



Inga and Lauma: Cinderella

Story of Old Latvia

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Magic

There was once a man named Andris who had a lovely wife who bore a daughter her exact image, and they named her Inga. When Inga was two years old, Her mother suddenly died. Inga's father Andris remarried, the woman he chose was a poor seamstress named Agnese and she was very beautiful, but was rumored to be a witch. She bore him twin children: a one eyed son named Janis and a two eyed girl named Kristine. Agnese despised Inga, and told her father so many lies about her behavior but Andris did not believe and loved Inga all the more. So Agnese did her best to torment Inga when her father was out working. "Go into the kitchen and work you naughty child" Agnese said. It was true Agnese was a witch and couldn't stand her purity. So little Inga was forced to serve her family and got little in return. Kristine, taught magic by her mother, was cruel to Inga and played mean tricks on her but Janis was kinder and would often slip her extra food because he cried at her pain. Agnese and Kristine were very jealous of Inga's beauty and thought of ways to drive her out. One day Kristine yelled "Inga, I am hungry. Bring me watercress and make me a salad" "Inga," said Agnese "it would be nice if you got your sister some watercress." "But stepmother," Inga protested, "there is no watercress now." "Don't argue with me go get the watercress and if you don't or you will not have a place to call home anymore." So Inga was forced to go. At the marsh Inga wept bitterly for she couldn't find the crop, when suddenly the good fairy Lauma appeared to her. "What is the matter my child?" "Oh holy one!" Inga cried, "my stepmother has made me pick some watercress and there is none!" "Don't despair child." Lauma said and with a wave of

her hand a beautiful white and silver stork appeared. "Tell her what you wish and his stork will provide all that you need" Lauma said and disappeared. Inga was joyful and begged the stork for some watercress and opened its beak and gave her a whole basketful. Joyfully, Inga ran home and gave her astonished sister her meal. Which she ate greedily and didn't even share with Janis. Visiting the lovely stork whenever she could, Inga got good clothes and good food. She even brought gifts for Janis and Kristine. Her stepmother Agnese began to suspect Inga's behavior and wanted to know where she got all these things. She called Janis to her in private and asked him to go with Inga to the marsh and see who provided for her. So they went out to the marsh together, and Inga asked "Janis please don't tell mother what you see out here" "I promise." He said. Then calling the stork to them, Inga gave Janis some bread and cake for the entire day. When they returned Agnese asked Janis the questions and he answered, "I didn't see anything." Agnese was furious so she sent Kristine to go out with Inga. When they arrived Inga begged Kristine to not say anything and Kristine said yes. When the silver stork came Inga gave Kristine fruits and sweetbreads and they returned together. Kristine told her mother, "Mother! Inga has a magic silver stork who gives her everything she wants. That never happens to me!!" "That little brat! To think she can live better than all of us." Agnese called her husband to her and ordered him to shoot the stork that was silver and give her the meat. So the father asked his daughter to show him to the marsh. Inga did but cried endlessly when she witnessed the silver bird's death. Realizing he had been tricked the father whipped Agnese brutally. Lauma appeared again hearing Inga's tears. "Dear one, take the feathers and bones, bury them in the soil and what grows will give you whatever you desire." Inga obeyed and took them and buried them at the edge of the forest. When she woke up she found in the spot a magnificent poplar tree with beautiful berries in it. After some years passed, the children grew up. Inga still worked hard but she remained beautiful. Kristine was treated like royalty and clothed like it, but she was absolutely ugly. Janis remained the same, kind and meek and worked with his father in the fields. One day a proclamation came from the royal palace that the king was holding a ball. He wanted to find a bride for his son. So Agnese and Andris prepared to go to the palace with their children. Agnese said, "go ahead with Janis and Kristine. I will take care of Inga so she will be ready". So Andris set off with the two and Agnese put a spell to put the house in a total mess and in shambles and said to Inga "Look at this mess! You will clean this up before we get back and if not you will be suffer for it!" With that Agnese slapped Inga and took off. Inga got up and washed herself and ran out to the tree and broke a branch off and blessed the house and it was all like new. Then she tapped herself and a beautiful gown with a pair of white gloves and silver shoes appeared on her. Then a

magnificent silver griffin appeared and bore Inga to the palace. The prince Valdis was dancing with Kristine when suddenly the palace marveled at the princess on the griffin outside. Immediately Valdis ran out to meet her and was struck by her beauty and kindness. Valdis took her and stood by her side all night. Andris and Janis didn't recognize her, even Agnese and Kristine were astonished and were consumed with jealousy and hate. Inga knew they spotted her and ran in such haste prince Valdis took off her gloves and Inga threw him her silver shoes and took off on her griffin. At home Inga hid the dress in the branches of the poplar tree and got in her rags again. The family returned home and told Inga of all that had happened. Prince Valdis ordered his men together and made a search of the kingdom of the girl who fit the slippers and the gloves. After three days he found himself at the house of Andris and asked him if he had any daughters. "My lord I have two daughters. My eldest Inga and my youngest Kristine." Agnese produced Kristine and forced the shoes on her feet while trying to pull on the gloves but they burned Kristine terribly as did the other girls. Inga was locked outside in the garden shed. Janis took the key and crept to unlock the shed. Inga came out and immediately put on the shoes and gloves with ease. She also had the gown she wore on the night of the ball. Valdis ordered Agnese to prepare her stepdaughter for her journey. Agnese locked Inga in a chest and dressed Kristine in her clothes and put a veil over her face. "Don't take it off until you have married the prince." Janis insisted he go with them to the palace, as he was the brother to the princess to be. Valdis agreed, and when they were some way out Janis whispered to him, "You take the evil one for wife, your love is in the chest". The prince discovered the deception he ordered Kristine to be thrown under the bride and took Inga for his bride. Kristine, knowing her mother's magic turned herself into a poisonous oak. Meanwhile prince married Inga and Inga married her brother to a lady of the court and lived happily for a time. Meanwhile Andris was so disgusted by his wife's cruelty to Inga that he kicked her out of the house so she sought refuge with her daughter the queen. As she passed by the bridge she heard Kristine calling. "Mother!" "Are you here?" "Indeed I am little mother! They threw me down and now I am the oak!" Agnese changed her daughter back into her original form. They went into the palace to Inga's room. Agnese chanted a spell over her and turned her into a wild boar with copper hair. Kristine took a potion which gave her the look and form of Inga. The prince didn't notice the difference and embraced Kristine as his wife. The court told the prince of a monstrous boar that was captured that wrecked the countryside and ate the crops. Kristine as Inga ordered that the boar be shot and killed. She asked the prince for its liver and heart to eat. The prince was shocked at this request, as wife loved all animals, but said he would kill it the next day. Meanwhile the prince saw a luminous being and saw it was Lauma. "My

prince, Inga your sweet wife is the boar your people want to kill. That wicked witch's daughter is your wife lying next to you. If you want your true wife back, strike the boar crosswise on the back with your sword and your wife will appear. Then take the water from the lake that will sprout and smear it on the false wife." The prince obeyed the fairy's commands and Inga returned more beautiful than ever. He then took a bowl and scooped the holy water and then splashed Kristine with it. It burned so badly Kristine confessed her and her mother's evil and pleaded for mercy. Kristine was torn apart by four horses while Agnese was disembowled and beheaded. Andris, Inga's father was brought immediately to the palace and died an old yet happy man. Inga her prince and even Janis lived happily to the end of their days.

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