



Russian Tales of Clever Fools: Complete Russian Folktale: v. 7

Jack V. Haney

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This is the concluding installment of a splendid multi-volume work that makes available to English readers a rich folktale tradition that has not been easily accessible or well-known in the West. Compared to other European traditions, the East Slavs have an extremely large number of tale types. Using the Aarne-Thompson index to folktale types, and drawing on both archival and written sources dating back to the early sixteenth century, J.V. Haney has assembled and translated examples of the full range of tales. Nearly all of these tales appear here in translation for the first time. The tales in this volume center on the so-called fool, the village simpleton. However, Ivan, the Russian everyman, turns out to have far more sense than his would-be oppressors. The greedy priests and landlords and dim-witted demons who try to take advantage of him are easily outsmarted. In the end it is they who are shown to be the fools as Ivan outwits or outlasts them. In these unequal contests lies the pleasure of the tales.

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