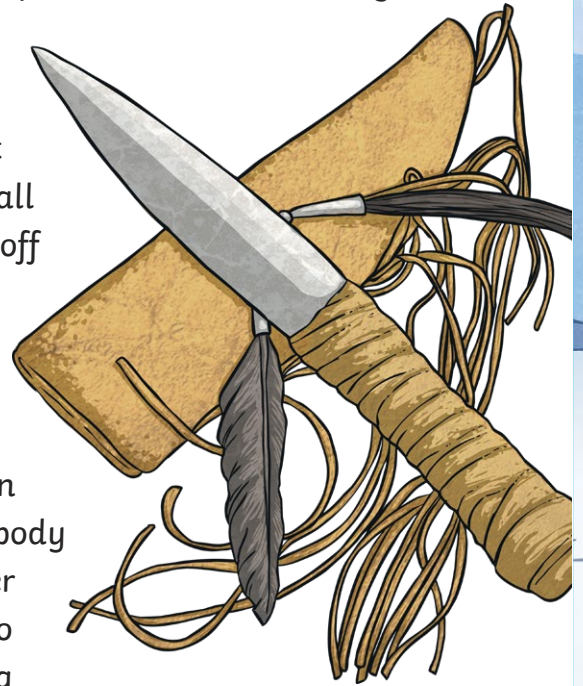


Fiction: The Snow Queen

by Hans Christian Andersen

“Do you intend to keep your knife while you sleep?” asked Gerda; looking at it rather fearfully.

“I always sleep with the knife,” said the little robber maiden. “There is no knowing what may happen. But tell me now, once more, all about little Kay; and why you have started off in the wide world alone.” And Gerda related all, from the very beginning: the Wood-pigeons cooed above in their cage, and the others slept. The little robber maiden wound her arm round Gerda’s neck, held the knife in the other hand, and snored so loud that everybody could hear her; but Gerda could not close her eyes, for she did not know whether she was to live or die. The robbers sat round the fire, sang and drank; and the old female robber jumped about so, that it was quite dreadful for Gerda to see her.



Then the Wood-pigeons said, “Coo! Coo! We have seen little Kay! A white hen carries his sledge; he himself sat in the carriage of the Snow Queen, who passed here, down just over the wood, as we lay in our nest. She blew upon us young ones; and all died except we two. Coo! Coo!”

“What is that you say up there?” cried little Gerda. “Where did the Snow Queen go to? Do you know anything about it?”

“She is no doubt gone to Lapland; for there is always snow and ice there. Only ask the Reindeer, who is tethered there.”

“Ice and snow is there! There it is, glorious and beautiful!” said the Reindeer. “One can spring about in the large shining valleys! The Snow Queen has her summer-tent there; but her fixed abode is high up towards the North Pole, on the Island called Spitzbergen.”

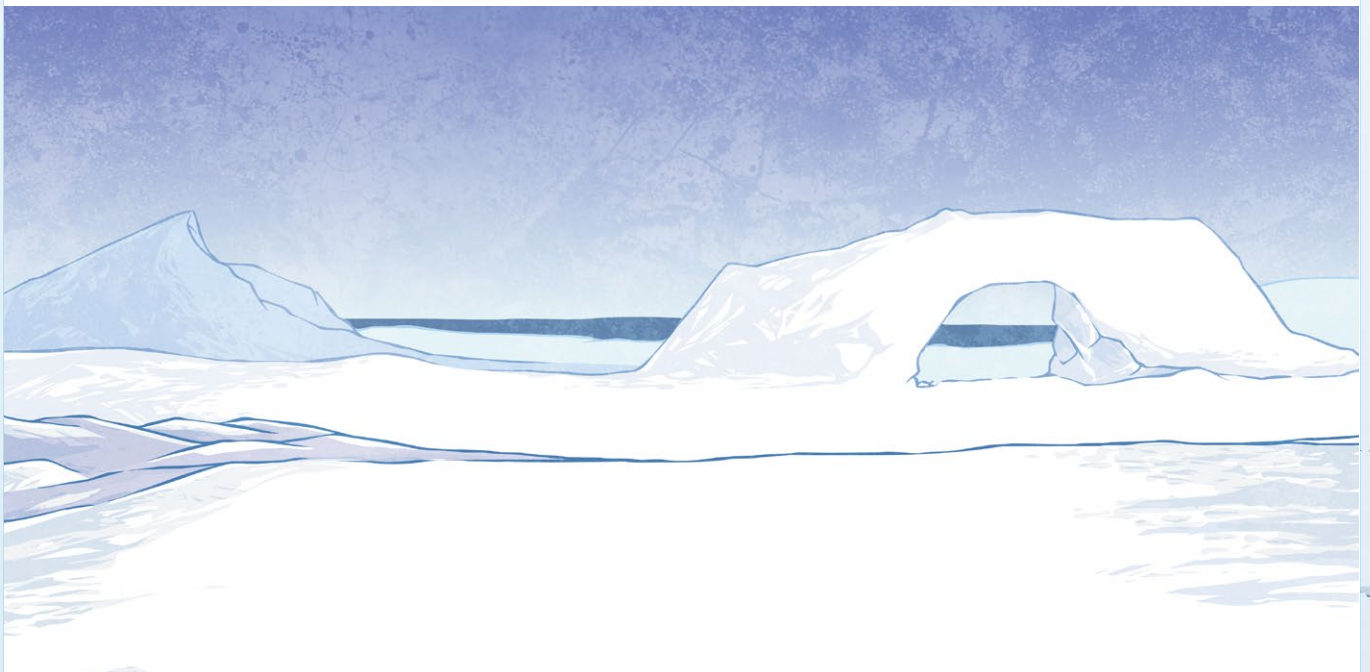
“Oh, Kay! Poor little Kay!” sighed Gerda.

“Do you choose to be quiet?” said the robber maiden. “If you don’t, I shall make you.”

In the morning, Gerda told her all that the Wood-pigeons had said; and the little maiden looked very serious, but she nodded her head, and said, “That’s no matter—that’s no matter. Do you know where Lapland lies!” she asked of the Reindeer.

“Who should know better than I?” said the animal; and his eyes rolled in his head. “I was born and bred there—there I leapt about on the fields of snow by lakes with glass surfaces.”

“Listen,” said the robber maiden to Gerda. “You see that the men are gone; but my mother is still here, and will remain. However, towards morning she takes a draught out of the large flask, and then she sleeps a little: then I will do something for you.” She now jumped out of bed, flew to her mother; with her arms round her neck, and pulling her by the beard, said, “Good morrow, my own sweet nanny-goat of a mother.” And her mother took hold of her nose, and pinched it till it was red and blue; but this was all done out of pure love.



Questions

1. What does the word 'abode' mean in line 23? Tick one.

island

tent

home

mountain

V

2. Name the person that Gerda is searching for.

R

3. Number the following (1-5) to show the order in which they happen in the extract.

S

The reindeer spoke to Gerda.

The woodpigeons spoke to Gerda.

Gerda told the little robber girl about Kay.

Her mother took hold of the robber girls nose.

The robber maiden went to sleep with her arm around Gerda's neck.

4. Why could Gerda not get to sleep?

Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

I

5. Based on what you have read, what do you predict will happen next?

P

6. ...lakes with glass surfaces.

Write two impressions this gives you of the lake.

C

7. When the reindeer describes Lapland, he says 'I was born and bred there – there I leapt on the fields of snow by lakes with glass surfaces'.



How is this different to his current situation. Explain your answer.

8. The author writes that Gerda looked at the knife 'rather fearfully'.



What does this imply? Circle the correct answer.

Gerda wishes to steal the knife.

Gerda is scared of the robber girl.

Gerda is jealous of the knife.

9. In the final paragraph, what does the word 'draught' mean?



Answers

1. What does the word 'abode' mean in line 23? Tick one.

- island
- tent
- home
- mountain

2. Name the person that Gerda is searching for.

Kay

3. Number the following (1-5) to show the order in which they happen in the extract.

- The reindeer spoke to Gerda.
- The woodpigeons spoke to Gerda.
- Gerda told the little robber girl about Kay.
- Her mother took hold of the robber girls nose.
- The robber maiden went to sleep with her arm around Gerda's neck.

4. Why could Gerda not get to sleep?

Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

Accept answers that refer to the following:

- **Gerda was fearful for her life; she was with a band of robbers and the robber girl held a knife whilst she slept.**
- **The robber girl said, 'there is no knowing what may happen,' implying that something bad could happen whilst they slept.**
- **The robber girl was snoring loudly.**
- **She was worried about her friend, Kay.**

5. Based on what you have read, what do you predict will happen next?

Accept any plausible answer with reference to the text:

- **The reindeer may guide Gerda to Kay because he told Gerda he knows where the Snow Queen lives.**
- **The little robber girl will help Gerda escape as she says 'I will do something for you, ' when her mother falls asleep.**

6. ...lakes with glass surfaces.

Write two impressions this gives you of the lake.

Children can receive one mark for each of the following:

- **they are reflective/shiny/mirror-like;**
 - **clear/transparent /see-through;**
 - **still /calm/frozen ice;**
 - **flat /smooth.**
7. When the reindeer describes Lapland, he says 'I was born and bred there – there I leapt on the fields of snow by lakes with glass surfaces'.
How is this different to his current situation. Explain your answer.

Accept any answer that refers to the reindeer being trapped or 'tethered', which means he now isn't free to leap through the field of snow.

8. The author writes that Gerda looked at the knife 'rather fearfully'.

What does this imply? Circle the correct answer.

Gerda wishes to
steal the knife.

Gerda is scared of
the robber girl.

Gerda is jealous
of the knife.

9. In the final paragraph, what does the word 'draught' mean?

she takes a drink / has a drink from the flask