

# East of the Sun and West of the Moon

## A Norwegian Fairytale



There once lived a very poor man. This man had a very big family. But he did not have enough money to keep them. One stormy evening, they heard a knock at the door. The man opened it. Outside stood a huge white bear. The bear spoke. "Give me your youngest, prettiest daughter. I will make you a very rich man." All eyes fell on Helga. She was the youngest and prettiest.

Helga agreed to go. The bear carried her to his palace. It was high on a mountain. A royal dinner awaited them. After dinner, servants led Helga into a grand bedroom. They tucked her into one of the two grand beds. An hour later, a man came into the dark room. Without a word, he climbed into the other bed and went to sleep. In the morning, he was gone. This went on, night after night.

One night, Helga waited until the man fell asleep. Quietly, she lit a candle and tiptoed over to his bed. He was the most beautiful man she had ever seen. She immediately fell in love with him. She leaned in for a closer look. As she did, her candle dripped onto his shirt. It woke him up.

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“What have you done,” he cried. “If only you had waited one year. Then I would have been free! My wicked stepmother cast a spell on me. I am a bear by day and a prince by night. Now I will have to return to her castle that is east of the sun and west of the moon. She will make me marry that troll princess with the nose that is three feet long.”

Helga awoke the next morning. Both the prince and his castle were gone. Helga set out to find him. She met many people along the way. On her journey, she was given a golden apple, a comb, and a spinning wheel.

Helga searched for the prince for many days. Finally, the North Wind took pity on her. It helped her. It took her to the stepmother’s palace. There, Helga learned that the prince was to be married to the troll princess. Helga sat down next to the palace. She took out her golden apple.

Along came the princess. She had a three-foot-long nose. She looked like a troll. The princess asked to buy Helga’s apple. Helga agreed. She would sell it for one night alone with the prince. The princess agreed. But then the troll tricked the prince. She gave him a sleeping potion just before Helga arrived. He slept through her first visit. He slept through her second visit, too. For the third visit, Helga sold her last golden item. It was the spinning wheel.

By then, the prince knew something was wrong. That night he only pretended to drink the troll’s potion. This time, he was awake for Helga’s visit. Together, they formed a plan.

The prince made an announcement the next day. He said he wanted to get married. But his bride must be able to clean the candle drippings from his favorite shirt. The troll princess tried. But she failed. His stepmother tried and failed. Then Helga tried. The prince’s shirt turned pure white. It became as clean as the day it was made.

And so Helga and the prince tricked his stepmother. The stepmother got so angry she exploded. Now the spell was broken. Helga and the prince were free to marry. They lived happily ever after.



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Once upon a time there was a very poor man. He had a very big family and not enough money to feed and clothe them. One stormy evening, the man opened the door to find a huge white bear standing outside. The bear said to the man, "Give me your youngest, prettiest daughter and I will make you rich beyond your wildest dreams." All eyes fell on Helga. She was the youngest and prettiest daughter.

Helga agreed to go. The bear carried her far away, to his palace on a steep cliff high on a mountain. A royal dinner awaited them. After dinner, servants lead Helga into a grand bedroom. They tucked her into the smooth silk sheets in one of the two grand feather beds. An hour later, a man entered the dark room. Without a word, he climbed into the other bed and went to sleep. In the morning, he was gone. This continued night after night.

One night, Helga waited until long after the man fell asleep. Quietly, she lit the candle and tiptoed over to his bed. In the light

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of the candle slept the most beautiful man she had ever seen. She immediately fell in love with him. As she leaned in for a closer look, her candle dripped onto his shirt and woke him up.

“What have you done,” cried the man. “If only you had waited one year, I would be free! I am a prince. My wicked stepmother cast a spell on me. I am a bear by day and a man by night. Now that you know my secret, I will have to leave. I must return to her castle that is east of the sun and west of the moon. She will make me marry that troll princess with the nose that is three feet long.”

Helga woke the next morning to find both the prince and his castle gone. She knew what she had to do. Helga set out to find him. She asked directions from those along the way. On her journey, she acquired a golden apple, comb, and spinning wheel.

After many days, the North Wind took pity on Helga. It carried her all the way to the stepmother's palace, where she learned that the prince was engaged. Helga sat down outside the palace and took out her golden apple.

Along came a troll-like princess with a nose that was three feet long. She wanted to buy the apple. Helga agreed to sell it for a night alone with the prince. The troll princess agreed but had a trick in mind. She secretly gave the prince a sleeping potion and Helga was unable to wake him. The next day, Helga sold her golden comb to the princess. But again the princess tricked her. Again, Helga could not wake the prince. On the third day, Helga sold her golden spinning wheel. Luckily, that evening the suspicious prince only pretended to drink the potion. And that night he and Helga met and formed a plan.

The next day the prince made an announcement. He would only marry the woman who could clean the candle drippings from his favorite shirt. The troll princess tried, but failed. Even the stepmother tried and failed. But when Helga touched it, the prince's shirt turned pure white, as clean as the day it was made.

And so Helga and the prince were able to trick the evil stepmother, who got so angry she exploded. With the spell broken, Helga and the prince were free to marry and live happily ever after.



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Once upon a time there was a very poor man who had a very big family and not enough money to feed and clothe them. One stormy evening, the man opened the door to find a huge white bear standing outside. The bear said to the man, "Give me your youngest, prettiest daughter and I will make you richer than your wildest dreams." All eyes fell on Helga, for she was the youngest and prettiest daughter.

Helga agreed to go, and the bear carried her far, far away, to his palace on a steep cliff high on a mountain. A royal dinner awaited them upon their arrival. After dinner, Helga was ushered into a grand bedroom and tucked into the smooth silk sheets in one of two luxurious feather beds. An hour later, a man came into the dark room and, without a word, climbed into the other bed and went to sleep. In the morning, he was gone. This strange phenomenon continued night after night.

One night, Helga waited until long after the strange man had fallen asleep and quietly lit a candle and tiptoed over to his bed. In the light



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of the candle slept the most beautiful man she had ever seen. She immediately fell in love with him and leaned in for a closer look. As she did, her candle dripped onto his shirt, startling him awake.

"What have you done," cried the man. "If only you had waited one year, I would be free! I am a prince. My wicked stepmother cast a spell on me that makes me a bear by day and a man by night. Now that you know my secret, I will have to leave. I must return to her castle that is east of the sun and west of the moon. She will make me marry that troll princess with the nose that is three feet long."

When Helga woke the next morning to find both the prince and his castle gone, she knew what she had to do. Helga set out to find him, asking directions from those along the way. On her journey, she acquired a golden apple, comb, and spinning wheel.

After many, many days, the North Wind took pity on Helga and carried her all the way to the stepmother's palace. Almost immediately, she learned that the prince was engaged to the troll princess. Helga sat down outside the palace and took out her golden apple.

A troll-like princess with a three-foot-long nose was passing by when she noticed Helga's golden apple. Greedy for gold, the troll princess asked if it was for sale. Helga agreed to give her the apple, but in return the princess would have to give Helga and entire night alone with the prince. The troll princess agreed, but secretly gave the prince a sleeping potion before bed so that Helga was unable to wake him. The next day, Helga sold her golden comb to the princess for the same price, but again the princess tricked the prince into drinking the sleeping potion. On the third day, Helga sold the golden spinning wheel. Luckily, that evening the suspicious prince only pretended to drink the potion and was awake when Helga arrived. Joyfully reunited, he and Helga formulated a plan.

The next day the prince announced to the whole kingdom that he would only marry the woman who could clean the candle drippings from his favorite shirt. The troll princess tried, but failed. Even the stepmother tried and failed. But when Helga touched it, the prince's shirt turned pure white, as clean as the day it was made.

And so Helga and the prince were able to trick the evil stepmother, who got so angry she exploded. The spell was broken. Helga and the prince were free to marry and live happily ever after.

