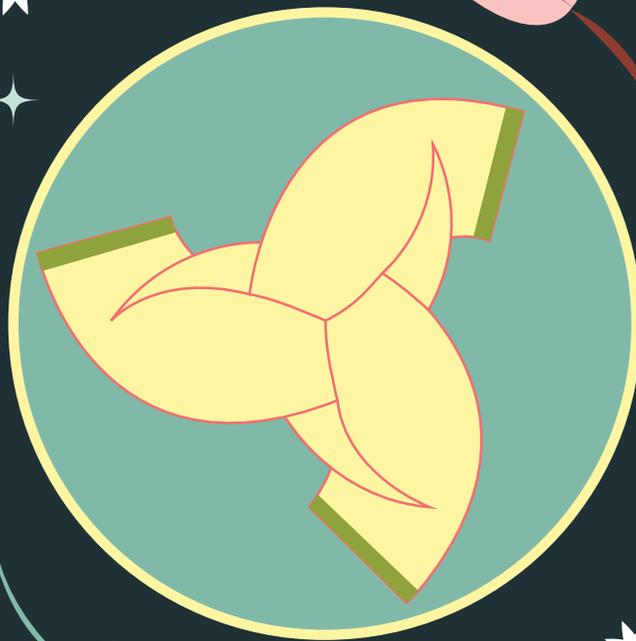


Runepebble

Ostara 2019



An Asatru publication for youths by

The ASATRU FOLK ASSEMBLY



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Ostara! Ostara! Spring has come!

May joy return to our hearts & warmth
to the land!

Hail the lovely earth as she awakens!

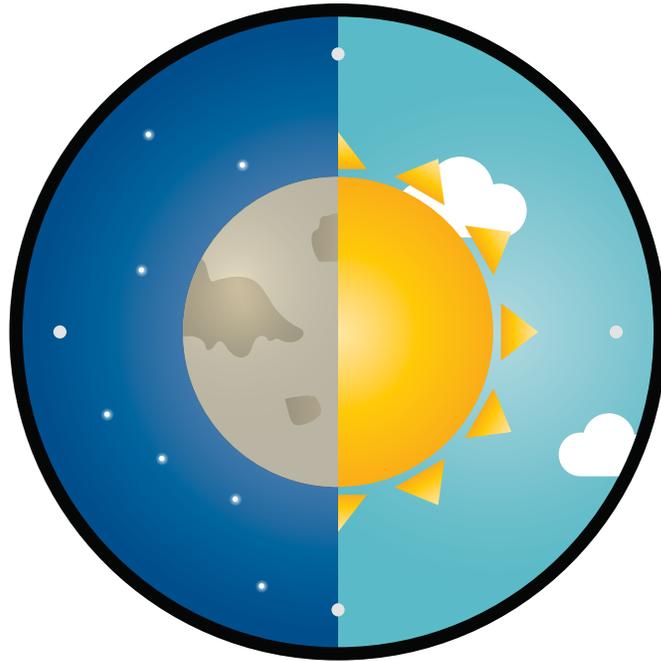
Hail Ostara lady of the dawning spring!

Hail to Frey lord of the elves who kiss
the flowers alive and sing the animals
gently from their sleep!

Ostara, Eostre, Easter what ever your family calls
this holy-day it represents the rebirth of the earth.
As the plants and the animals wake from winter's
cold grasp.

Ostara is the Goddess of the rising sun. You will find
that her name sounds a lot like East. That is because
the sun rises in the East.

During the celebration of Ostara spend time outdoors
with your family. Look for signs of flowers blooming,
plant seeds & sing songs in honour of Spring.



SPRING EQUINOX

The spring equinox is when we traditionally celebrate Ostara. It is the turning of the seasons when the Day and the Night are of equal length and so things are in balance as we rejoice in the coming summer season.

My family also likes to mark the full moon as an important day for rituals. There are plenty of fun and fulfilling things to do as we welcome in the our beautiful Goddess of the Dawning day.

Join me in the coming pages as we travel around Europe in search of traditions we can include in our Ostara celebrations!

May Day Song

Written down in 1869 from England
Made Asatru Friendly by Carrie Overton

All in this pleasant evening together
come has we for the summer springs
so fresh and green and gay.

We'll tell you of a blossom and a bud
on every tree, drawing near to the
merry month of May

Rise up, the master of this house all
in your chain of gold, for the summer
springs so fresh and green and gay

We hope you're not offended with your
house we make so bold, drawing near
to the merry month of May

Rise up, the mistress of this house with
gold all on your breast, for the summer
springs so fresh and green and gay

And if your body is asleep we hope
your soul's at rest, drawing near to the
merry month of May

Rise up, the children of this house, all
in your rich attire, for the summer
springs so fresh and green and gay.

And every hair all on your head shines
like a silver wire, drawing near to the
merry month of May

Gods bless this house and arbor, your
riches and your store, for the summer
springs so fresh and green and gay

We hope that the Gods will prosper you
both now and evermore, drawing near to
the merry month of May

So now we're going to leave you in peace
and plenty here, for the summer springs
so fresh and green and gay

We will not sing you May again until
another year, for to drive you these
cold winter nights away

The Reason for Folktales?

By: Carrie Overton

We've all read or had Folktales read to us at some point in our lives. They are similar to Fairy tales in many ways but deal less with kings, princess and dragons and more about regular people like you and I.

Often they are about children or teenagers though in these stories they are usually referred to as young or youths.

Folktales are stories like the familiar Little Red Riding Hood and Hansel and Gretel. We have our modern cleansed versions of these stories that leave out the sordid and depressing bits thus making them more palatable to a modern parent who has distress signals go off inside their brains when their child is taking in information that they feel might be scary or harmful.

Why do we as modern people feel the need to cleanse these tales of their original words? What puts us off that must not have put off our not so distant ancestors?

First of all we have to look at what the reason was for the creation of any particular folktale. If you have spent time studying old texts you will find that all of these stories were most certainly targeted toward children, even with the murder, poverty, illness, and suffering included.

Let us look at one of the more familiar stories from the Grimm Brothers.

LITTLE RED-CAP

(LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD)

Once upon a time there was a dear little girl who was loved by everyone who looked at her, but most of all by her grandmother, and there was nothing that she would not have given to the child. Once she gave her a little cap of red velvet, which suited her so well that she would never wear anything else; so she was always called ‘Little Red-Cap.’

One day her mother said to her: ‘Come, Little Red-Cap, here is a piece of cake and a bottle of wine; take them to your grandmother, she is ill and weak, and they will do her good. Set out before it gets hot, and when you are going, walk nicely and quietly and do not run off the path, or you may fall and break the bottle, and then your grandmother will get nothing; and when you go into her room, don’t forget to say, “Good morning”, and don’t peep into every corner before you do it.’

‘I will take great care,’ said Little Red-Cap to her mother, and gave her hand on it.

The grandmother lived out in the wood, half a league from the village, and just as Little Red-Cap entered the wood, a wolf met her. Red-Cap did not know what a wicked creature he was, and was not at all afraid of him.

‘Good day, Little Red-Cap,’ said he.

‘Thank you kindly, wolf.’

‘Whither away so early, Little Red-Cap?’

‘To my grandmother’s.’

‘What have you got in your apron?’

‘Cake and wine; yesterday was baking-day, so poor sick grandmother is to have something good, to make her stronger.’

‘Where does your grandmother live, Little Red-Cap?’

‘A good quarter of a league farther on in the wood; her house stands under the three large oak-trees, the nut-trees are just below; you surely must know it,’ replied Little Red-Cap.

The wolf thought to himself: ‘What a tender young creature! What a nice plump mouthful—she will be better to eat than the old woman. I must act craftily, so as to catch both.’ So he walked for a short time by the side of Little Red-Cap, and then he said: ‘See, Little Red-Cap, how pretty the flowers are about here—why do you not look round? I believe, too, that you do not hear how sweetly the little birds are singing; you walk gravely along as if you were going to school, while everything else out here in the wood is merry.’

Little Red-Cap raised her eyes, and when she saw the sunbeams dancing here and there through the trees, and pretty flowers growing everywhere, she thought: ‘Suppose I take grandmother a fresh nosegay; that would please her too. It is so early in the day that I shall still get there in good time’; and so she ran from the path into the wood to look for flowers. And whenever she had picked one, she fancied that she saw a still prettier one farther on, and ran after it, and so got deeper and deeper into the wood.

Meanwhile the wolf ran straight to the grandmother’s house and knocked at the door.



‘Who is there?’

‘Little Red-Cap,’ replied the wolf. ‘She is bringing cake and wine; open the door.’

‘Lift the latch,’ called out the grandmother, ‘I am too weak, and cannot get up.’

The wolf lifted the latch, the door sprang open, and without saying a word he went straight to the grandmother’s bed, and devoured her. Then he put on her clothes, dressed himself in her cap laid himself in bed and drew the curtains.

Little Red-Cap, however, had been running about picking flowers, and when she had gathered so many that she could carry no more, she remembered her grandmother, and set out on the way to her.

She was surprised to find the cottage-door standing open, and when she went into the room, she had such a strange feeling that she said to herself: ‘Oh dear! How uneasy I feel today, and at other times I like being with grandmother so much.’ She called out: ‘Good morning,’ but received no answer; so she went to the bed and drew back the curtains. There lay her grandmother with her cap pulled far over her face, and looking very strange.

‘Oh! Grandmother,’ she said, ‘what big ears you have!’

‘The better to hear you with, my child,’ was the reply.

‘But, grandmother, what big eyes you have!’ She said.

‘The better to see you with, my dear.’

‘But, grandmother, what large hands you have!’

‘The better to hug you with.’

‘Oh! But, grandmother, what a terrible big mouth you have!’

‘The better to eat you with!’

And scarcely had the wolf said this, than with one bound he was out of bed and swallowed up Red-Cap.

When the wolf had appeased his appetite, he lay down again in the bed, fell asleep and began to snore very loud. The huntsman was just passing the house, and thought to himself: ‘How the old woman is snoring! I must just see if she wants anything.’ So he went into the room, and when he came to the bed, he saw that the wolf was lying in it. ‘Do I find you here, you old sinner!’ Said he. ‘I have long sought you!’ Then just as he was going to fire at him, it occurred to him that the wolf might have devoured the grandmother, and that she might still be saved, so he did not fire, but took a pair of scissors, and began to cut open the stomach of the sleeping wolf. When he had made two snips, he saw the little Red-Cap shining, and then he made two snips more, and the little girl sprang out, crying: ‘Ah, how frightened I have been! How dark it was inside the wolf’; and after that the aged grandmother came out alive also, but scarcely able to breathe. Red-Cap, however, quickly fetched great stones with which they filled the wolf’s belly, and when he awoke, he wanted to run away, but the stones were so heavy that he collapsed at once, and fell dead.

Then all three were delighted. The huntsman drew off the wolf’s skin and went home with it; the grandmother ate the cake and drank the wine which Red-Cap had brought, and revived, but Red-Cap thought to herself: ‘As long as I live, I will never by myself leave the path, to run into the wood, when my mother has forbidden me to do so.’

It also related that once when Red-Cap was again taking cakes to the old grandmother, another wolf spoke to her, and tried to entice her from the path. Red-Cap, however, was on her guard, and went straight forward on her way, and told her grandmother that she had met the wolf, and that he had said ‘good morning’ to her, but with such a wicked look in his eyes, that if they had not been on the public road she was certain he would have eaten her up. ‘Well,’ said the grandmother, ‘we will shut the door, that he may not come in.’ Soon afterwards the wolf knocked, and cried: ‘Open the door, grandmother, I am Little Red-Cap, and am bringing you some cakes.’ But they did not speak, or open the door, so the Grey-beard stole twice or thrice round the house, and at last jumped on the roof, intending to wait until Red-Cap went home in the evening, and then to steal after her and devour her in the darkness. But the grandmother saw what was in his thoughts. In front of the house was a great stone trough, so she said to the child: ‘Take the pail, Red-Cap; I made some sausages yesterday, so carry the water in which I boiled them to the trough.’ Red-Cap carried until the great trough was quite full. Then the smell of the sausages reached the wolf, and he sniffed and peeped down, and at last stretched out his neck so far that he could no longer keep his footing and began to slip, and slipped down from the roof straight into the great trough, and was drowned. But Red-Cap went joyously home, and no one ever did anything to harm her again.

The Grimm Brothers version in itself is more friendly than other versions I have read from earlier times. In some Little Red Riding Hood is gobbled up as well as her Grandmother and the Huntsman did not save them.

MODERN RETELLING

But some modern versions have taken it even further. I cannot recall here the exact words of one modern retelling due to copyright reasons but I remember being quite surprised when I read a version to my daughter for the first time that told how the Wolf locked Grandmother up in a closet and posed as her while Little Red came to visit. The Huntsman came along just as Little Red was chatting with the wolf and scared him away. Then the Huntsman and Little Red pulled her Grandmother out of the closet and all was happy.

While this was a much cleaner version meaning that no one (not even the wolf) was actually harmed, it seemed to miss the point a bit.

THE MORAL

The heart of the Folktale is the Moral of the Story. What is that? The Moral of the Story is the Lesson the story is trying to teach you. Think about Aesop's Fables. Many would argue that the very reason many these stories were created were to teach a lesson about life. Common ones would be, don't lie, don't cheat, don't let yourself be cheated, don't be unkind to old folks, etc..

The moral of Little Red Riding Hood is pretty clear. Do as your mother says (she is trying to look out for your best interests) and don't talk to or trust strangers (you could end up getting killed).

If you look to the earlier sources you will see that many of the most beloved Folktales can be downright disturbing. Our ancestors saw no need to censor themselves for their children. Why did they not want to protect their children from these alarming thoughts?

They knew that telling them stories that were brutally honest and realistic meant that they may just end up saving their children's lives.

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

So what do you think? Should children be protected from scary things or be told the brutal truth? This is a deeper philosophical question that has changed a lot in our minds as time has passed.

I challenge you to look at our Folktales. Older versions and modern ones. Compare them and think about what the original story was trying to convey. Consider if the modern versions do as well a job as the old ones do in expressing this same message.

It is clear that our ancestors saw it necessary to share these scary stories with their children in an attempt to keep them from harm. Do you think it worked? Would it work on you?





BIRD FEEDER CRAFT



© Carrie Overton

As the earth begins to emerge from the frozen winter it is easier to spend more time outdoors. Go on a few nature walks to find the things you will need to make this craft. :)

What you will need:

- 1 Large stick and 3 smaller sticks
- Yarn either of Hemp or Wool
- 2 Large Pinecones
- Peanut Butter & Bird Seed
- Woodburner or carving knife

What to do:

First place your large stick laying flat on a piece of newspaper or do this craft outside.

Then tie yarn on one side of the stick then onto the other end leaving enough slack for it to hang up.

Either carve or use a wood burner to make Runes in the smaller sticks

Tie five pieces of yarn hanging from the large stick and attach the three smaller sticks

Put peanut butter on the pinecones and attach the bird seed to the pinecones then attach to the two remaining pieces of yarn

Hang it up for the birds!

GERMANIC OSTARA TRADITIONS



Photo: Sualk61 @Flickr

Have a Bonfire

To drive away winter and the bad spirits that come around during winter time. The bonfire is often lit with the Yule Tree or remnants of the Yule Log. This has its roots in the tradition of burning the Yule Log at Yuletide and lighting all of the fires of the village from that single fire. The important part of that tradition is that it is the new fire for the coming year and all fires for the remainder of the year will be kept lit from that original flame. To start the bonfire with part of the Yule Log (and fire from the Yule Bonfire) renews the magic of healthy & prosperity for the coming spring & summer.



Photo: Torsten Althof @Flickr

Osterräderlauf - The Ostara Wheel

This is something to do with your family & Kindred
Don't do this yourself! In Germany there is a ritual
called: Osterräderlauf Which means Ostara Wheel.

This is a wheel of hay that has a stick set through it
which is lit on fire. Then it is rolled down a large hill.

It is meant to be symbolic of the burning sun creating
for us a good harvest. If the wheel rolls straight down
the hill it will be a good year for farming.

If there is a draught in your area do not attempt to do
this and as always adults should help with and oversee
anything to do with fire.



Photo: Stefan Hundhammer @Flickr

The Ostara Tree

The Germans didn't just decorate the Yule Tree they also decorated the Ostara Tree!

Hang brightly coloured and painted eggs all over your trees outside to welcome in the coming spring and the fertility of the world as all creatures come out from their winter homes to make nests & dens for their babies.

SLAVIC OSTARA TRADITION



The Watering

In Czech - Oblévačka. In Hungarian - locsolkodás & in Polish - Śmigus-dyngus

Basically meaning "Pouring Water on them" or "The Watering". It is a ritual of Pagan origins that is throughout the Slavic world on Ostara.

First the boys would sneak up and pour water over the girls, then the girls would get a chance to sneak up and pour water over the boys.

Girls who saw the boys and didn't want to get water poured on them would offer the boys painted eggs.

The ritual was to ensure that they would be healthy in the coming year and usually meant that the boy or girl that poured water on you liked you (in that special way).

DANISH OSTARA TRADITION

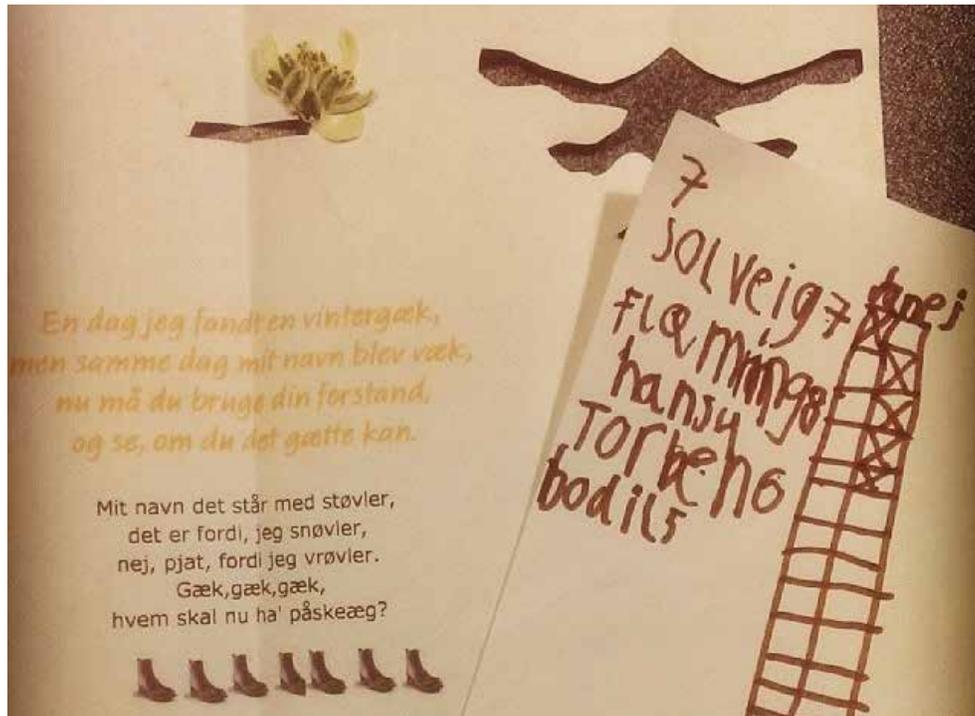


Photo: Torben Heikel Vinther @Flickr

Gækkebrev

Write a little poem and send it to a friend or family member anonymously. If they guess right about who sent it to them then you owe them a chocolate but if they guess wrong then they owe you a chocolate. Yum!

“FRIED EGG” COOKIES

Adapted from a Polish recipe this is a fun way to make “eggs” for Ostara.

If the idea behind these cookies seems weird to you don't let it deceive you. They are cute little cookies made of cream and peaches that look like real fried eggs.

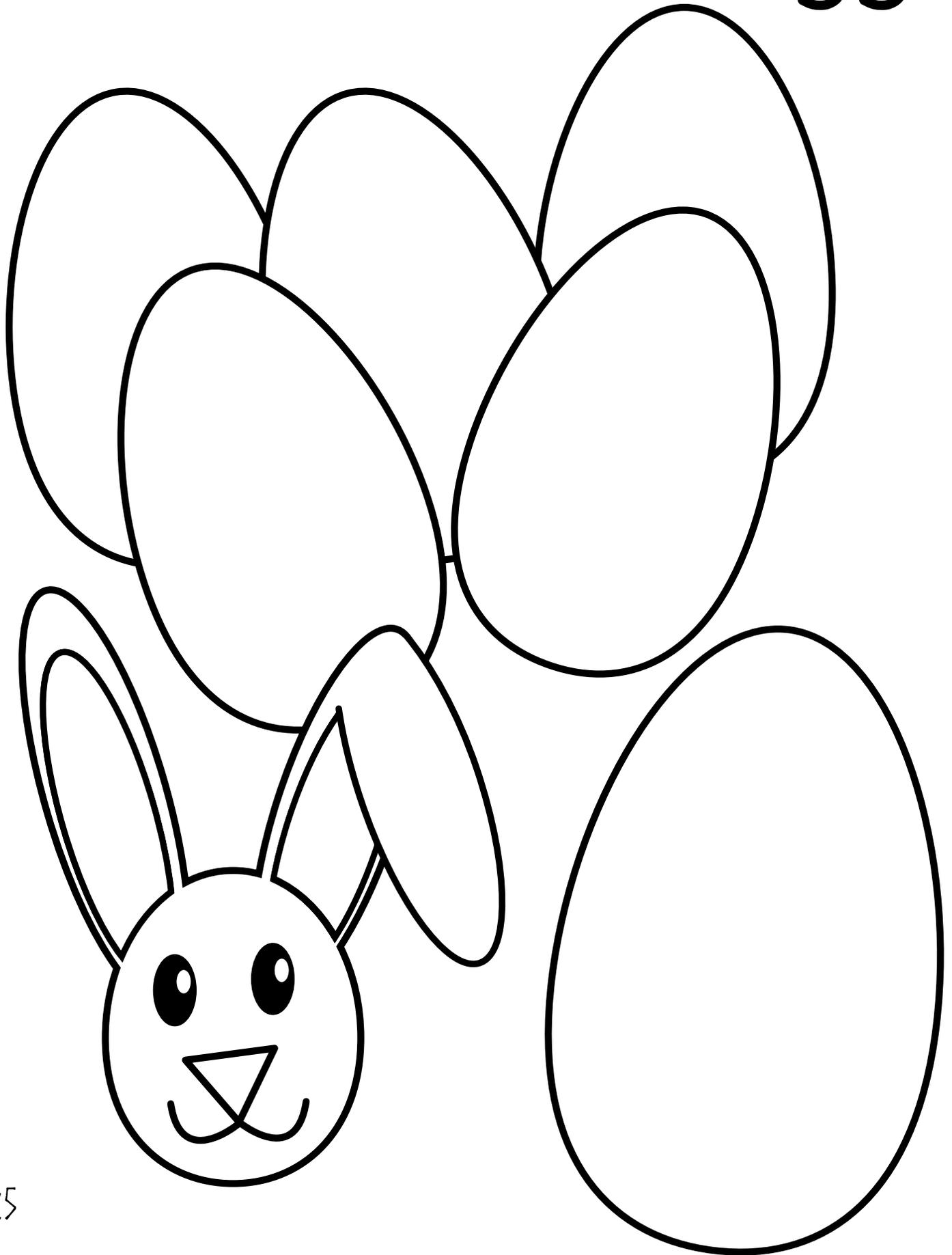
Ingredients:

- 3 cups or 300g flour
- 2 flat teaspoons of baking powder
- 1 cup or 100g sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons of vanilla sugar (or 1 teaspoon extract)
- 1 1/2 cups or 150g of lean curd (this is called Tvaroh in Czech and is not like cottage cheese with little chunks of curd but rather a smooth creamy curd)
- 1 2/3 cups milk or 400ml + 11 Spoons
- 1 egg
- 6 tablespoons olive (or rapeseed) oil
- 1 vanilla pudding packet (like Dr. Oetker, etc..)
- 4 canned peaches halved (8 halves total)
- Powdered sugar for sprinkling

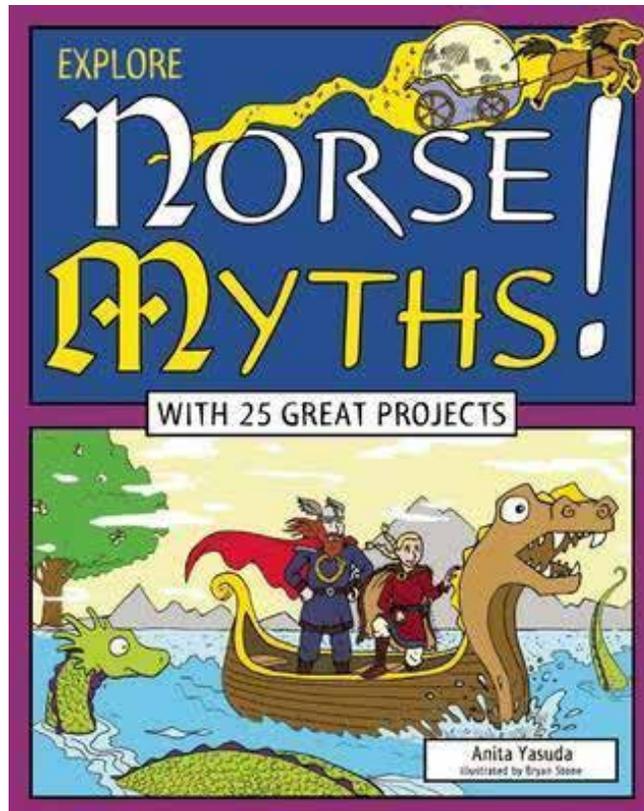
Directions:

- 1. Mix the flour with baking powder, 2/3 (75g) sugar, vanilla and salt. Add lean curd, 5 tablespoons of milk, oil, egg and knead the dough.
- 2. Divide the dough into 8 parts and form oval cookies with an indentation, place them on a baking tray lined with baking paper.
- 3. Mix pudding with 6 tablespoons of milk and 1/3 (25g) of sugar add the remaining milk boil and pour the mixed pudding.
- 4. Using the pudding still hot, fill the hollows in the cookies and put on the top half of the peach. Bake cookies for 20-25 minutes at 400F (200C) until they brown. Carefully remove from the oven and set aside to cool.
- Before serving, sprinkle with powdered sugar. Enjoy!

Color Ostara's Eggs



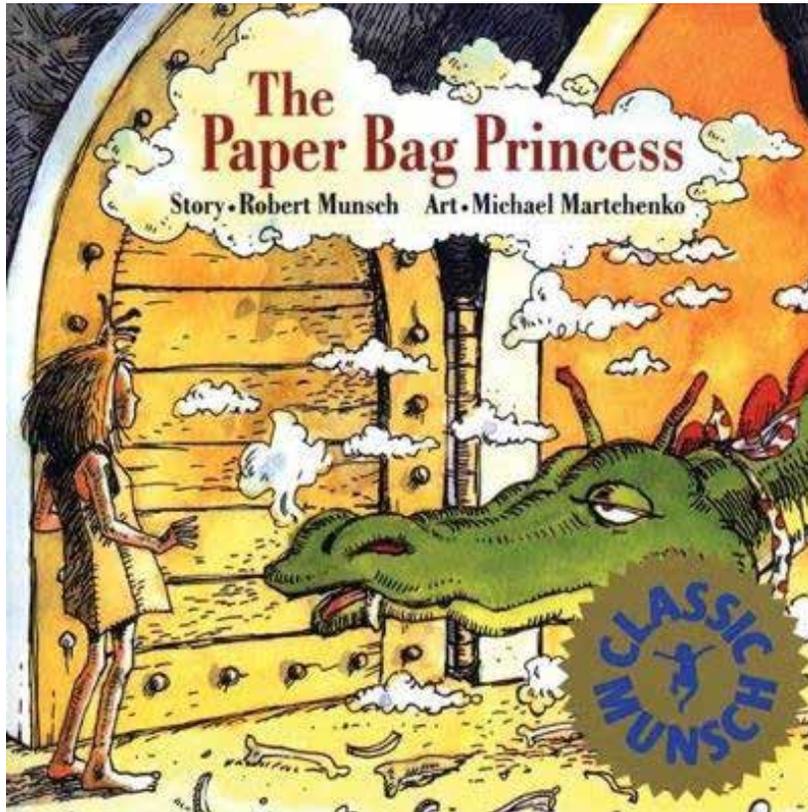
BOOK REVIEWS



Explore Norse Myths! By: Anita Yasuda

This is a fun colourful book that presents the Myths in a very understandable format for young children. Although not always accurate it tries to be as fair as possible. With Cartoon artwork through out, it is lively and engaging. There are also 25 “projects” you can do so it is great for an addition to homeschooling!

BOOK REVIEWS



The Paper Bag Princess By: Robert Munsch

Although not at all about our myths this book is a classic and my girls love it.

Robert Munsch is a children's comedy writer and in this book he tells the simple story of a Princess who is about to marry her "prince charming" when along comes trouble proving that her prince may not be so wonderful after all.

It is a story about a young girl who is both clever and brave. A perfect example for a strong woman of our faith.

BUILDING COMMUNITY: BABY BLANKETS FOR AFA BABIES



Do you have a baby? One on the way?

The **Ladies of the AFA** want to include you in
The Baby Blanket Project!

We're committed to ensuring all new babies born within the AFA are gifted a hand made - knit, crocheted, sewn or woven baby blanket! It just our little way of celebrating our new folk!

If you would like a blanket for your newborn, or would like to donate to help with yarn cost (yarn is expensive!) please notify your Folk Builder!

RUNEPEBBLE SUBMISSIONS

**Want to see something in the Runepebble?
Submit your ideas!**

We need folks like you to help us create content for the Runepebble youth publication.

If you are a parent, child or teen your participation is *greatly* appreciated. Our children are our future and we need to give them the best future we can.

By helping Runepebble with articles, art, stories, pictures, insights, etc.. you are helping our young folk grown within them a strong sense of who they are and encouraging a connection to the AFA community.

Please send any submissions you may have to:

carrie@carrieoverton.com or message me on facebook.

We would like to thank everyone involved in making this Ostara Runepebble possible!