



The Complete Folktales of A. N. Afanas'ev: Volume I: 1

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The folktales of A. N. Afanas'ev represent the largest single collection of folktales in any European language and perhaps in the world. Widely regarded as the Russian Grimm, Afanas'ev collected folktales from throughout the Russian Empire in what are now regarded as the three East Slavic languages, Byelorussian, Russian, and Ukrainian. The result of his own collecting, the collecting of friends and correspondents, and in a few cases his publishing of works from earlier and forgotten collections is truly phenomenal. In his lifetime, Afanas'ev published more than 575 tales in his most popular and best known work, *Narodnye russkie skazki*. In addition to this basic collection he prepared a volume of Russian legends, many on religious themes, an anthology of mildly obscene tales, and voluminous writings on Slavic folk life and Slavic mythology. His works were subject to the strict censorship of ecclesiastical and state authorities that lasted until the demise of the Soviet Union at the end of the twentieth century. Overwhelmingly, his particular emendations were of a stylistic nature, while those of the censors mostly concerned content. The censored tales are generally not included.

Up to now, there has been no complete English-language version of the Russian folktales of Afanas'ev. This translation is based on L. G. Barag and N. V. Novikov's edition (Moscow: Nauka, 1984–1986), widely regarded as the authoritative edition. The present edition includes commentaries to each tale as well as its international classification number.

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