the petitioner what they want, and they will earn a friend, reward or good reputation in the process.

Flashback: *Who in the village did you love while you were alive?*

Assent

Reflection

You will give the petitioner what they want, except for one tiny detail that will not go as they wish.

Flashback: How did one tiny mistake lead to your death?



Refusal

Reflection

You will not give the petitioner what they want, but their life will improve because they return home empty-handed.

Flashback: How is their current plight similar to your plight when you were alive?



Gift

Reflection

You will teach the
petitioner a beguiling song
that makes people love
them.

*Flashback: Who beguiled you
with their song, and how did
they betray you?*

Gift

Reflection

You will show the
petitioner visions of the
future in the pool's waters,
though they won't like
what they see.

*Flashback: How did your
hatred change to be more like
the person you most hated?*



Price

Reflection

You will give the petitioner what they want, but they must give up their ability to speak ever again.

Flashback: Who here among the rusalka was once a great rival of yours, and in what endeavor?

Price

Reflection

You will give the petitioner what they want, but only if they come join the rusalka for eternity once their desire has been fulfilled.

Flashback: What draws you to this petitioner so that you want them to spend eternity with you?

Refusal

Reflection

The petitioner will not find what they seek here, but using illusions you will draw them into the pool to drown instead.

Flashback: Why does the mortal look nearly identical to you? How are they connected to you?

Moonlight

Appearance:

(Choose one or more)


A crown of lilies, grows young and old with the moon's phases, always sounds as if she is singing, eyes that shine like stars



Moonlight

***Answer now:** What strange creature makes it home on the eastern edge of the rusalka's pond? Mark your answer on the map.*


***Names:** Klavdiya, Yezibaba, Solomiya,
Rurik*



I
Moonlight

A hunter who wishes to gain secret knowledge of the world. She has devoted her life to capturing a mythic beast, but still it eludes her. She believes the rusalka can teach her how to ensnare the creature.

What legendary animal does she hope to slay? Why is it impossible to catch?



A natural philosopher who wishes to understand the secrets of the stars and the moon and the sun. She wishes to travel to the moon, to see what it is like there.

What mystery of the universe is she particularly interested in solving?

A bride about to be married. She has only met her groom once, by the light of the moon. She knows not if he is kind or cruel. The bride seeks reassurance, knowledge of her future, or some form of control.

Why must she marry against her will?



4

Moonlight

A witch who wishes to bind the rusalka to her will. Ancient beyond reckoning, with knowledge of foul and forbidden magicks. She hopes to turn the rusalka's power to her own ends.

What strange object is the focus of her magic power?

Assent

Moonlight

The petitioner gets exactly what they want, but getting what they want will change them.

Flashback: What did you desire most in life? How did that desire change who you were?

Gift

Moonlight

You will give the petitioner
a cloak made of wolf pelt,
that changes the wearer
into a wolf when worn by
moonlight.

*Flashback: Whose blood
dripped from your hands as
you stood in a moonlit forest?*

Gift

Moonlight

You will change the petitioner's eyes so that the next person who sees their face uncovered grows scales and fins, like a fish.

Flashback: How did someone you once loved change into someone you hated?

Price

Moonlight

The petitioner must live as a beggar for seven years and seven days, never bathing, never wearing any clothes except this wolf pelt. Then I will grant your request.

Flashback: How did you lose your great wealth and forced into beggardom?

Price

Moonlight

You will give the petitioner what they want, but they must give up the skill or trait that most defines their life.

Flashback: *What thing in this place did you lovingly craft with your own hands? Choose from among items already established, if possible.*

Price

Moonlight

You will give the petitioner what they want, but they can never see their family or friends again.

Flashback: Who here among the rusalka is kin to you, and what is your relationship?

Refusal

Moonlight

You will give the petitioner what they want, but it will be nothing but an illusion that fades away like moonlight.

Flashback: How did a mistaken impression or false belief lead to your death?

Refusal

Moonlight

The petitioner will not find what they seek here, but their failure will help them find a new friend or ally.

Flashback: *Who in the village once treated you with kindness?*

Mysteries

Appearance:

(Choose one or more)


An amulet with strange runes, never speaks yet you hear her words in your mind, moves as if her body is unfamiliar, face always hidden by a mask



Mysteries

***Answer now:** What object in the pool hides its secrets even from the rusalka? Mark your answer on the map.*

***Names:** Orest, Zoryana, Sergiy, Vitaliya, Miroslava*



A smith with a secret she wishes to hide. She fears that if her actions were known, then she would be ostracized or punished by the village.

What does she wish to hide? How will the smith suffer if it is discovered. Who else knows the secret already?

A decorative vertical panel on the left side of the page. It features a large, stylized number '2' in a dark grey color. Below the number, the word 'Mysteries' is written in a smaller, italicized, dark grey font. The background of this panel consists of intricate, light grey wavy patterns that resemble topographical lines or abstract art.

2 Mysteries

A religious pilgrim seeking the answer to an ancient riddle. His master said that he could only enter the Heaven of Seven Joys once when he understood the ancient teaching: “A frog in a well knows nothing of the ocean.”

Is the pilgrim's religion commonplace or foreign to the village?

Two conspirators, planning to use this place to plot secret plans. They don't believe in fairy tales, so they hope that superstition will keep the villagers away as they scheme.

What criminal action are they preparing for? Who will be harmed if they succeed?

A natural philosopher trying to understand the peculiar nature of the pool and the creatures within. They will understand how the rusalka work, through dissection if necessary.

What cruel experiments do they have planned for the rusalka?

Assent

Mysteries

You will give the petitioner what they ask for, but they will learn something they would prefer not to know.

Flashback: What question did you spend your life seeking an answer to?

Assent

Mysteries

You will give the petitioner what they ask for, but the consequences of their success will be completely different from what they expected.

Flashback: How did you attempt to seek the truth, and why did you fail?

Gift

Mysteries

You will teach the petitioner the secret language of birds, who know many things hidden from humankind.

Flashback: Who in the village is hiding a terrible secret? Do you know what the secret is?

Gift

Mysteries

You will teach the petitioner how to drowse for water, gold or buried treasure.

Flashback: What treasured item did you bury beneath your home, on the night you died?

Price

Mysteries

You will give the petitioner what they want, but they must enter the forbidden area and bring back the magical object that lay there.

Flashback: What area within this place are you forbidden to enter? What lies hidden within?

Price

Mysteries

You will give the petitioner what they want, but only after they identify your murderer and bring them to justice.

Flashback: What single detail do you remember about the person who drowned you in the rusalka pool?

Refusal

Mysteries

The petitioner will not find what they seek here, but their failure will help someone else succeed.

Flashback: Which other rusalka betrayed you in life, and how did you discover their treachery?

Refusal

Mysteries

The petitioner will not find what they seek here, but you will tell them a secret that will change their life.

Flashback: How did curiosity lead to your death?

Sorrow

Appearance: (Choose one or more)

A long white dress that trails behind her, impossibly old, a voice never rises above a whisper but she can always be heard clearly, covered in scars upon scars



Sorrow

***Answer now:** What symbols of mourning have been placed by the pool? Mark your answer on the map.*

***Names:** Ruzhena, Zlata, Vlasta, Semyon*



1
Sorrow

A mourner, come to lament the death of one of the rusalka.

Which rusalka did they love? What personal connection did they have to the rusalka? Why do they blame themselves for the rusalka's death?

2

Sorrow

An old man, whose mind is slipping away. He can no longer tell what is real and what is only a fading memory.

Who does he seek that has been long dead? Who does he mistake the rusalka for? What regrets does he carry from his past?

3

Sorrow

A miller whose home and business burned down. Now she has nothing. In despair, she has wandered into the forest.

Who does she owe tremendous debts to? How will she suffer further if she cannot repay her debts? Was the fire an accident or a deliberate crime?

4

Sorrow

A woman seeking to end her loveless marriage, through any means. Her husband has caused her nothing but misery for decades. So she seeks the rusalka's aid in causing his untimely death.

How has the husband made this woman's life a living hell? What is his worst flaw?

Assent

Sorrow

You will give the petitioner what they want, but their request will bring them great harm.

Flashback: When were you punished for a misdeed someone else committed?

Assent

Sorrow

You will give the petitioner what they want, but their success will harm a friend, ally or loved one.

Flashback: Why do you blame yourself for the harm suffered by the people you loved?

Gift

Sorrow

If the petitioner brings a
dead body to the pool, I
will restore them not to
life, but to a semblance of
life.

*Flashback: Which other
rusalka watched as you
drowned, but didn't act to
save you?*

Gift

Sorrow

I will turn your heart into
ice, so that every thing you
touch turns into ice.

*Flashback: Who did you love
whose heart was as cold as
ice?*

Price

Sorrow

I will give you what you want, but only if you give us your firstborn child.

Flashback: What became of your only child after your death?

Price

Sorrow

I will give you what you want, but you must bring my lost love to this pond, so that they will drown here as I did.

Flashback: Who was the reluctant object of your unwavering devotion? Why do you wish them dead now?

Assent

Sorrow

I will give you what you want, but you will earn a new enemy when you get your wish.

Flashback: Who in the village caused you great suffering to you in life?

Refusal

Sorrow

I will give you nothing, for
you richly deserve no
better than the terrible life
you have now.

*Flashback: Who here among
the rusalka richly deserves
this fate, and why?*

Ghosts

Appearance: (Choose one or more)

Tangled black hair, a skeleton with no flesh remaining, clothed in a manner long out of style, intangible—she walks through obstacles like they aren't there





Ghosts

***Answer now:** What wards and barriers do superstitious villagers make in a fruitless attempt to protect themselves? Mark your answer on the map.*

***Names:** Oleg, Kateryna, Larysa, Bohdana*



1

Ghosts

A youth of thirteen or fourteen, forced to come here on a dare to prove her bravery. Fearing embarrassment more than deadly ghosts, she has come to face the undead in person.

What must she collect from the rusalka to prove that she met with the spirits? What childish method does she employ to ward off evil spirits?



2

Ghosts

Three friends with a corpse of their dead fourth friend.

Do they seek to resurrect their friend, or to hide their crime? Which friend do the other two blame for the death? Why must they hide their involvement in the death?

A decorative vertical panel on the left side of the page. It features a large, stylized number '3' in a dark grey color. Below the '3' is the word 'Ghosts' in a smaller, dark grey font. The background of this panel is light grey and contains faint, intricate line art of a ghostly face with a crown or headpiece, and swirling patterns that suggest mist or smoke.

3

Ghosts

The spirit of a dead villager, which comes seeking assistance.

What unfinished business does the ghost have that prevents them from moving on to the next world? Does the spirit seek help moving on to the afterlife? Or do they seek retribution against those that wronged them in life?



4

Ghosts

An exorcist who wishes to clear the pool of the evil spirits that live here. They have heard that this place is the haunt of undead creatures, and they wish to see them destroyed.

What method will they use to slay the rusalka?



Assent

Ghosts

I will give you what you want, but your success will have dangerous unintended consequences.

Flashback: Why are you haunted by regret?



Gift

Ghosts

I will cause sickness and disease to befall the person of your choosing.

Flashback: *What horrors did you witness when the plague overtook the village?*



Gift

Ghosts

I will teach you the charm
that lets you speak to the
dead and learn their
secrets.

*Flashback: What went wrong
when you tried to summon
the dead spirit of your loved
one?*



Gift

Ghosts

I will enchant you so that
you can see the dead that
walk among the living and
those malevolent spirits
that haunt you.

*Flashback: Whose death cast
a pall over your life long
after they were gone?*



Gift

Ghosts

I will trap your soul inside a silver box. You cannot die nor know joy while I keep the box hidden.

Flashback: What item in the pool entraps your soul? Choose from something already established, if possible. Mark your answer on the map.



Gift

Ghosts

I will send ghost lights and
will o'wisps to lure in one
person of your choosing,
which they will follow into
the pool and drown.

*Flashback: Which rusalka
tried to warn you before your
death, and why didn't you
listen?*



Price

Ghosts

I will give you what you want, but you must complete my unfinished business from my life.

Flashback: What dying wish did you have that went unfulfilled?



Refusal

Ghosts

I will not give you what
you want, and I will haunt
you as a specter until you
die or are driven out of the
village.

*Flashback: Why do you
blame this petitioner for your
death?*

Rusalka

