

## **AI-Generated Graded Readers**

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### **About This Edition**

This book is a simplified English adaptation created for extensive reading practice.

The text was translated from Finnish into English and simplified using ChatGPT for intermediate English learners as part of an educational project.

Target reading level: CEFR A2-B1

This edition aims to support fluency development through accessible vocabulary, expanded narration, and improved readability while preserving the original story structure.

### **Content Note**

This adaptation is based on a historical literary work. It may contain expressions, attitudes, or depictions that some readers may consider inappropriate or offensive by today's standards. Such elements have been retained or reflected where necessary in order to preserve the historical and literary character of the original work.

### **Source Text**

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Compiled by Elias Lönnrot, *Kalevala* (Simplified Edition, Adapted and Simplified from Finnish by ChatGPT)

## Part 1: The Birth of the World

I want to begin my song. I want to tell old stories, the stories that came from long ago. These words are not new. Fathers sang them while they worked, and mothers taught them while they sat beside the fire. Children heard them on the floor, when they were still small and did not understand everything. But the words stayed in their ears, and later they came back like birds returning to a tree.

I have gathered these songs from many places. I found them on roads, in fields, in woods, and near cold water. The wind brought some words to me, and the waves brought others. The birds seemed to carry small pieces of songs in their voices. I put all these words together, as a person puts small threads into one ball. Now I open the box of song, and I begin.

In the beginning, there was no land for people to walk on. There were no fields, no forests, and no houses. There was only wide air and wide water. In that empty place lived Ilmatar, the daughter of the air. She was alone for a very long time. At first she stayed in the high air, but after many years she grew tired of her lonely life.

At last Ilmatar came down from the air and rested on the sea. The sea moved under her, and the wind moved over her. A strong wind came from the east and pushed the waves high. The waves carried her far across the water. She could not stand, and she could not find a shore. She lived on the sea for many years, and she suffered there alone.

Ilmatar became the mother of a child, but the child did not come into the world. For a very long time she carried him inside her. She swam through the water in pain and sadness. She moved east and west, north and south, but still there was no land. At last she cried out, "Great Ukko, help me. I am alone on this wide sea. Come to me in my pain and set me free."

A little time passed. Then a bird came flying over the sea. It was looking for a

place to make a nest, but it found nothing. It flew east and west, north and south, and everywhere there was only water. The bird thought, "I cannot build my nest in the wind. The wind will throw it down. I cannot build it on the waves. The waves will carry it away."

Ilmatar saw the bird and felt pity for it. She lifted her knee out of the water, so the bird could rest there. The bird thought the knee was a small green island. It flew down and made its nest there. Then it laid six golden eggs and one iron egg. It sat on the eggs and warmed them.

The eggs grew hot on Ilmatar's knee. At first she waited, but soon the heat became too strong. It felt as if her skin were burning. She moved her knee suddenly, and the eggs fell into the sea. They broke into pieces, but the pieces did not sink like dead things. They changed into the parts of the world.

The lower part of one egg became the earth. The upper part became the sky. The bright yellow part became the sun, and the pale white part became the moon. The small shining pieces became stars. The dark pieces became clouds. So the world began from the broken eggs on the sea.

Time passed, and the sun and moon moved in the sky. Still Ilmatar swam on the water. After many years she began to shape the world with her body. Where she moved her hand, she made points of land. Where her foot touched, she made deep places for fish. Where she turned on her side, she made smooth shores. Where she rested her head, she made bays and small safe places by the sea.

She made islands in the water. She made rocks under the waves, places where ships might break. She made shores, deep water, and quiet places. But still her child had not been born. Väinämöinen, the old and lasting singer, was still inside his mother. He had lived there for thirty summers and thirty winters, in a dark and narrow place.

At last Väinämöinen could not bear it any longer. He wanted to see the moon, the sun, and the stars. He spoke from the dark place and said, "Moon, help me. Sun, set me free. Show me the way out of this small home. I want to come into the world and see the light." But the moon did not free him, and the sun did not answer.

So Väinämöinen pushed his way out by his own strength. He came from his mother and fell into the sea. The waves took him, and he floated there for many years. He was alone on the water, with no land under his feet. At last he reached a bare piece of land. He lifted himself from the sea with his hands and knees, and he stood up to look at the moon, the sun, and the stars.

This was the birth of Väinämöinen, the old singer. He was born from Ilmatar, the mother of the waters. He stood on an empty island, but there were no trees, no plants, and no food. For many years he lived there and looked at the empty land. Then he thought, “Who will plant this world? Who will make fields and forests grow?”

Then Sampsa Pellervoinen came, the small planter of the earth. He went across the land and sowed seeds everywhere. He sowed seeds on hills, in low places, on wet land, and on dry land. Pines grew on the hills, fir trees grew on the high ground, and birches grew in low places. Other trees rose too, and the empty world began to turn green.

Väinämöinen went to look at the work. He saw that many trees had grown well. But one tree had not grown at all. It was the oak, the great tree of the world. Väinämöinen waited three days and three nights, and then he came back. Still the oak had not grown.

Then strange women of the water cut grass near the edge of the sea. A being from the sea rose up and burned the grass to ash. In the ash there was a small acorn. From that acorn, the oak began to grow. It did not stay small. It rose higher and higher until its top reached the sky.

The oak became too great. Its branches spread across the heavens. It stopped the clouds from moving. It covered the sun and hid the moon. The world became dark, and people could not live well in that darkness. Väinämöinen thought, “Who can cut down this terrible tree? Who can open the way for the sun and moon again?”

He called to his mother and asked for help from the water people. Then a very small man rose from the sea. He was no taller than a thumb, and he wore clothes of copper. Väinämöinen looked at him and said, “You are too small. You cannot cut down this great oak.” But as soon as he spoke, the little man began to change.

The small man grew into a giant. His head reached the clouds, and his feet stood strongly on the earth. He sharpened his axe and walked toward the oak. He struck the tree once, and then again. At the third blow, fire flew from the axe, and the great oak began to fall. Its top fell one way, its roots another way, and its branches spread across the land and sea.

When the oak fell, the sun could shine again. The moon could give light again. Clouds could move across the sky, and the world breathed freely. Forests grew, grass rose from the ground, and birds came to sing in the trees. Berries grew on the hills, and flowers opened in the fields. Life returned to the land.

But one thing was still missing. Barley had not grown. Väinämöinen walked by the sea and found six grains and seven seeds on the sand. He put them safely away and went to sow them near the field of Kaleva. A small bird spoke from a tree and said, "The barley will not grow unless the forest is cut and burned. The field must be made ready first."

Väinämöinen made a sharp axe and cut down the trees. But he left one birch standing. It was for the birds, so they would have a place to rest and sing. An eagle flew over the land and saw the tree. It asked, "Why did you leave this birch?" Väinämöinen answered, "I left it for the birds, and for you too, if you need a place to sit."

The eagle was pleased. It struck fire from the sky and helped burn the field. The trees became ash, and the earth was ready. Väinämöinen took the seeds and sowed them with care. He prayed to the earth and to Ukko in the sky. He asked for rain, soft ground, strong stems, and good grain.

Ukko heard him. Clouds gathered from the east, west, north, and south. Rain fell from the sky and touched the young field. After a few days, the barley began to rise. Väinämöinen came to see it and found that it had grown well. The stems were strong, and the heads of grain were full.

Then a cuckoo came to the birch tree that Väinämöinen had left standing. The bird saw the green land, the field, and the bright sky. Väinämöinen said, "Sing here, cuckoo. Sing in the morning, sing in the evening, and sing at noon. Make my land pleasant, make my woods happy, and make my fields rich." So the world

was no longer empty. It had light, land, trees, birds, and grain.

## Part 2: Joukahainen and Aino

Väinämöinen lived in the fields of Kalevala. He sang old songs and spoke deep words from ancient times. His voice carried far across the land. People heard of his wisdom, and the news went even to distant Pohjola.

In that far country lived a young man named Joukahainen. He was proud and thin, and he thought he knew many things. One day he heard people speak of Väinämöinen's songs. They said that no one could sing like the old man. Joukahainen did not like this, because he wanted to be the greatest singer himself.

Joukahainen went home and told his parents that he would go to meet Väinämöinen. His father told him not to go. His mother also warned him. "Do not challenge that old singer," they said. "He can sing you into the snow, and you will not be able to move your hands or feet."

But Joukahainen did not listen. He said, "My father knows much, and my mother knows more, but I know best of all. If I meet this singer, I will sing him down. I will put stone shoes on his feet and a stone weight on his chest. I will show him that I am stronger." Then he took his fiery horse, placed it before his fine sleigh, and drove away.

He drove for one day, then for a second day, and then for a third. On the third day he reached the fields of Kalevala. At the same time, Väinämöinen was driving along the road. The two sleighs came face to face. Their wooden parts caught together, and neither man could pass.

They sat there and looked at each other. Water ran from the bent wood of the sleighs, and mist rose from the horses. At last Väinämöinen spoke first. "Who are you?" he asked. "Why did you drive so badly against me? You have broken my road and damaged my sleigh."

Joukahainen answered proudly, "I am young Joukahainen. Now tell me who you are." Väinämöinen gave his name and said, "If you are young Joukahainen, move aside. You are younger than I am." But Joukahainen would not move. He

said, "Age is not the important thing. The wiser man should stay on the road, and the other should move away."

Then Joukahainen asked for a singing contest. Väinämöinen did not boast. He said, "I have lived quietly in my own fields. I have listened to the cuckoo near my home. But tell me what you know, so I can hear your wisdom." Joukahainen began to speak. He told small facts about fish, birds, water, fire, and iron.

Väinämöinen listened, but he was not impressed. "That is children's knowledge," he said. "Tell me deeper things. Tell me about the beginning of the world." Joukahainen tried to answer. He said that he had been there when the sea was made, when the sky was lifted, and when the sun and moon were set in their places. But Väinämöinen knew this was false.

The old singer said, "You are lying. You were not there when the sea was made. You were not there when the earth was formed. You were not there when the sun and moon were placed in the sky." Joukahainen grew angry and ashamed. If words could not help him, he wanted to use a sword.

He called Väinämöinen to fight. Väinämöinen refused. "I do not fear your sword," he said. "But I will not fight a weak and foolish young man like you." Joukahainen became even more angry. He spoke ugly words and said he would turn any man who refused battle into a low animal.

Then Väinämöinen's anger rose. He began to sing, and his song was not like the song of a child. The earth shook, the water moved, and strong rocks cracked. His words changed the things around Joukahainen. The young man's sleigh became old wood in the water, his whip became reeds by the shore, and his horse became stone beside the rapids.

Väinämöinen sang again, and Joukahainen himself began to sink. His feet went into the soft ground. His legs went deeper. Soon he was trapped in a dark swamp. He tried to lift one foot, but it would not rise. He tried the other foot, but it was held fast like stone.

Fear entered Joukahainen's heart. He knew at last that he had come against a greater singer. "Wise Väinämöinen," he cried, "take back your words. Free me from this place. I will pay you well." Väinämöinen asked, "What will you give

me if I let you go?”

Joukahainen first offered him fine bows. Väinämöinen did not want them. Then he offered boats, then horses, then gold and silver. Väinämöinen refused them all. Each time he sang Joukahainen deeper into the swamp, until mud was near the young man’s mouth.

At last Joukahainen was desperate. The water pulled at his feet, and sand pressed against his face. He cried, “Take back your song, and I will give you my sister Aino. She will come to your house. She will clean your room, wash your clothes, make bread, and be your wife.” When Väinämöinen heard this, he was pleased, because he was old and wanted a young wife for his later years.

Väinämöinen sat on a stone and sang his words backward. Slowly the spell opened. Joukahainen came out of the swamp, his horse came back from the stone, and his sleigh came back from the water. But he was not happy. He climbed into his sleigh with a dark heart and drove home in shame.

When Joukahainen reached home, he drove badly and broke his sleigh at the gate. His father asked, “Why have you broken your sleigh? Why do you come home like this?” Joukahainen stood with his head low and tears on his face. His mother asked more gently, “Why are you crying, my son?”

Joukahainen said, “I have a reason to cry. I promised my sister Aino to Väinämöinen. I gave her to that old singer as his wife, so he would free me from the swamp.” His mother was not sad. She clapped her hands and said, “Do not cry. I have long wished to have Väinämöinen in our family.”

But Aino heard these words and began to weep. She cried for one day, and then for another. Her mother said, “Why do you cry, Aino? You will have a great husband. A wise and famous man will sit in our house.” But Aino answered, “I cry because I must leave my young life. I cry because I must cover my hair and go away from my father’s home.”

Later Aino went into the woods to gather branches for the bath. She cut one bundle for her father, one for her mother, and one for her brother. As she walked home through the trees, Väinämöinen saw her. He said, “Young maiden, do not wear your jewels for others. Wear them for me.”

Aino answered with a cold heart. "I will not wear them for you or for anyone else," she said. "I do not care about fine clothes or rich food. I would rather live in simple clothes near my father and my mother." Then she pulled off her cross, rings, beads, and ribbons. She threw them down in the woods and went home crying.

Her father asked why she was crying, and she spoke of the things she had lost. Her brother asked, and she gave another answer about her rings and beads. Her sister asked, and again Aino spoke of her lost ribbons. At last her mother asked, and Aino told the whole truth. She told how Väinämöinen had spoken to her in the forest, and how she had refused him.

Her mother tried to comfort her. She said, "Do not cry, my daughter. Go to the storehouse on the hill. There are fine belts, dresses, gold, and silver there. Dress yourself beautifully, and you will be the joy of your family." She told Aino that the Moon's daughter and the Sun's daughter had once given those shining things to her when she was young.

Aino did not feel comforted. She went outside and spoke sadly to herself. She said that happy people had minds like moving water, but unhappy people had hearts like deep cold wells. She wished she had never grown up to see such sorrow. She said it would be better to live under the waves with fish than to be given to an old man.

Then Aino went to the storehouse. She opened the best chest and found the fine clothes and ornaments. She dressed herself in them, with gold on her head, silver in her hair, blue silk near her eyes, and red ribbons above. But she did not dress for a wedding. She dressed as a person who was leaving her home forever.

Aino walked across fields, marshes, and dark woods. She walked for one day, then for a second day, and on the third day she came to the sea. Night came, and she stayed by the shore, crying on a stone. In the morning she saw three maidens bathing in the water. She thought she would go into the sea as the fourth.

She left her clothes and jewels on the shore. Then she saw a bright stone out in the water and swam toward it. She climbed onto it and sat down. But the stone moved under her. It sank into the deep water, and Aino sank with it.

As she disappeared, she spoke her last words. She said that she had come to bathe, but now she was lost in the sea. She asked that her father never fish in that water, that her mother never take water from that bay for bread, that her brother never lead his horse there, and that her sister never wash her eyes there. The sea would now hold her blood, her body, her bones, and her hair.

Aino was gone. Someone had to carry the news to her home. The bear could not do it, because it went to the cattle. The wolf could not do it, because it went to the sheep. The fox could not do it, because it went to the geese. At last the hare agreed to carry the message.

The hare ran to Aino's home and stopped at the bathhouse door. The young women inside laughed and asked if it had come to be cooked for a meal. But the hare answered, "I did not come for the cooking pot. I came with news. The beautiful girl has fallen. She has gone into the deep sea, to live as a sister of fish."

Aino's mother began to cry. She said, "Poor mothers, never force your daughters to marry against their hearts, as I forced mine." Her tears ran from her eyes, down her cheeks, over her breast, onto her dress, and down to her shoes. From those tears grew three rivers, and in each river rose waterfalls, islands, hills, birches, and golden cuckoos.

The cuckoos began to sing. One sang of love for the girl who had no love. One sang of the bridegroom who had no bride. One sang of sorrow for the mother who would cry all her life. When the mother heard the cuckoo, her heart shook again, and new tears came to her eyes. Thus Aino's sorrow became a sorrow for the whole house.

### Part 3: Aino Lost, Väinämöinen Wounded

The news of Aino's death came to Väinämöinen. He heard that the young girl had gone into the deep sea and would not return. His heart became heavy. He cried in the evening, he cried in the morning, and he cried most in the night. The maiden he had hoped to marry was lost under the waves.

Väinämöinen walked sadly to the shore of the blue sea. He stood there and

looked over the water. He wanted to know where Aino had gone. He asked the sleeper Untamo, “Tell me what you know from your dreams. Where do the daughters of the water live? Where do the maidens of Vellamo stay?”

Untamo answered from his sleep and told him of a place under the waves. He said that the water maidens lived near a misty point of land, below the deep water and above the dark mud. They lived beside a colored stone, in a narrow room under the sea. When Väinämöinen heard this, hope returned to him a little. Perhaps Aino was there among the daughters of the water.

Väinämöinen went to his boat place and looked at his fishing lines. He took a hook and put it in his bag. Then he rowed to the misty point of land and began to fish. His copper rod shook, his silver line sang, and his golden cord moved in the water. He waited there for many hours and watched the sea.

At last a fish took the hook. Väinämöinen pulled it into the boat and looked at it with surprise. It was not like an ordinary fish. It was smooth, bright, and strange, too beautiful for a common fish and too silent for a human girl. He turned it in his hands and wondered what it was.

Väinämöinen took out his knife. He thought, “I will cut this fish for my meal. I will eat it in the morning, at noon, and in the evening.” He began to bring the knife close. But before he could cut it, the fish jumped from the boat and flashed back into the sea.

Then the fish rose from the water and spoke. “Old Väinämöinen,” it said, “I did not come to be cut for your meal. I did not come to be eaten as a fish. I came to be your wife, to sit beside you, to make your bed, to clean your room, to light your fire, to bake your bread, and to bring food to your table.”

Väinämöinen listened with fear and wonder. The fish continued, “I was not a salmon from the sea. I was Aino, the young sister of Joukahainen. You wanted me for a long time, but you did not know me when I came into your hands. Shame on you, old man. You could not hold the water maiden of Vellamo.”

Väinämöinen bent his head in sorrow. “Aino, sister of Joukahainen,” he said, “come back once more.” But she did not come again. She slipped away under the water and disappeared into the deep place beside the colored stone. Väinämöinen

sat alone in his boat, and the sea was empty before him.

He did not give up at once. He made a strong net and pulled it through the water in many places. He drew it across bays, channels, deep places, and wide open water. He caught many kinds of fish, but he did not catch the one he wanted. He found no water maiden and no lost daughter of the field.

Then Väinämöinen knew that Aino was truly gone. He lowered his head and spoke bitterly to himself. "I was foolish," he said. "Once I had wisdom and good sense, but now my mind has failed me. The one I wanted came to my boat, and I did not know her. I let her go back under the waves."

He walked home slowly, full of grief. He thought of the cuckoo that had once sung for joy near his fields. Now even that song seemed gone. He said, "Sorrow has taken the good voice away. I do not know how to live in this world now. If only my mother were alive, she could tell me how to stand under this pain."

Then his mother answered him from beyond the grave, from under the waves. "I am still here enough to speak to you," she said. "I can tell you how to live and how not to break under sorrow. Do not stay here and mourn forever. Go to Pohjola, the northern land, and seek a bride there."

His mother told him that the daughters of Pohjola were beautiful and strong. She said they were finer than the girls of Joukahainen's people. "Go there, my son," she said. "Choose the best daughter of Pohjola. Choose the one with bright eyes, quick feet, and graceful movement." Väinämöinen listened, and he began to turn his mind toward the north.

So Väinämöinen prepared to travel to the cold and dark land of Pohjola. He took a strange horse, light as straw and small as a pea stem, and put golden reins in its mouth and silver gear on its head. Then he climbed onto its back. The horse moved quickly, and the road grew shorter under its feet.

Väinämöinen rode across the fields of Kalevala. Soon he came to the open sea. His horse ran over the water, but its feet did not sink. Its legs did not even grow wet. Väinämöinen rode over the wide waves toward Pohjola, thinking of the bride his mother had told him to seek.

But young Joukahainen had not forgotten his shame. He still hated

Väinämöinen, because the old singer had sung him into the swamp. He had waited a long time for revenge. He made a strong bow of iron and copper, decorated it with gold and silver, and prepared sharp arrows. He used dark poison from snakes to make the arrows more dangerous.

Joukahainen waited for Väinämöinen day after day. He watched from windows, from yards, from roads, and from the edge of fields. He kept his bow under his arm and his arrows on his back. He waited in the morning, at noon, and in the evening. He did not grow tired of watching.

At last he looked toward the northwest and saw something dark on the sea. At first he wondered if it was a cloud or a line of morning light. But it was not a cloud. It was Väinämöinen, riding over the water on his strange horse, on his way to Pohjola. Joukahainen took up his bow and prepared to shoot.

His mother saw him and asked, “Whom are you aiming at? Why are you lifting that bow?” Joukahainen answered, “I am aiming at Väinämöinen. I will shoot the old singer through the heart and body. I will bring him down into the sea.” His mother was afraid and told him not to do it.

She said, “Do not shoot Väinämöinen. He is a great man of Kalevala, and he is also part of our family. If you kill him, joy will leave the world, and song will fall silent on the earth. Song is better here among the living than in the dark land of the dead.” Joukahainen listened for a moment, but anger was stronger than his mother’s words.

His hand wanted to shoot, though another part of him held back. At last he said, “Let joy die if it must. Let songs fall if they must. I will shoot anyway.” He bent the bow against his knee and chose the best arrow. He placed it on the string and aimed at Väinämöinen.

Joukahainen shot the first arrow, but it flew too high. It went over Väinämöinen’s head and disappeared into the clouds. He shot the second arrow, but it flew too low. It struck the earth below and made the ground tremble. Still Joukahainen did not stop.

He shot the third arrow. This one flew true, but it did not strike Väinämöinen’s body. It struck the horse beneath him, the strange horse that was carrying him over

the sea. The horse fell, and Väinämöinen lost his seat. He slipped from the animal's back and fell into the cold waves.

A strong wind rose over the sea. Great waves lifted Väinämöinen and carried him far from land. He was no longer riding proudly toward Pohjola. He was alone in the open water, pushed by wind and wave. The sea took him farther and farther away from the shore.

Joukahainen was proud of what he had done. He said, "Old Väinämöinen, you will not walk again in the fields of Kalevala. Stay in the sea for years. Float there like wood, and let the waves carry you." Then he went back inside his house.

His mother asked him, "Did you shoot Väinämöinen? Did you bring down the great man of Kalevala?" Joukahainen answered, "Yes, I shot him. I sent him into the sea, where the waves can move him about." His mother was not pleased. She said, "You have done a terrible thing. You have shot Väinämöinen, the great singer and the best man of Kalevala."

#### Part 4: The Road to Pohjola

Väinämöinen floated on the wide sea for many days. He moved like a broken branch on the water, while the waves lifted him and dropped him again. There was water before him and sky behind him. He had no boat, no horse, and no road back to his own land.

Six days and six nights passed, and still he stayed on the sea. Two more days and nights passed after that. On the ninth night, his strength began to fail. His hands were weak, his feet were cold, and he did not know how much longer he could live.

He spoke sadly to himself. "Poor man that I am," he said. "I left my own land and my old home. Now I am under the open sky, pushed by wind and carried by waves. I do not know where I should live. If I build a house in the wind, the wind will not hold it. If I build a house on the water, the water will carry it away."

Then a great bird came flying from the north. It was not very large and not very small, but its wings were wide and strong. One wing touched the water, and

the other seemed to sweep the sky. The bird looked down and saw Väinämöinen alone on the blue sea.

The bird asked, “Why are you in the sea, old man? Why are you among the waves?” Väinämöinen answered, “I went to seek a maiden in Pohjola. But my horse was shot under me, and I fell into the water. A strong wind carried me far from land, and now I do not know whether hunger or the sea will kill me first.”

The bird said, “Do not be afraid. Climb onto my back, and I will carry you where you need to go. I remember a good thing you once did. When you cut the forest and burned the field, you left one birch tree standing. You left it for birds to rest on, and for me to sit on. Now I will help you.”

Väinämöinen lifted himself from the water and climbed onto the bird’s back. The bird rose into the air and carried him over the wind roads. It flew far to the dark northern land of Pohjola. There it left him on the shore and flew away into the sky.

Väinämöinen stood on a strange shore. He was tired, wet, and wounded by wind and water. His beard was rough, his hair was in disorder, and his body was full of pain. He did not know the roads of that land. He did not know how to return to Kalevala.

He sat by the sea and cried for two days and three days. In Pohjola, a young servant girl rose early before the moon, before the sun, and before the cock called. She washed tables, swept floors, and carried dirt outside. When she reached the far edge of the yard, she heard crying from the sea.

The girl ran back into the house and said, “I heard someone crying by the water.” Louhi, the mistress of Pohjola, went outside and listened. She said, “That is not the cry of a child. It is not the voice of a woman. It is the cry of a grown man with a beard.”

Louhi pushed a boat into the water and rowed across to the shore. There she found Väinämöinen, sitting in sorrow near the water. She said, “Old man, you are far from home. You have come to a strange land.” Väinämöinen raised his head and answered, “I know that. I am on a strange shore. I was greater in my own land and happier at home.”

Louhi asked who he was. Väinämöinen said, “In former days, people knew me as a singer. I sang in the fields of Kalevala and gave joy in many valleys. But now I hardly know myself. I am only a poor man on a strange shore.”

Louhi lifted him from the ground and brought him into her boat. She rowed him to Pohjola and took him into her house. She gave food to the hungry man and dried his wet clothes. For many days she cared for him, warmed him, and helped him grow strong again.

Then Louhi asked, “Why were you crying on the shore?” Väinämöinen answered, “I have good reason to cry. I swam for many days on the open sea. I came from my own land to these strange shores. Here every tree seems to bite me, and every branch seems to strike me. Only the wind and the sun are familiar to me.”

Louhi said, “Do not cry. You can live well here. You can eat salmon and good meat in Pohjola.” But Väinämöinen shook his head. “Even good food in another person’s house is hard to enjoy,” he said. “A man is better in his own land. Water under my own shoe is better than sweet drink from a golden cup in a strange country.”

Louhi listened and then asked, “What will you give me if I send you back to your home?” Väinämöinen offered gold and silver. But Louhi did not want them. She said, “Gold is only a child’s flower, and silver is only a horse’s decoration. Can you make the Sampo for me, with its bright cover?”

Väinämöinen answered, “I cannot make the Sampo. But if you send me home, I will send you Ilmarinen. He is the great smith. He forged the sky itself, and no mark of hammer or tongs can be seen there. He can make your Sampo.”

Louhi said, “I will give my daughter to the man who makes the Sampo. He must make it from a swan’s feather, milk from a dry cow, one grain of barley, and wool from one sheep. If Ilmarinen can do that, he may have my daughter.” Then she prepared a horse and sleigh for Väinämöinen.

Before he left, Louhi gave him a warning. “Do not lift your head while you ride,” she said. “Do not look up before the horse is tired or before evening comes. If you lift your head too soon, trouble will come to you.” Väinämöinen took the

reins and drove away from dark Pohjola.

He had not gone far when he heard a soft sound above him. It was the sound of a shuttle moving in cloth. He forgot Louhi's warning and lifted his head. High in the sky, on a bright curve of light, sat the beautiful maiden of Pohjola. She wore white clothes and wove golden cloth with silver tools.

Väinämöinen stopped his horse at once. He looked up and called, "Come down, young maiden. Sit in my sleigh and come with me." The maiden asked, "Why should I come into your sleigh?" Väinämöinen answered, "Come to Kalevala. Bake sweet bread, make good drink, sing by the window, and bring joy to my home."

The maiden did not come down. She said that a bird had once told her the life of a married woman was cold and hard. "A girl in her father's house is like a berry in good soil," she said. "A wife in another house can be like a dog on a chain." Väinämöinen answered, "Do not believe empty bird songs. A girl is only a child at home. She becomes a true woman when she marries."

The maiden then set him a test. "I will call you a real man if you can split a hair with a bladeless knife and tie an egg into a knot without showing the knot." Väinämöinen did both things. Then he asked her again to come into his sleigh. But she gave him another test.

She said, "Come again when you can peel bark from a stone and make fence posts from ice without breaking off even a small piece." Väinämöinen did this too, and again he called her to him. Still she did not come. She said, "I will go with the man who can make a boat from the pieces of my spindle and push it into the water without touching it with knee, hand, arm, or shoulder."

Väinämöinen believed he could do this. He took the small pieces of the spindle and went to a mountain of steel, to an iron rock. There he began to make the boat. He worked for one day, then for a second, and then for a third. His axe did not touch the rock, and the work went well at first.

But on the third day, evil force moved the axe. The blade slipped from its work and struck Väinämöinen's knee. The cut was deep, and blood began to flow. Väinämöinen spoke words of healing, but he could not remember the strongest

words for iron and blood. The blood ran like a river and covered the plants on the ground.

He took wool from the rock, moss from the marsh, and earth from the ground, and pressed them to the wound. But nothing stopped the blood. Pain came over him, and at last he began to cry. He put a horse before a sleigh, climbed in, and drove away to look for someone who could heal him.

He came to a village where three roads met. He took the lowest road and came to the first house. He asked, "Is there anyone here who knows iron wounds and can stop blood?" A child answered from the floor, "No one here can do that. Go to another house."

Väinämöinen drove on by the middle road and came to the second house. Again he asked for someone who knew how to stop blood from an iron wound. An old woman answered, "No one here knows that. Go to another house." So he drove on again, though his pain was heavy.

At last he took the highest road and came to the third house. He asked from the doorway, "Is there anyone here who can close this flood of blood?" An old man with a gray beard answered from near the stove. "Greater floods have been stopped before," he said. "Rivers, lakes, and strong streams have been closed by the deep words of the Creator."

## Part 5: The Forging of the Sampo

Väinämöinen entered the third house, weak from pain and loss of blood. The old man by the stove looked at him and saw that the wound was terrible. People brought a silver cup and a golden pot to catch the blood, but they could not stop it. The old man said, "Who are you, poor man? So much blood has flowed from your knee that many boats could be filled with it."

The old man knew many healing words, but he did not know the first beginning of iron. He said, "I remember many words, but I do not know where iron was born." Then Väinämöinen answered, "I know the birth of iron. I know the beginning of steel." Though he was in pain, he began to tell the old story, because

without that knowledge the wound could not be closed.

Väinämöinen told how air, water, iron, and fire were like brothers. Water was the oldest, iron was the youngest, and fire stood between them. Ukko, the high creator, separated water from air and made dry land from water. But iron had not yet been born. Then Ukko rubbed his hands together, and three maidens came into being. From their milk came different kinds of iron.

One maiden poured dark milk, and from it came soft iron. Another poured white milk, and from it came steel. The third poured red milk, and from it came harder iron. Iron wished to know fire, its brother, but fire was fierce and tried to burn it. So iron hid in marshes, springs, and wet places, under roots and in dark ground.

Later the smith Ilmarinen was born. He was born with a hammer in his hand and small tongs in his fingers. He built a forge and found the hidden iron in the earth. He put iron into the fire and worked it with hammer and tongs. In this way iron became tools, axes, and swords.

But iron grew proud and cruel. It forgot its own birth and bit into human flesh. Väinämöinen spoke to it as if it were a living thing. "Iron," he said, "you have done wrong. You were not made to eat flesh or drink blood. You were made for good work, not for hurting the knee of a man." The old healer listened carefully, because these were the words he needed.

Then the old man began his work. He told the blood to stop running. He told it to stand still like a wall, like a fence, like a rock in a field. He did not speak in a proud voice. He spoke as one who trusted the power above him. He asked the Creator to help his hand and make the healing words strong.

The old man sent a boy to make medicine. The boy went to the forge and prepared a healing salve from many things. He cooked it with care until it was ready. Before he used it on Väinämöinen, the old man tested it on broken trees and cracked stones. The broken tree became whole again, and the stones joined together.

Then the old man knew the medicine was good. He placed it on Väinämöinen's wound, above it, below it, and around it. He said, "I do not move with my own

strength. I move with the strength of the Creator. I do not speak with my own mouth. I speak with the mouth that gives true help.” Then he wrapped the wound with soft silk.

The pain still moved through Väinämöinen’s body. He turned one way and then another, and he could not find rest. The old man sent the pain away to the hill of pain, to a hard place where stones could bear it. Slowly Väinämöinen felt real help. His flesh grew whole again, his knee became strong, and his foot could press the ground without pain.

Väinämöinen looked up toward the sky and gave thanks. “Help comes from above,” he said. “Safety comes from the Creator. I thank you, because you helped me in this hard pain, when iron had cut me.” Then he gave a warning to future people. “Do not make a boat carelessly or proudly. A person’s path is not held only by human skill. The end of every work is in greater hands.”

After he was healed, Väinämöinen put his horse before the sleigh and began the journey home. The horse ran quickly, and the road grew short beneath the runners. For one day, then another, and then a third, he traveled across marshes, fields, and open land. At last he came back to the fields of Kalevala. He was alive, though Joukahainen had believed he would never return.

Yet Väinämöinen was not fully happy. He remembered the promise he had made to Louhi in Pohjola. To save himself and return home, he had promised to send Ilmarinen to forge the Sampo. Now he had to keep that promise. He drove on with a heavy heart until he heard the sound of hammering from Ilmarinen’s forge.

Väinämöinen entered the forge, where Ilmarinen was working beside the fire. Ilmarinen looked up and said, “Old Väinämöinen, where have you been all this time?” Väinämöinen answered, “I have been in dark Pohjola, in the cold northern land.” Ilmarinen asked, “What news do you bring from that place?” Väinämöinen said, “There is a beautiful maiden there, but she will not accept just any man.”

Väinämöinen spoke warmly of the maiden of Pohjola. He said that the moon seemed to shine from her brow, the sun from her breast, and the stars from her shoulders. Then he said, “Ilmarinen, go to Pohjola and seek her. If you can forge

the Sampo with its bright cover, you will receive the maiden as your reward.” Ilmarinen understood at once that Väinämöinen had promised him away.

The smith was angry and afraid. “Did you give me to Pohjola to save your own life?” he asked. “I will never go to that dark land. I will not go to the houses where men are eaten and heroes disappear.” Väinämöinen did not argue directly. Instead, he used a trick, because he knew Ilmarinen’s mind was full of wonder.

Väinämöinen sang a tall fir tree into being at the edge of Osmo’s field. Its top rose high into the sky, and its leaves shone like gold. He sang the moon into the top of the tree and the Great Bear onto its branches. Then he said to Ilmarinen, “Come and see a strange thing. There is a fir tree with the moon in its top and stars on its branches.”

Ilmarinen did not believe him at first. But curiosity took hold of him, and he went with Väinämöinen to see the tree. When he reached it, he looked up and saw the moon and stars shining among the branches. Väinämöinen said, “Climb up, my brother. Bring down the moon and the stars.” Ilmarinen climbed high into the tree.

While Ilmarinen was above the ground, Väinämöinen sang to the wind. The wind came quickly and took the smith from the branches. It carried him over the moon’s road and the sun’s road, far across the sky. Ilmarinen flew helplessly through the air until he came down in Pohjola, before the house of Louhi.

Louhi saw him and knew who he was. She said, “Are you Ilmarinen, the great smith? Are you the one who forged the sky?” Ilmarinen answered, “Yes, I am Ilmarinen. But why have I been brought here?” Louhi said, “You must forge the Sampo for me. If you make it with its bright cover, you may have my daughter.”

Ilmarinen asked for a place to work. Louhi gave him a forge, slaves to blow the fire, and the strange things needed for the Sampo: a swan’s feather, milk from a dry cow, one grain of barley, and wool from one sheep. Ilmarinen worked with them and put them into the fire. The servants blew the bellows, and the fire grew fierce.

On the first day, Ilmarinen looked into the fire and saw a golden bow coming out. It was beautiful, but it had an evil nature. It wanted a head every day and two

heads on feast days. Ilmarinen did not accept it. He broke the bow and threw it back into the fire.

On the second day, a red boat came from the fire. It was beautiful, with a golden front and copper sides. But it had an evil nature too. It wanted to rush into battle without need. Ilmarinen broke it apart and threw it back into the fire. He ordered the servants to blow the bellows again.

On the third day, a fine cow came from the fire. Its horns were golden, and bright signs shone on its head. But it did not behave well. It wasted its milk and lay in the forest. Ilmarinen cut it apart and returned it to the fire. Still the true Sampo had not come.

On the fourth day, a plough came from the fire. It had a golden blade, a copper handle, and silver on its end. It looked useful and rich, but it also had a bad nature. It ploughed fields that did not belong to it. Ilmarinen broke the plough and pushed it under the forge.

Then Ilmarinen called the winds themselves to blow the fire. The east wind blew, the west wind blew, the south wind blew harder, and the north wind burned fiercely. The fire flashed from the window, sparks flew from the door, smoke rose to the clouds, and dust climbed into the sky. After three days, Ilmarinen looked again under the forge.

This time he saw the Sampo being born. He worked with all his skill and shaped it carefully. On one side it had a mill for flour. On another side it had a mill for salt. On the third side it had a mill for money. The new Sampo began to turn and grind. It made food, things to sell, and wealth to keep at home.

Louhi was very pleased. She took the great Sampo and carried it into a stone hill in Pohjola, inside a copper mountain. She locked it behind nine locks and rooted it deep in the earth. One root went into the ground, one into the water's edge, and one into the home hill. The Sampo was now hidden and held fast in Pohjola.

Then Ilmarinen asked for the maiden. "I have made the Sampo," he said. "Its bright cover is finished. Will you now give me the girl?" But the maiden of Pohjola did not wish to go. She said, "Who would make the cuckoos sing here

next year if I left? Who would walk on these hills and play in these woods? My berries are still unpicked, and my summer work is not done.”

Ilmarinen was deeply disappointed. He had made the Sampo, but he did not receive the bride. Louhi saw his sadness and asked if he wished to go home. Ilmarinen said, “Yes. I want to go back to my own land, even if I must die there.” Louhi gave him food and drink, placed him in a boat, and sent the wind to carry him over the blue sea.

Ilmarinen traveled for one day, then for another, and on the third day he reached his own home. Väinämöinen came to meet him and asked, “Brother Ilmarinen, did you make the new Sampo?” Ilmarinen answered, “Yes, the new Sampo is grinding in Pohjola. It grinds food, things to sell, and wealth to keep. But the maiden did not come with me.”

## Part 6: Lemminkäinen and Kyllikki

Now the song turns to Ahti Lemminkäinen, also called Kaukomieli. He grew up in his mother’s house near the wide bay, at the edge of Kauko’s land. He became a strong and handsome man, bright in face and quick in body. But there was one fault in him: he loved women too much, stayed out at night too often, and was always ready for war.

Far away on the island of Saari lived Kyllikki, the flower of that island. She grew in her father’s house and became famous for her beauty. Many men came to ask for her hand. Even the Sun, the Moon, and the Star seemed to seek her, but she would not go with any of them.

Men came from Viro and from Inkeri too, but Kyllikki refused them. She said she would not go across the water to strange lands or live where hunger waited at every door. Lemminkäinen heard of her and wanted to seek her. He told his mother that he would go to Saari and bring home that beautiful girl.

His mother tried to stop him. “Do not go, my son,” she said. “That family is greater than ours. The women of Saari will laugh at you, and the young girls will mock you.” But Lemminkäinen cared little for warning. He answered, “If I am

not high by birth, I will be high by my body and my courage.”

His mother warned him again. “If the women laugh and you answer with anger, trouble will come. A hundred men with swords may rise against you.” Lemminkäinen still did not listen. He took his good horse, put it before his sleigh, and drove toward the famous village of Saari. His mind was full of Kyllikki, and his mother’s words fell behind him like dust on the road.

When he reached Saari, things did not begin well. He drove badly into the yard, and his sleigh turned over near the gate. The women laughed, and the girls made jokes about him. Lemminkäinen’s face darkened, for he had never heard women laugh at him before.

But he did not leave. He asked if there was space on the island for him to dance and play among the girls. The island girls answered with more mockery. They said there was space for him as a poor shepherd in the burned fields. Lemminkäinen accepted even that low place, because he wanted to stay near Kyllikki.

So he became a shepherd on Saari. In the daytime he watched the cattle, but at night he joined the young women in their games and dances. Little by little, the laughter against him grew quiet. No girl on the island remained far from him, except one. That one was Kyllikki, the most beautiful and the most proud.

Lemminkäinen spent a long time trying to win her. He wore out many shoes and crossed much water in his search for her. But Kyllikki did not accept him. She said, “Why do you come here asking for girls? I do not want a weak or empty man. I want someone equal to me in body, face, and place.”

Some time passed, but Lemminkäinen did not forget her words. One evening the young women of Saari danced in a beautiful open place near the woods. Kyllikki was there above all the others, bright and famous among them. Then Lemminkäinen came quickly with his horse and sleigh. He drove into the middle of the dance and seized Kyllikki.

He lifted her into his sleigh and set her beside him. Then he struck the horse with the whip and rushed away. As he left, he called to the other maidens, “Do not tell anyone that I came here. Do not tell anyone that I took this girl away. If you do, I will sing your young men into war, and you will not see them again.”

Kyllikki cried out in fear and anger. "Let me go," she said. "Let me return to my mother's house. I have five brothers and seven strong kinsmen. They will follow you and punish you for taking me." But Lemminkäinen did not turn back, and the horse ran on.

When she saw that she could not escape, Kyllikki began to weep. She said, "I was born for nothing and grew up for nothing. Now I have been given to a useless man, a man of battle, always ready for fighting." Lemminkäinen tried to comfort her. He said, "Do not be afraid, Kyllikki. I will not treat you badly. You will sit beside me, eat with me, and rest near me."

He asked why she was so sad. "Are you afraid there will be no cows, no bread, and no good life?" he said. "Do not fear that. I have many cows, and they give milk without trouble. You will not need to tie them in the evening or lead them out in the morning." Then he asked if she was sad because his family was not great enough.

Lemminkäinen said, "If my family is not high, I have a fiery sword. It was sharpened in a powerful place and made bright by strong hands. With that sword I can make my family greater." But Kyllikki still looked at him with a heavy heart. She knew his pride, and she feared his love of war.

At last she said, "Ahti, son of Lempi, if you want me as your wife forever, you must make a promise. You must promise that you will not go to war, not for gold and not for silver." Lemminkäinen answered, "I will promise that. But you must promise too. You must not go to village dances, not for pleasure and not because you long for them."

So they made their promises before the open face of God. Ahti would not go to war, and Kyllikki would not go to the village dances. Then Lemminkäinen drove on toward home. As he left Saari behind, he said farewell to the fields, roots, and old stumps where he had walked so long while seeking Kyllikki.

Soon his home came into sight. Kyllikki looked at the house and spoke sharply. "What is that poor little house?" she asked. "Whose weak home stands there?" Lemminkäinen told her not to worry about the house. "Better rooms can be built," he said. "Stronger walls can rise from better wood."

Lemminkäinen came home to his mother with Kyllikki beside him. His mother said, "You stayed away a long time, my son." He answered, "I stayed because I had to answer the laughter of the women of Saari. I brought home the best of them, and now their mockery is paid back." He asked his mother to prepare the best bed for his new wife.

His mother looked at Kyllikki and was pleased. She told her son that he had found a good wife. She said Kyllikki was purer than snow, whiter than sea foam, finer than a duck on the water, and brighter than a star in the sky. Then she told him to make the house better. "Build wider floors and larger windows," she said, "because you have brought home a woman better than yourself."

For a time Ahti Lemminkäinen and Kyllikki lived together in peace. He did not go to war, and she did not go to the village. But one day Lemminkäinen went fishing and did not come home by evening. He stayed away through the night. Then Kyllikki forgot her promise and went to the village dances.

Ahti's sister Ainikki saw what happened. She carried the news to her brother and said, "Dear Ahti, Kyllikki has gone to the village. She has gone through strange gates and joined the dancing girls." When Lemminkäinen heard this, anger filled him. His promise broke inside him, because he believed Kyllikki had broken hers first.

He called to his mother. "Wash my shirt quickly," he said. "Dry it fast, because I am going to war. I will go to the fires of the men of Pohjola." Kyllikki tried to stop him. She said, "Do not go to war, dear Ahti. I had a dream. I saw fire in our house, and flames rose from the windows."

Lemminkäinen did not accept her warning. "I do not believe women's dreams," he said. "I do not trust the sleep words of girls." His mother also tried to stop him. She said, "Do not go to Pohjola without true magic and knowledge. The singers there may push you into fire, clay, ashes, and burning stones."

Lemminkäinen answered with pride. He said that magic had been tried against him before, but it had not defeated him. He had sung witches, shooters, and evil men into the river of death. His mother still warned him. "You do not know the language of those northern people," she said. "You are not strong enough among

the singers of Pohjola.”

Lemminkäinen was combing his hair while she spoke. He threw his comb against the wall and said, “Then you will know when danger has found me. If blood flows from this comb, then your son is lost.” After that he dressed himself for the journey. He put on an iron shirt, fastened a steel belt, took his sword, and made himself ready.

Before he left, he asked powers of earth, forest, mountain, and water to help him. He asked them to stand beside one man, so that no witch’s arrow or evil blade could strike him. Then he prayed to Ukko in the sky for a fiery sword to break all dangers before him and behind him. Only after these words did he call his horse.

Lemminkäinen put the horse before the sleigh and drove away. He traveled for one day, then for another, and then for a third. On the third day, a village came before him. He stopped at the first house and asked if anyone would take his horse, but a child answered that no one there would help him.

He drove to the second house and asked again. An old woman answered harshly and said there were many men who could send him back home before sunset. Lemminkäinen did not fear her words. He drove on to the highest house, where he used magic to silence the dog before it could bark.

When he reached the yard, he struck the ground with his whip. A mist rose, and a small man came out of it to take care of the horse. Then Lemminkäinen listened at the house. He heard songs through the walls and knew that the room was full of singers, wise men, and magic workers.

Lemminkäinen entered the house and spoke boldly. He told them that a song was better when it ended well than when it broke off in the middle. Louhi, the mistress of Pohjola, asked how he had entered without being heard by the dog. Lemminkäinen answered that he had not come without skill or protection. Then he began to sing with fire in his eyes.

He sang the best singers into shame and silence. He sent many men to empty fields, fishless ponds, hard rapids, and burning places. He sang young men and old men away with their swords and weapons. But he left one man untouched: a poor old cowherd named Märkähattu.

The cowherd asked, "Why did you not sing me away too?" Lemminkäinen answered that the man was too low and ugly for him to touch with his song. The cowherd became angry and went outside. He hurried to the river of Tuonela and waited there for Lemminkäinen, planning harm for the day when the proud hero would return from Pohjola.

#### Part 7: Death and Return of Lemminkäinen

Lemminkäinen stood in the house of Pohjola after his proud singing. He had sent many men away by magic, and only the old cowherd remained outside with anger in his heart. Lemminkäinen did not think much about that weak-looking man. He turned to Louhi, the mistress of Pohjola, and asked for her daughter.

Louhi looked at him and answered coldly. "I will not give you my daughter," she said. "You already have a wife at home. You have Kyllikki in your own house." But Lemminkäinen was not ashamed. He said, "I can leave Kyllikki in the village. I can find a better wife here. Bring me your finest daughter, the most beautiful maiden in Pohjola."

Louhi would not give her so easily. She said, "You may ask for my daughter only after you have caught the elk of Hiisi. It runs in the far fields of Hiisi, and no ordinary man can take it." Lemminkäinen accepted the task at once. He prepared his bow, arrows, and spear, but then he saw that he needed good skis for the chase.

He went to a skilled maker named Lyylikki and asked for strong skis. Lyylikki warned him, "You are going to a hard task. You may get only a piece of rotten wood for all your trouble." Lemminkäinen did not care. He said, "Make the skis. I will go after the elk of Hiisi." So Lyylikki worked through autumn and winter, shaping the skis and the poles with care.

When the skis were ready, Lemminkäinen set out with great pride. He said that no animal under the sky could escape him now. But the powers of Hiisi heard his boast. They made a strange elk from wood, roots, reeds, and other wild things. Then they sent it running through the northern lands, so that it would lead Lemminkäinen into trouble.

The elk rushed through the yards of Lapland and broke pots, spilled food, frightened children, and made dogs bark. Lemminkäinen followed it over marshes, fields, dark forests, and dangerous places. Fire seemed to fly from his skis, and smoke rose from his poles. He passed near the house of death itself, but death could not catch him.

At last he came to the place where people were crying and laughing because of the elk's damage. He heard where the animal had gone and rushed after it again. With one great push, then a second, then a third, he reached the elk and caught it. He tied it with strong wood and placed it inside a fence.

But Lemminkäinen became careless. He touched the elk's back and spoke of lying beside a young maiden. The elk grew angry. It broke the fence, tore away the bonds, and ran off again into lands where eyes could not see and ears could not hear. Lemminkäinen tried to follow, but his skis broke, his pole broke, and his fine hunting gear was ruined.

He stood there in shame and anger. For a moment he thought of giving up and going home. Then he prayed for new skis and called to the powers of the forest. He greeted the hills, trees, and deep woods. He asked Tapio, Mielikki, and the daughters of the forest to guide the elk back to him.

For many days he skied through the wild land, singing and asking for help. At last the forest powers were pleased. They brought the elk from its hiding place and sent it before him. This time Lemminkäinen did not speak foolishly. He caught the animal and thanked the forest. Then he returned to Pohjola and stood again before Louhi.

"I have caught the elk of Hiisi," he said. "Now give me your daughter." But Louhi gave him another task. "First," she said, "you must catch the great horse of Hiisi, the fire-maned horse from the fields of Hiisi." Lemminkäinen took golden reins and silver gear and went to seek the horse.

He searched for one day, then a second, and on the third day he saw the horse on a sandy place near the trees. Fire flew from its mane, and smoke rose from its hair. Lemminkäinen prayed to Ukko for help. Then ice and iron hail fell from the sky onto the horse's back, and the fierce animal became still.

Lemminkäinen went close and spoke gently to it. “Good horse of Hiisi,” he said, “put your head into these golden reins. I will not treat you badly. I will drive only a short way to Pohjola.” The horse lowered its head, and Lemminkäinen placed the reins on it. Then he rode back to Louhi’s house.

Again he asked for the daughter. “I have caught the elk, and I have brought the horse,” he said. “Now give me the young maiden.” Louhi still did not agree. She gave him a third and darker task. “Shoot the swan on the black river of Tuonela,” she said. “You must do it with one arrow.”

Lemminkäinen took his bow and arrows and went toward the river of death. He did not know that the old cowherd Märkähattu was waiting for him there. The cowherd had not forgotten the insult in Pohjola’s hall. He hid near the dark water and watched for the proud hero.

When Lemminkäinen came near the river, the cowherd lifted a water-snake from the waves and sent it against him like a weapon. It struck Lemminkäinen through the body. Pain entered him suddenly and terribly. He knew at once that he had not prepared for this danger.

He cried, “This is my worst mistake. I did not ask my mother for the words against water-snakes. If she knew where I was, she would come quickly and help me.” But his mother was far away, and no help came. The cowherd pushed him into the black river of Tuonela.

Lemminkäinen was carried down the dark stream. Then a bloody son of Tuonela struck him with a sword and cut his body into pieces. The pieces were thrown into the river of death. So Lemminkäinen died in the black water, far from his mother and far from his home.

At home, Lemminkäinen’s mother began to worry. She did not know where her son had gone or why he had not returned. Kyllikki looked at the comb that Lemminkäinen had thrown on the wall before leaving. One morning blood began to flow from it. Then Kyllikki said, “Now my husband is lost on unknown roads.”

His mother saw the bloody comb and cried out. She gathered up her clothes and ran to Pohjola. Mountains seemed to shake under her feet, and valleys rose as she passed. She came to Louhi and asked, “Where did you send my son? What

have you done with Lemminkäinen?”

Louhi first lied. She said she did not know where he was. She said he might have fallen into the sea, frozen on the ice, or been eaten by a wolf or bear. Lemminkäinen’s mother did not believe her. “A wolf cannot eat my son,” she said. “A bear cannot bring him down. Tell me the truth, or I will break your doors and locks.”

Louhi gave another answer, then another, until at last she told more of the truth. She said, “I sent him to catch the elk, then the horse, and then the swan on Tuonela’s river. I do not know what stopped him after that.” Lemminkäinen’s mother left her and began to search for her son everywhere.

She searched through marshes, forests, waters, roads, and shores. She asked the trees, but the trees spoke only of their own hard lives. She asked the road, but the road spoke of being stepped on by people and animals. She asked the moon, but the moon said it had its own lonely work in the night. At last she asked the sun.

The sun knew the truth. It said, “Your son has been killed. He is in the black river of Tuonela, carried down to the lower waters.” Lemminkäinen’s mother began to weep, but she did not stop. She went to Ilmarinen and asked him to forge a great rake of copper and iron, with a very long handle and many strong teeth.

Ilmarinen made the rake for her, and she carried it to the river of Tuonela. She prayed to the sun to shine hotly and put the people of death to sleep. The sun did as she asked. Then she began to rake the dark water. She pulled once and found nothing. She pulled again and found pieces of clothing.

She went deeper and dragged the rake through the black stream again. At last something caught in the iron teeth. It was not a bundle of weeds. It was Lemminkäinen, broken and incomplete. His mother pulled him from the river, but one hand, part of his head, and many parts of his body were still missing.

A raven told her to throw the body back into the river. It said there was no man left there to save. But the mother would not do it. She raked the river again and again until she found the missing parts. Then she placed flesh with flesh, bone with bone, and joint with joint. She spoke healing words and called for help to

bind the veins and make the body whole.

The body became whole, but Lemminkäinen did not speak. His mother called to the bee and sent it to bring honey and healing medicine from the forest. The bee returned, and she used the medicine, but her son still did not wake. She sent the bee farther, over many seas, and again it came back with strong medicine. Still Lemminkäinen did not speak.

At last she sent the bee up toward the high heavens, above the moon, past the sun, and among the stars. There the bee found the true healing honey of the Creator. It brought back rich medicine in many small cups and horns. Lemminkäinen's mother tasted it and knew this was the right help.

She spread the medicine over her son, above and below, inside every wound and between every joint. Then she said, "Rise from your sleep. Wake from this hard bed of death." Lemminkäinen opened his eyes and spoke. "I have slept a sweet and heavy sleep," he said.

His mother answered, "You would have slept longer without me." Then she asked who had sent him to death. Lemminkäinen told her about the old cowherd and the water-snake. His mother scolded him for his pride. "You said you knew every magic word," she said, "but you did not know the danger of the water-snake."

Lemminkäinen still thought of the maidens of Pohjola. He said his heart remained there, because Louhi had not given her daughter. But his mother told him to leave the swan alone and come home. "Be glad that you live," she said. "I could not have saved you without the help of God." Then Lemminkäinen went home with his mother, and the song leaves him there for a time.

## Part 8: The Lost Words for the Boat

Väinämöinen still remembered the maiden of Pohjola. He remembered how she had sat high in the sky, weaving bright cloth with golden and silver tools. She had not come down into his sleigh, but she had given him a hard task. He had to make a boat by song alone and push it to the water without touching it with his hands, knees, arms, or shoulders.

So Väinämöinen called for wood. Sampsa Pellervoinen went out to find a tree good enough for the boat. First he came to a weak tree, but it was not right. Then he came to another, but that one was hollow and full of trouble. At last he found a strong oak, wide and sound, standing in the forest.

Sampsa asked the oak, “Can you become the heart of a boat? Can you become the bottom of a war boat?” The oak answered that it was strong enough. It was not hollow, not weak, and not eaten inside. The sun had gone around it, the moon had shone on its top, and birds had rested in its branches.

Sampsa lifted his axe and cut the oak down. He cut the top away and split the strong trunk. From that tree he made boards and bottom pieces for Väinämöinen’s boat. Then Väinämöinen came to the wood and began to work in his own way, not only with tools, but with knowledge and song.

He sang one song, and the bottom of the boat took shape. He sang a second song, and the sides joined together. He sang a third song while he shaped the ribs and joined the wooden parts. The boat grew under his words, as if the song itself were a hand, an axe, and a knife.

But when the boat was almost ready, Väinämöinen stopped. Three words were missing. Without those words, he could not finish the side boards, the front, and the back of the boat. He looked at the unfinished work and said, “Poor me. My boat cannot go to the water. My new ship cannot move on the waves.”

He began to think where he could find the lost words. Perhaps they were on the heads of swallows, on the necks of swans, or on the shoulders of geese. He went out and searched among birds. But after all that trouble, he did not find even one useful word.

Then he thought, “Perhaps the words are under the tongue of the summer reindeer or in the mouth of the white squirrel.” He went again to seek them. He looked among reindeer and squirrels and found many words, but they were not the right words. They did not help him finish the boat.

At last Väinämöinen thought of Tuonela, the dark land of the dead. “There may be a hundred words there,” he said. “There may be strong magic words in the houses of death.” So he started on that dangerous road. He walked for a week

through brush, for another week through trees, and for a third week through juniper land.

At last he saw the island of Manala and the hill of Tuonela. A dark river lay before him. Väinämöinen stood on the shore and called across the water. "Daughter of Tuoni, bring a boat. Child of Manala, bring a ferry. Take me across this river."

The daughter of Tuoni heard him, but she did not hurry. She asked, "Why should I bring you a boat? Tell me what brought you to the land of death. Did sickness kill you? Did some other death take you?" Väinämöinen did not want to tell the truth, so he first said that Tuoni himself had brought him there.

The girl knew he was not telling the truth. She said, "If Tuoni had brought you, you would have come with Tuoni's hat and the gloves of death." Then Väinämöinen said that iron had brought him. Again she knew the lie. "If iron had brought you here, your clothes would be full of blood," she said.

Väinämöinen tried again and said that water had brought him. The daughter of Tuoni answered, "If water had brought you, your clothes would be wet." Then he said fire had brought him. She said, "If fire had brought you, your hair and beard would be burned." At last she told him to speak the truth if he wanted the boat.

Then Väinämöinen said, "I was making a boat with knowledge and song. I sang for one day and for another. On the third day, my song failed because three words were missing. I came here to find those words. Now bring the boat and take me across."

The girl scolded him. "You are foolish," she said. "You have come to Tuonela without sickness and without death. It would be better for you to go back to your own land. Many come here, but few return." Still Väinämöinen would not turn back. He asked again for the boat, and at last she took him across the black river.

In Tuonela, the old woman of the house brought him a cup of drink. "Drink, old Väinämöinen," she said. But Väinämöinen looked into the cup and saw frogs and worms moving inside. He set it aside and said, "I did not come here to drink from the cups of death. Those who drink here may disappear forever."

The mistress of Tuonela asked why he had come before his time. Väinämöinen

told her about the boat and the three missing words. But the people of Tuonela would not give him the words. Instead, they prepared a bed for him. It was a dangerous bed, and Väinämöinen understood that sleep there could become death.

He lay down, but he did not truly sleep. In the night, the people of Tuonela set nets of iron and copper across the river, so he could not escape. They made the nets long and wide, from one side of the river to the other. They thought, “Now Väinämöinen will stay here.”

But Väinämöinen changed himself into a small creature and slipped through the nets. He moved through the holes like a snake in water. He passed the iron and copper threads and crossed back from the land of death. When he reached the living world again, he warned people not to go to Tuonela without need.

He said, “Do not go there by your own will. Many have gone to the houses of death, but only a few have come back.” He also warned young people not to harm the innocent. In Tuonela, the guilty have hard beds, hot stones beneath them, and covers made of snakes and worms. But even after this danger, he still did not have the missing words.

Väinämöinen continued to wonder where he could find them. Then a shepherd came along the road and said, “You can get a hundred words, even a thousand, from Antero Vipunen. They are in his mouth and in his strong body. But the road to him is not easy. You must pass over women’s needles, men’s sword points, and heroes’ axe blades.”

Väinämöinen decided to go. First he went to Ilmarinen’s forge. He said, “Smith Ilmarinen, make me iron shoes, iron gloves, and an iron shirt. Make me an iron staff with steel at its heart. I am going to seek words from the body and mouth of Antero Vipunen.”

Ilmarinen warned him. “Vipunen has been dead a long time,” he said. “You will not get words from him. You will not get even half a word.” But Väinämöinen did not listen. He put on the iron things and began the hard road. He walked one day over needles, another over sword points, and a third over axe blades.

At last he came to Antero Vipunen. The old giant lay deep in the earth, full of ancient songs. Trees had grown over him. An aspen grew on his shoulders, birches

rose from his brows, alders grew near his jaw, and a pine stood by his teeth. Vipunen was more like a hill than a man.

Väinämöinen drew his sword and cut away the trees. He cleared the shoulders, brows, jaw, beard, forehead, and teeth of the sleeping giant. Then he pushed his iron staff into Vipunen's mouth and told him to rise from his long sleep. Vipunen woke in pain and bit the iron, but he could not bite through the steel heart of it.

As Väinämöinen stood near the giant's mouth, one foot slipped. Vipunen opened his mouth wider and swallowed him, sword and all. Inside the giant, Väinämöinen was afraid for a moment. He thought, "Now my day of trouble has come. I am trapped in the body of this old power."

But Väinämöinen did not give up. He took out his knife and made a small boat inside Vipunen. He moved through the giant's body from one place to another, but Vipunen still did not answer him. Then Väinämöinen changed himself into a smith. He made his shirt into a forge, his sleeves into bellows, his knee into an anvil, and his elbow into a hammer.

He began to work inside Vipunen without rest. He hammered for a night and for a day, making heat, smoke, and pain. Vipunen cried out, "Who are you? I have eaten many men, but never one like you. Fire comes into my mouth, coals touch my tongue, and iron waste fills my throat."

Vipunen tried to drive him out with strong words. He ordered the strange thing inside him to leave, to go back to its own people and its own road. But Väinämöinen answered, "It is good for me here. Your liver can be my bread, your fat can be my food, and your body can be my house. I will not leave until I hear the words I need."

Then Vipunen understood that he had to open his store of songs. He began to sing deep words from the beginning of time. He sang how air was born, how water came from air, how land rose from water, and how plants grew on land. He sang of the moon, the sun, the sky, and the stars.

Vipunen sang for many days and nights. His mouth poured out words like a fast horse running over a road. The sun seemed to stop and listen. The moon looked down. The waves stood still on the sea, and rivers slowed in their beds.

Väinämöinen listened carefully and gathered the words he needed.

When he had heard enough, Väinämöinen said, “Antero Vipunen, open your mouth wider. Let me go out and return home.” Vipunen answered, “I have eaten many things, but never anything like you. You did well to come. You will do better to leave.” Then he opened his mouth, and Väinämöinen slipped out like a golden squirrel.

Väinämöinen returned to Ilmarinen’s forge. Ilmarinen asked, “Did you get the words? Do you now know how to finish the boat?” Väinämöinen answered, “Yes. I have found the hidden words and brought the strong songs into the light.” Then he went back to the unfinished boat.

With the new words, Väinämöinen finished the work. He joined the last boards, shaped the back, and raised the front. The boat became complete without ordinary cutting and without extra chips of wood. Now it was ready for the water. The lost words had been found, and Väinämöinen could prepare once more for the road to Pohjola.

## Part 9: The Two Suitors

Väinämöinen did not forget the maiden of Pohjola. He had finished his boat with the hidden words he had won from Vipunen. Now he made the boat bright and beautiful. He shaped its front with gold and its sides with silver. Early one morning he pushed it from the rollers into the water and raised red and blue sails above it.

He stepped into the boat and spoke quietly to the power above him. “Come with me on this wide water,” he said. “Give strength to a small man on the open sea. Wind, move my boat. Wave, carry it forward. Let it go without hard rowing and without breaking the blue water.” Then the boat began to move across the sea toward dark Pohjola.

At that same time, Annikki, the sister of Ilmarinen, was washing clothes by the water. She looked across the shining sea and saw something dark far away. At first she did not know what it was. She called out, “If you are a flock of birds, fly into

the sky. If you are a fish or a rock, go down into the water. If you are a strange boat, go to another shore.”

The boat came closer, and Annikki saw that it was not a strange boat. It was Väinämöinen’s boat, and the old singer himself sat inside it. She called to him and asked, “Where are you going, Väinämöinen?” At first he did not tell the truth. He said he was going to catch fish in the dark river of Tuonela.

Annikki did not believe him. She said, “Do not lie to me. I know how people go fishing. They take nets, ropes, hooks, and many tools. Your boat is not a fishing boat.” Väinämöinen then said he was going to hunt birds. Again Annikki answered, “I know how people hunt birds. They take bows, dogs, and hunters. Tell me the truth.”

Väinämöinen tried a third time. He said he was going to war, to a place where blood rose high. Annikki still did not believe him. “I know what war looks like,” she said. “Many men go together, with swords and bows. You are alone in your boat. Speak truly now, and do not hide your road from me.”

At last Väinämöinen told her the truth. “I am going to Pohjola,” he said. “I am going to ask for the maiden of the North.” When Annikki heard this, she left the clothes unwashed on the shore. She gathered up her dress and ran as fast as she could to Ilmarinen’s forge.

Ilmarinen was at work in the heat and smoke. Sparks flew around him, and his face was dark from the forge. Annikki came to the door and said, “Brother Ilmarinen, make me fine rings, bright ornaments, and pretty chains. Then I will tell you true news.” Ilmarinen answered, “If your news is good, I will make them. If your news is bad, I will break even the old ornaments you have.”

Annikki said, “You remember the maiden you once hoped to marry. You worked long for her and forged the Sampo for her land. Now another man is going before you. Väinämöinen is already sailing over the sea to Pohjola. He is going to take the one you wanted.” When Ilmarinen heard this, the hammer fell from his hand.

A heavy fear came over the smith. He said, “Sister, heat the bath for me. Make it sweet and clean. Prepare water, soap, and soft branches, so I can wash the smoke

and black dust from my body.” Annikki quickly heated the bath with good wood and brought clean water. She prepared everything for him with care.

Ilmarinen bathed until his skin was clean and bright. He washed his hair, his face, his neck, and his whole body. When he came out, he looked almost like another man. Then he called to Annikki for fine clothes. She brought him a clean shirt, good trousers, soft socks, fine shoes, a blue coat, a warm outer coat, a belt, gloves, and a handsome hat.

Ilmarinen dressed like a bridegroom. Then he went outside and looked for his horse. The horse had been fed well and was ready. Ilmarinen put golden gear on it and made ready his sleigh. He also prayed for a safe road and a good journey. Then he climbed into the sleigh and drove toward Pohjola.

While Väinämöinen crossed the blue sea in his boat, Ilmarinen drove over the land in his sleigh. The sea road and the land road came near the same northern country. Soon Pohjola saw visitors coming from two sides. One came by water, in a bright boat. The other came by land, in a fine sleigh.

Louhi, the mistress of Pohjola, wanted to know what kind of guests were coming. She ordered a servant to put rowan wood into the fire. “If blood comes from the wood, war is coming,” she said. “If water comes, peace will remain.” The wood did not give blood or water. Sweet liquid came from it, and an old woman said, “That means wedding guests are coming.”

Louhi went outside and looked carefully. She saw Väinämöinen’s boat on the water and Ilmarinen’s sleigh on the land. Then she spoke to her daughter. “Two men are coming to ask for you,” she said. “The one in the boat is old Väinämöinen. He brings wealth and goods. The one in the sleigh is Ilmarinen. He brings empty words and magic. When they come in, give the cup to the man you choose.”

The maiden answered her mother firmly. “I will not choose a man for his wealth,” she said. “I will choose for face, body, and heart. A maiden has not been sold for goods before. I will go with Ilmarinen, because he forged the Sampo.” Louhi did not like this answer. She warned her daughter that a smith’s wife would have hard work, washing his clothes and cleaning his head.

But the maiden did not change her mind. “I will not go to the old man from

Väinölä,” she said. “There would be sorrow in living with someone so old.” Väinämöinen arrived first and came into the house. From the doorway he asked, “Will you come with me, young maiden, to be my wife and friend for life?”

The maiden asked him, “Have you made the boat from the pieces of my spindle, as I told you?” Väinämöinen answered that he had made a good strong boat, one that could cross wind and storm. But the maiden refused him. “I do not praise a man only because he travels on the sea,” she said. “The wind can steal a man’s mind, and cold air can break his thoughts. I will not come to you.”

Then Ilmarinen entered the house. A cup of sweet drink was brought to him. But he did not drink at once. He said, “I will not drink before I see the one I came for. I want to know if my promised bride is ready.” Louhi answered, “Your bride is not ready yet. First you must plough the field of snakes without using an ordinary plough.”

Ilmarinen went to the maiden’s room and told her what her mother had demanded. “I made the Sampo,” he said. “You promised to come with me. But now your mother asks me to plough a field full of snakes.” The maiden helped him. She said, “Forge a golden plough with silver parts. Then you can plough the snake field.”

Ilmarinen returned to the forge and made the golden plough. He dressed himself in iron and steel, took strong gloves, and harnessed a fiery horse. Then he went to the field. Snakes lifted their heads and moved across the ground. Ilmarinen spoke to them and ordered them away from his path. With the golden plough he turned the field, and the snakes rose in the furrows but could not stop him.

He went back to Louhi and said, “I have ploughed the snake field. Now give me your daughter.” Louhi answered, “Not yet. First you must catch the bear of Tuonela and the wolf of Manala from the dark forest of death.” Ilmarinen again went to the maiden and told her. Again she gave him advice.

She said, “Make strong bridles of steel and iron. Then you can lead the bear and wolf.” Ilmarinen forged the bridles and went to the dark land. He called on the maid of mist to spread mist over the fields, so the animals would not hear him coming. Then he caught the wolf and the bear, placed iron bonds on them, and

brought them to Pohjola.

Again he asked for the maiden. Louhi still gave him one more task. “Catch the great pike from the river of Tuonela,” she said. “You must do it without nets and without hand nets. Many have gone to catch it, and none have returned.” Ilmarinen felt deep worry, but he went once more to the maiden.

The maiden helped him for the third time. “Do not be afraid,” she said. “Forge a fiery eagle, a great bird of fire. With that bird you can catch the pike from the black river.” Ilmarinen made the eagle from fire and iron. Its claws were of iron, its grip was of steel, and its wings were like the sides of boats.

Ilmarinen climbed onto the eagle’s back and told it where to fly. The eagle flew to the dark river of Tuonela. One wing touched the water, and the other touched the sky. Ilmarinen began to search the river, while the eagle watched beside him. Then a water spirit rose and seized Ilmarinen, but the eagle struck it and pushed it down into the mud.

Soon the great pike came from the water. It was huge, with a mouth like rapids and a back as wide as many boats. It tried to swallow Ilmarinen. The fiery eagle attacked it, but the first strike failed. The second strike tore the fish but did not hold it. On the third strike, the eagle caught the great pike in its iron claws and lifted it from the deep water.

The eagle carried the fish to a tree and began to taste it. Ilmarinen was angry and said, “Bad bird, why did you tear the prize and eat from it?” The eagle flew away into the sky. Ilmarinen took the head of the great pike and carried it to Louhi. He said, “I have done all your tasks. I ploughed the snake field, caught the bear and wolf, and brought the pike from Tuonela. Will you now give me the maiden?”

Louhi complained that the pike had been damaged, but Ilmarinen answered, “No prize from the river of death can be taken without some mark.” At last Louhi agreed. She said, “Now your promised bride is ready. My daughter will go with Ilmarinen and become his wife.” In the house, a small child sang that an eagle had come and taken the finest bird from the group of maidens.

Louhi asked how anyone had known where her daughter was. The child answered that a fine maiden cannot be hidden. Even if she is kept in a secret room,

great suitors will still find her. Louhi then said sadly that she had tried to hide her daughter from the men of Finland, but it had been useless.

Väinämöinen left Pohjola with his head low and his heart heavy. He had come too late and was too old for the maiden. On his way home, he spoke a warning. “Let no old man try to take a young bride against a younger man,” he said. “Let no one enter such a contest with pride.” Then he returned alone, while the wedding of Ilmarinen and the maiden of Pohjola began to move forward.

#### Part 10: The Wedding Feast Begins

Now the song turns to the wedding in Pohjola. For a whole week, people worked to prepare the feast. The halls of Sariola were made ready, and food was brought from many places. A great crowd would come, and everyone had to be fed. The wedding of Ilmarinen and the maiden of Pohjola could not be small.

First they brought a great ox for the feast. It had grown in Karelia and become fat in Finland. It was so large that its tail seemed to swing in one land while its head moved in another. A hundred men held its horns, and a thousand held its nose when they led it to Pohjola.

But no one could kill the huge animal. Young men could not do it, and old men could not do it. A man named Virokannas came and tried to strike it down. He spoke proudly, but when the ox moved its head and rolled its dark eyes, he jumped away into the bushes. The great animal still stood there.

They searched many lands for someone strong enough. They looked in Karelia, Finland, Russia, Sweden, Lapland, and even in the lands below the earth. No one could be found. At last a dark man rose from the sea. He was not very large and not very small, but he had an iron hand, a stone helmet, stone shoes, and a golden knife.

This sea man became the ox’s killer. As soon as he saw the animal, he struck it in the neck and brought it down. Then the people had meat for the great wedding. They had more than enough for the long tables of Pohjola. The feast could now go forward.

The house in Pohjola was large and strong. Its rooms were wide, and its roof stood high above the floor. Even if a rooster sang in the roof, the sound could hardly reach the ground. Even if a dog barked at the far end of the house, the sound could hardly reach the door. It was a house made for a great gathering.

Louhi, the mistress of Pohjola, walked across the floor and thought about the feast. She had meat and bread, but she still needed strong drink. She wondered how to make beer for such a wedding. An old man sitting near the stove heard her and said, "Beer comes from barley and hops. But it also needs water and fire."

Then the old man told the story of beer's beginning. Barley had grown in the field of Kaleva, and hops had climbed a small tree. Water waited in the well. Each one called to the others, because life alone was poor and life together was better. Then Osmotar, the maker of beer, took barley, hops, and water and put them to boil.

The drink began, but it would not rise. Osmotar wondered what would make it live. A girl found a small stick on the floor and gave it to her. Osmotar rubbed it in her hands, and a white squirrel was born. She sent the squirrel to the forest to bring cones and needles from the trees, but when these were put into the drink, it still did not rise.

Then the girl found a small chip of wood and gave it to Osmotar. Osmotar rubbed it in her hands, and a golden-breasted marten was born. She sent the marten to the place where bears fought on iron rocks. The marten brought foam from the bears, but even that did not make the beer rise.

A third time, the girl found a small plant on the ground. Osmotar rubbed it in her hands, and a bee was born. She sent the bee over the sea to a far island, where sweet plants grew beside a sleeping maiden. The bee wet its wings with honey and brought the sweetness back. When Osmotar put that honey into the drink, the beer began to rise.

The beer foamed high in the wooden tub. It almost ran over the sides and onto the floor. Osmotar was afraid she had made a bad drink, but a bird sang from the tree and said, "This is not bad beer. This is good beer. Put it into barrels and carry it to the cellar." From that time, beer had a good name among people, because it

made women smile and men feel glad.

When Louhi heard the old story, she began to make beer for the wedding. She carried much water, used much barley, and burned much wood. For a long time the fires burned at the edge of Pohjola. Smoke rose high into the sky and spread over the northern land. People far away saw the smoke and wondered if war had begun.

Lemminkäinen's mother saw the smoke in the morning when she went for water. She thought it was the smoke of battle. Lemminkäinen also saw it and went closer to learn the truth. He found that it was not war smoke. It was the smoke of beer fires, rising for the wedding in Pohjola.

Lemminkäinen called across the water to Louhi. He asked her to make good beer for the great feast, and especially for him. But Louhi did not plan to invite him. She knew his proud and quarrelsome nature. She remembered how easily he made trouble at feasts and among maidens.

The beer was ready, the food was ready, and the bread was baked. The red beer waited in the cellar behind a copper tap. But the beer seemed to call out for a singer. It wanted someone wise and joyful to drink it and praise it. Louhi therefore sent her servant girl to invite the guests.

Louhi gave clear orders. "Invite all the people of Pohjola," she said. "Invite all the people of Kalevala. Invite the poor, the weak, the blind, and the lame too. Invite old Väinämöinen, because he is the lawful singer for this feast. But do not invite Kaukomieli, the man called Ahti Lemminkäinen."

The servant asked how she would know Lemminkäinen's house. Louhi answered, "You will know it. He lives on an island, near the wide bay, at the edge of Kaukoniemi." So the servant carried the invitations far and wide. All kinds of people were invited. Only Ahti Lemminkäinen was left without a call.

Soon Louhi heard the sound of whips from the marsh and the noise of sleighs near the shore. She looked out and wondered if a great army was coming. But when she looked more closely, she saw that it was not war. It was the wedding party. The bridegroom was in the middle of the people, not first and not last, but honored among them.

Louhi recognized Ilmarinen among the crowd. She called to the young men and told them to go out into the yard. They were to take the horse from its harness, lead it carefully to a good place, give it water from a clear spring, feed it with good grain, comb it gently, and cover it with a fine cloth. The bridegroom's horse had to be treated with honor.

Then she told them to bring the bridegroom inside. She wondered whether he could enter without making the doorway higher or the threshold lower. In the song of the wedding, the bridegroom was so great that the house itself seemed to open for him. The upper beam lifted, the threshold sank, and the doors made way. Ilmarinen stepped into the house.

The bridegroom greeted the house and the people under its famous roof. Louhi welcomed him and called for light so she could see his face. First a servant brought smoky light, but Louhi said it would darken the bridegroom's eyes. Then the servant brought a clean wax light. Its bright flame showed Ilmarinen's face clearly.

Louhi looked at his eyes and was pleased. They were not blue, not red, and not dull white. They were like sea foam, sea reeds, and sea grass. Then she told the young men to lead him to the highest seat, with his back to the blue wall and his face toward the red table. There he sat before the guests.

Food was brought in plenty. There was salmon, pork, full cups, and dishes filled to the top. Louhi fed the guests well, and she gave special honor to the bridegroom. Then she ordered beer to be brought. The servant carried it in a great cup and gave it first to the honored guests and especially to Ilmarinen.

The beer now had the singer it wanted, because Väinämöinen was there. He took the cup first and spoke to the drink. "Beer, do not make people sit in silence," he said. "Make them sing. Make golden mouths open. The hosts may wonder if the beer is poor when no one sings and no joy rises in the room."

Väinämöinen asked if anyone would sing with him. A small child on the floor offered to sing if stronger men would not. But an old man near the stove said that children's songs were not enough for such a feast. He said that wisdom should sing, and that songs should come from those who sat in the high seats.

The old man remembered his own youth. He said that once his voice had run

like a river and moved like a boat over waves. But now his voice was weak, like a sleigh stuck in sand or a boat lying dry on stones. Then Väinämöinen understood that no other singer would stand with him. He would sing alone.

Väinämöinen began his song. His words came easily, and his song did not grow thin. He sang through the evening, and the people listened with joy. The women smiled, and the men felt glad. Everyone wondered at the old singer's skill, because even the listeners felt the power of his words.

At the end of his song, Väinämöinen did not praise himself. He said that true song would be greater if the Creator himself sang it. Such a song could make the seas sweet, the forests full of bread, and the hills full of food. It could fill the cattle sheds, give fine clothes to hosts and guests, and bring good things to all the house.

Then Väinämöinen prayed for the hosts. He asked that such joy might come again to Pohjola, and that beer might flow like a river in the halls of Sariola. He asked that the master and mistress of the house would receive their reward, that sons would prosper, and that daughters would do well at their looms. So the wedding feast began with food, drink, welcome, and song.

## Part 11: The Bride's Farewell

After the wedding feast had gone on for a long time, Louhi, the mistress of Pohjola, spoke to Ilmarinen. He had sat patiently in the hall, waiting for the bride. Louhi said, "Why do you sit there, noble bridegroom? You are not waiting for my house, my fire, or my guests. You are waiting for the young woman who will go with you."

Louhi told him to wait a little longer. The bride was still being made ready. Half her hair was braided, but half was not yet braided. One sleeve was prepared, but the other was still being fixed. One foot was in its shoe, and the other was not yet ready. One hand was gloved, and the other still waited.

At last Louhi said, "Bridegroom, you have waited long and have not grown tired. Now your young bride is ready. The one you bought with hard work is ready to go." Then she turned to the bride and spoke more sharply. "Go now, young

woman. Your time is near. The one who will take you is at the door, and the horse is biting its bit outside.”

Louhi reminded the bride that she had once been quick to take the ring and accept the promise. Now she must be just as quick to enter the sleigh. But the words were heavy. They did not sound like joy. They sounded like a door closing behind the girl’s childhood.

The bride was told that she had not thought deeply enough about this change. She had not looked to both sides before making the promise. She was leaving her father’s house, her mother’s yard, and the place where she had grown. She had lived there like a flower beside the path and like a berry in a sunny field. She had eaten well, slept safely, and carried no heavy care.

Now she was going to another house, under another mother’s eye. Everything would be different there. The doors would sound different, the gates would move differently, and the hinges would speak in another voice. She would not know how to walk through the doors like a daughter of that house. She would not yet know how to warm the fire or speak in the way her husband’s people liked.

The bride heard these words and sighed. Sorrow came into her heart, and tears came into her eyes. She said, “I always thought that marriage would be a happy day. I waited for it as people wait for summer. Now the day has come, but I do not feel joy. My foot is at the door, and the sleigh waits for me, yet my heart is dark.”

She said she did not know why her mind had changed. She had hoped to leave her home like a cuckoo singing on a hill, but now she felt like a lonely water bird on cold waves. Other brides might have bright thoughts, like sunrise in spring. Her own mind was like a dark shore, like a cloudy sky, like a winter day without light.

Then an old woman in the house spoke. She had seen much of life and did not speak softly. She said, “Poor young bride, did I not warn you? I told you not to trust a suitor only because his mouth was sweet and his eyes were kind. A man may speak gently, and still death may live in his words.”

The old woman said that she had often warned young girls. When great suitors came, a girl should answer for herself. She should say, “I am not ready to be taken

as a daughter-in-law. I am not ready to become a servant in another house.” But this bride had not listened. Now she was going from her own home into a harder school.

The old woman described the new house in dark colors. There the father-in-law might have a hard jaw, and the mother-in-law might have a stone tongue. The husband’s brother might speak like a snake, and the husband’s sister might look with cold eyes. At home the bride had been called moonlight by her father, sunshine by her mother, and clear water by her brother. In the new house, strangers might call her by harsher names.

Then the old woman told the bride to cry while she still could. “Cry now,” she said. “Let your tears fall on your father’s clean yard and your mother’s floor. If you do not cry now, you may cry later when you come back and find your father old and weak, your mother worn with work, your brother fallen in the yard, or your sister changed by sorrow.” The words were hard, and they made the bride cry even more.

The bride wept with both hands full of tears. She spoke to her sisters and childhood friends. “Listen to me,” she said. “I do not understand what has struck me. I thought this day would bring singing, but now I carry more sorrow than a horse could pull. People may think a bride has no care, but they must not say that of me. My worries are more than stones in a river.”

Then a child spoke from the floor. The child’s voice was small, but the words were lighter. “Why should the bride cry so much?” the child said. “Let the horse carry the worry. The horse has a stronger head and a stronger body. She is not being taken to a swamp or a ditch. She is being taken from a good place to another good place.”

The child told her to look beside her. There was her bridegroom, strong and living. He had a good horse, a good sleigh, and wealth around him. Birds seemed to sing on the harness, and cuckoos seemed to call from the front of the sleigh. The child said, “Do not be afraid. You are not being made worse. You are going to the side of a man who ploughs, hunts, fishes, and brings food home.”

After this, the women began to advise the bride for her new life. Osmotar, a

wise woman, spoke most clearly. She said, “Bride, listen to my words. You are leaving this famous home and going into another family. In another house, you must walk with thought and work with care. You cannot live there as freely as you lived in your father’s yard.”

Osmotar told her to leave some things behind. She must leave long morning sleep near the home stove. She must leave careless songs by the window. She must leave the light ways of girlhood and the lazy habits of childhood. A new house needed new habits. Old love from father, mother, brother, and sister must not be forgotten, but she must also learn respect for father-in-law, mother-in-law, husband’s brother, and husband’s sister.

“Never enter a husband’s house without good manners,” Osmotar said. “Even a good house asks for good behavior. Even a good husband watches the mind of his wife. If the old man is like a wolf, if the old woman is like a bear, if others are sharp like snakes or nails, still you must answer with respect. Bow lower than before and speak with care.”

She told the bride to keep her head clear and her mind steady. In the evening, she must watch the fire. In the morning, she must listen for the cock. If the cock did not call, she must look at the moon and stars and learn the hour from the sky. When it was time, she must rise from beside her young husband and make fire from the ashes.

If there was no fire left in the ashes, she should ask her husband gently. “Dear one, give me fire,” she should say. Then she must light the splint, take water, and go to the cattle. The mother-in-law’s cow would low, the father-in-law’s horse would call, and the calves and lambs would wait for food. She must feed them kindly and not kick the pigs or treat small animals badly.

When the animals were cared for, she must not rest in the cattle house. She must hurry back to the room, because a child might be crying under the covers. The child might not be able to say whether it was cold, hungry, or hurt. If she found a child on the floor, even if it was only her sister-in-law’s child, she must lift it, wash its eyes, smooth its head, and give it bread or even a small piece of wood to hold if there was no bread.

Osmotar then spoke of housework. The bride must sweep the floors, wash the tables, clean the benches, wipe dust from windows, and clear soot from the stove. When she came into the room, she should bring water, a broom, and fire, and she herself should be the fourth good thing. A house must look like a house, not like a place where no one cares.

She must also dress properly. She should not run about without a belt, cloth, shoes, or head covering, because her husband might be displeased. She should keep sharp ears like a mouse and quick feet like a hare. She should bend her young neck with grace, like a growing juniper or a fresh bird-cherry tree. She should be watchful and not fall lazily onto the bench or bed.

When the father-in-law came from the field, or the husband came from outdoor work, she should bring water and a towel. She should bow and speak kindly. When the mother-in-law came from the storehouse with a box of flour, she should run to meet her, take the box, and carry it inside. If she did not know what work should be done, she should ask gently, "Dear mother-in-law, how should I do the work here?"

Then she should listen and do the work. She might have to grind grain, carry water, prepare dough, bring wood, heat the oven, bake bread, wash dishes, and clean cups. When she went to the grinding room, she should not complain loudly. She should sing softly with the stone, but not groan so that the old people thought she was angry. When she carried water, she should go and come quickly, not stand long at the well looking at her own face.

When she brought wood, she should not throw it down noisily. When she went to the storehouse for flour, she should not stay there too long, or people might think she was giving flour away. When she washed dishes, she should wash handles, edges, cups, bowls, and spoons carefully. She should keep things safe from dogs, cats, birds, and children, because small hands in a village could scatter many things.

Osmotar also told her how to prepare the evening bath. She must carry water, bring bath branches, heat the bathhouse, and invite the father-in-law politely when everything was ready. She should say, "Dear father, the bath is ready. The water

is drawn, the branches are prepared, and the benches are clean. Go and bathe as long as you wish.” She herself should be ready to help with the steam.

When it was time for spinning and weaving, she should not go from house to house seeking help. She must spin thread with her own fingers and weave cloth with her own hands. She should make good woolen clothes from the sheep’s wool and weave strongly at the loom. When it was time to make beer, she should work carefully with barley, malt, water, and warmth. She must keep animals away from the malt and not fear the night road to the bathhouse.

She must also treat guests well. If a guest came, she should not hate the guest. A good house always kept something for visitors, even if only kind words came first while the food was cooking. She should invite the guest to sit, speak gently, and feed the guest when food was ready. But when the guest left, she should not follow too far outside the door, because that too might anger her husband.

If she went to visit the village, she must not speak badly of her new home. If other women asked, “Does your mother-in-law give you butter as your own mother did?” she must not answer with complaint. Even if she received butter only once in a summer, she should say, “Yes, she gives it.” Osmotar’s advice was not only about truth. It was about peace in a hard household.

Last of all, Osmotar warned her never to forget her mother. “Your mother carried you and fed you from her own body,” she said. “She spent many nights without sleep and forgot many meals while she cared for you. Whoever forgets a mother has a heavy answer to give in the land of the dead. Even there, the daughters of death will ask, ‘How could you forget the one who suffered for you?’”

Then another old woman spoke from the floor. She was poor, lonely, and covered with an old cloth. She said, “Listen, sister. I once followed my husband’s mind too much. I tried to please him in everything, and still I found no love.” She remembered her own girlhood, when she had been like a flower in her father’s yard and a bird in her mother’s room.

She had gone to her husband’s house believing fine promises. People had said there were great rooms, rich fields, grain stores, money, and kindness there. But when she arrived, she found a poor house full of cold eyes and hard words. She

worked early and late. She carried moss for bread, drank poor water, cleaned, ground, baked, and labored like a servant.

She tried to win honor by bringing fire, preparing wood, and doing every task. But strange eyes watched her at the door and on the floor. Her husband's words burned like coals. Her mother-in-law ate well, while she herself ate poor food near the stove. No matter how much she worked, blame fell on her like iron hail.

Worse still, her husband changed. The man who should have loved her became like a wolf and a bear. He turned his side to her, gave her his elbow in bed, struck her, pulled her hair, and kept anger beside him. She stood by the walls in cold shoes, waiting for his rage to pass. But it did not pass.

At last she left that house and tried to return to her brother's home. Even the gates and fields seemed to say, "This is not your home now." Her father and mother were dead, and her brother's wife did not welcome her. Her brother knew her at last and wept, but his wife gave her poor food and dirty water. So she had to go away again, from one strange door to another.

The old woman ended with sadness. She had many people ready to speak harshly to her, but few ready to speak kindly. She had once thought such a fate could never come to her. Now she knew that a young bride could fall into hard days. Her story stayed in the room like smoke after a fire. The bride of Pohjola had heard the joy, the warnings, the rules, and the sorrow, and her new life waited outside with the horse and sleigh.

## Part 12: The Bride Comes Home

The bride had received much advice, and now the bridegroom also had to listen. An older voice spoke to Ilmarinen and said, "Bridegroom, be thankful for your good fortune. You have received a fine young woman. Thank her father, and thank her mother even more, because they raised such a daughter."

The speaker praised the bride's skill. She could work in the field, make hay, wash clothes, spin thread, and weave cloth. Her shuttle had sounded in the house like a cuckoo singing on a hill. Her weaving tools had moved so busily that the

whole village could hear them. The women of the village had often asked, “Who is weaving so well?”

Then Ilmarinen was told how to guide his new wife. He should make a sharp scythe and take her to the meadow, so she could show her skill in cutting grass. He should give her good weaving tools and let her work at the loom, so people could hear the sound of her weaving. When the women asked who made such fine cloth, he could answer proudly, “My own dear wife is weaving.”

But he was also warned not to treat her badly. He must not drive her into fences or rough places when he took her away in the sleigh. He must not push her into corners or dark rooms. In her father’s house, she had not been treated like a low servant. She had sat by the windows, moved freely on the floor, and brought joy to her parents morning and evening.

Ilmarinen was told not to send her to poor and bitter work as if she had no worth. He should take her to good grain, good bread, and good beer. If homesickness came to her and she felt sorrow for her own people, he should put the horse into harness and take her back to visit her father’s home. He must not make her cry with loneliness.

He was also told not to keep her like a slave. He must not lock the storehouse against her or keep food from her. In her father’s house, she had been trusted with bread, milk, eggs, and beer. She had opened the storehouses in the morning and closed them in the evening. A wife who came with honor should also be treated with honor.

The advice then became darker, because the old world was hard. Ilmarinen was told to stand before his wife like a wall if others tried to shame her. He should not let his father or mother hurt her with words. He should not let strangers speak against her. He had sought her for years, so he should not give her up to cruelty now.

Yet the old voice also spoke of correcting a wife, and these words were harsh. First, Ilmarinen should teach her with speech, then with looks, and then with small signs. If she did not listen after a long time, he was told to show a branch or a switch, but not to strike at once. The song belongs to an old and severe world, so

its advice carries both care and danger.

The speaker warned that if punishment ever happened, it should not be in the open yard or by the field, where the noise would reach the village. It should not leave marks on the eyes or ears, because people would ask questions and laugh. This advice is not gentle, but it shows the hard thoughts of that age. The bride, hearing these words, felt sorrow rise again inside her.

Then an old man near the stove spoke from his own bitter life. He warned the bridegroom not to follow a woman's wishes too much. He said that he had once bought meat, bread, butter, fish, and drink for his wife, but received no kindness. His words were angry and unfair, and they made the room feel colder. The bride listened and understood that marriage could hold both welcome and fear.

The bride sighed and began to cry again. She said, "Now the time has truly come. Other people have left before me, but now my own leaving is near. It is hard to leave this famous village and this beautiful house where I grew from childhood." She had never believed she would really leave those rooms, fields, and familiar doors.

She thanked her father for the food and care of former days. She thanked her mother for carrying her, feeding her, and rocking her when she was small. She thanked her brother, her sister, and all the people with whom she had grown. Then she told them not to fall into too much sorrow because of her leaving. The same sun, moon, and stars would shine in other lands too.

Still, her farewell was long and painful. She said goodbye to the rooms, the yard, the water, the sandy shore, the fields, the forests, and the hills. She left the paths to people who would walk them, the floors to people who would sweep them, and the fields to wild animals and birds. She imagined returning one day and not being known by anyone. Perhaps only the fence she had once touched, the cow she had fed, the horse she had cared for, and the dog she had raised would remember her.

She said goodbye to the house with its wooden roof. She said goodbye to the entrance room, the yard, the rowan trees, the woods, the berries, the flowers, the islands, the fish waters, the hills, and the deep valleys. Her words moved slowly,

as if every thing around her had a face. At last there was no more time for farewell.

Ilmarinen lifted the bride into the sleigh. He struck the horse lightly with the whip, and they left the yard of Pohjola. Children stayed behind and sang that a dark bird had come through the forest and taken away their duck, their berry, their apple, and their little fish. They wondered who would now lead them to the water and keep the house in order. Their song showed that the bride had been loved and needed in her old home.

Ilmarinen drove along the shores of Pohjola. The sleigh ran over sand and stone, and the road sounded beneath it. One of his hands held the reins, and the other rested near the bride. One foot was on the side of the sleigh, and the other was under the warm cover. For one day, then another, and then a third, they traveled toward Ilmarinen's home.

On the third day, as the sun went down, Ilmarinen's house came into sight. Smoke rose from the rooms and climbed thickly toward the clouds. His family and people had waited a long time for him. Old people had sat by windows, young people had stood at gates, children had waited by walls, and others had walked along the shore until their shoes were worn.

Lokka, the mistress of the house, saw the sleigh and knew it was her son's. She said, "Now my son is coming from Pohjola with his young bride." She spoke to the bride from the yard and welcomed her toward the house built by Ilmarinen's fathers. She had not been waiting for the moon or the sun, she said. She had been waiting for her son and for the young woman he would bring.

Lokka asked Ilmarinen about the journey, but then she answered her own question. She could see that he had traveled safely and had won what he sought. The bride sat beside him, bright and beautiful. The good horse was wet with sweat because it had brought home such a precious gift. Lokka told the bride to rise from the sleigh and step into the yard with light feet.

She invited the bride to walk across the clean yard and into the house. She said the floors, doors, benches, storehouses, cattle sheds, and yards had waited through winter and summer for a young mistress. The cattle had waited for someone to feed them, the rooms for someone to clean them, and the clothes poles for a young

wife's garments. The whole house seemed to have been expecting her.

Lokka greeted the yard, the storehouse, the entrance room, the main room, the people, and the young crowd. Then she told Ilmarinen to open the sleigh coverings and show the bride he had brought after so much waiting. Lokka praised the bride before the people. She called her the best bird from the woods, the freshest branch from the green grove, and the fairest leaf from the young tree.

But a child on the floor spoke rudely. The child mocked the bride and said Ilmarinen had brought home something poor and dark, not the fine maiden he had promised. The words were foolish and cruel. Lokka heard them and quickly stopped the child. She said, "Do not speak shameful words. Such insults do not belong to this bride or this house."

Lokka praised the bride again with stronger words. She said Ilmarinen had brought the best maiden from the land, a girl like a ripe berry on a hill and a small bright bird in a tree. No better woman could have been found beyond the sea or in any other country. Her face, arms, neck, and form were all beautiful. She had not come empty-handed either, because she brought clothes, cloth, and the work of her own spinning.

Then Lokka spoke directly to the bride. "Do not worry," she said. "You have not been brought to a poor swamp or a bad ditch. You have been brought from a rich place to an even richer place, from a beer house to a house with more beer." She told her that this home had wide bath benches, large rooms, good people like father, mother, brother, and sister, and plenty of food.

Lokka said that if the bride wished for fish, birds, or other good things, she should not beg from her father-in-law or mother-in-law. She should ask her husband directly. There was no animal in the forest, no bird in the air, and no fish in the water that Ilmarinen could not bring home for her. In this house, the bride would not have to hurry to heavy stones or worry at the grinding place, because water, rapids, waves, and sea foam would help with the hard work.

After the welcome, the guests were fed and given drink. Meat, bread, fish, salmon, beer, and sweet drink filled the tables. There was enough to eat and enough to drink from fine wooden dishes and cups. Beer flowed without being

bought, and sweet drink came freely. The house was full of food, warmth, and noise.

Then people asked who would sing properly for the feast. Once again, old Väinämöinen began to sing. He greeted his brothers in song and said that people do not often meet face to face in this poor northern world. He said that if even the children of Lapland could sing after poor food and drink, surely the people in this good house could sing after barley beer and rich meals.

Väinämöinen praised the house and the comfort of the feast. He praised the host first, because the host had built the house from strong trees and made a place where many people could gather. He praised the mistress next, because she had baked bread, prepared food, made beer, and worked before the cock called in the morning. He praised the guide of the wedding and the woman who had helped bring the bride.

He praised the bride herself and all the people present. He spoke of shining clothes, bright ornaments, fine guests, and the beauty of the whole crowd. The room was full of honor and gladness. After the song, the feast had reached its full joy. The wedding had moved from Pohjola to Ilmarinen's home, and the bride had been received as the new woman of the house.

At last Väinämöinen climbed into his sleigh and started for home. He sang as he traveled, but on the third song his sleigh struck a stone and a stump. The runner broke, the side came loose, and the sleigh could not go on. Väinämöinen asked if any young or old person there would go to Tuonela, the land of the dead, and bring back the tool he needed to repair it.

No one would go. The young people refused, and the old people refused too. They said there was no one brave enough to travel to the houses of death for a tool. So Väinämöinen himself went once more to Tuonela. He brought back what he needed, found strong wood, and made a new sleigh.

Then he placed his horse before the repaired sleigh and sat down again. The horse ran without being struck and carried him back to his own familiar door. The wedding songs were finished, the bride had come to her new home, and Väinämöinen returned to his own house after the long celebration.

### Part 13: Lemminkäinen at Pohjola

Ahti Lemminkäinen was living on his island near Kaukonieni. He was working in the field, turning the earth with his plough, when his sharp ears heard a distant noise. It came from far away, beyond villages and lakes. He heard the sound of many feet, many sleighs, and much movement. At once he understood that a great feast was being held in Pohjola, and that he had not been invited.

His face darkened. Blood rose in his cheeks, and anger moved through him. He left the plough in the middle of the field and hurried home to his mother. When he entered the house, he said, "Mother, bring food quickly. I am hungry. Heat the bath too, because I must wash and dress well."

His mother did what he asked, but she was troubled. She knew his way of life and the fire in his heart. After he had eaten and washed, he asked for his best clothes. His mother said, "Where are you going, my son? Are you going to hunt the lynx, chase the elk, or shoot the squirrel?" Lemminkäinen answered, "I am not going hunting. I am going to the feast in Pohjola."

His mother grew afraid. "Do not go," she said. "You were not invited. They do not want you there." Lemminkäinen laughed at that warning. "Poor men need an invitation," he said. "A good man can go without one. My invitation is my sharp sword and my bright blade."

His mother tried again. "There are great dangers on the road," she said. "Three hard deaths wait for you before you reach Pohjola." Lemminkäinen did not look afraid. "Women always see death everywhere," he answered. "Tell me the first danger, and I will find a way through it."

His mother said, "First you will come to a river of fire. In that river there is a fiery rapid, and on the rapid there is a fiery rock. On that rock sits a fiery eagle. It sharpens its teeth at night and its claws by day, waiting for the traveler who comes that way." Lemminkäinen answered, "That is not a death for a man. I will make birds for the eagle to eat, and I will pass by while it feeds."

His mother said, "The second danger is a pit of fire. It crosses the road and is

full of burning stones. Hundreds of men and horses have fallen there.” Lemminkäinen answered, “I will pray to Ukko for snow. I will make the burning pit into a cold lake, and then I will sing an icy bridge over it.”

His mother said, “The third danger is at the gate of Pohjola. A wolf waits there, and a bear waits beside it. They have eaten many men.” Lemminkäinen answered, “I will give them sheep to chase. They will turn away from me, and I will drive through.” His mother saw that he would not listen. Then she told him of more dangers inside Pohjola itself.

She said, “At the yard there is an iron fence, high as the sky and deep as the earth. It is set with spears, snakes, lizards, and dark creatures. At the gate lies a great serpent, longer than a house beam and thicker than a post. It has a hundred eyes and a thousand tongues. It waits for you.”

Lemminkäinen still did not step back. “I know words for snakes,” he said. “I have handled them before.” His mother then warned him of the men inside the house. They would be drunk, armed, and ready for quarrel. They might sing him into a sword or cut his head from his body. She said there was a hill outside with many stakes and many heads on them. One stake still had no head, and she feared it was waiting for him.

Lemminkäinen asked for his war clothes and his father’s sword. He tested the sword, and it bent in his hand like a fresh branch. He was pleased with it. Then he took down his strong bow and spoke proudly. “I would call him a man,” he said, “who could bend this bow in the halls of Pohjola.”

He dressed for battle and told his servant to harness the horse. His hand seemed to urge him forward, while another part of him tried to hold him back. But pride was stronger than warning. Before he left, his mother gave one last piece of advice. “If you reach the feast, drink only half the cup,” she said. “Leave the other half, because a snake may be lying in the bottom.”

She also said, “When you sit among them, sit only on half the seat. Step only half a step. Leave room for danger, so you can move when you must.” Lemminkäinen heard her, but he was already turned toward Pohjola. He struck his horse with the whip, and the horse began to run. The road opened before him.

Soon a flock of birds rose from the road in front of the horse. Some feathers fell to the ground. Lemminkäinen stopped and picked them up. He put them into his pouch, thinking, “No one knows what may be useful on a journey.” Then he drove on until the horse suddenly stopped and lifted its ears.

Before him was the fiery river, just as his mother had said. Fire moved in the water, and a fiery eagle sat on the fiery rock. The eagle saw him from far away and asked, “Where are you going, Lemminkäinen?” He answered, “I am going to the feast in Pohjola. Move aside and let me pass.”

The eagle said, “I will let you pass through my mouth and throat.” Lemminkäinen did not panic. He took the feathers from his pouch and rubbed them between his hands. A flock of birds appeared. He threw them into the eagle’s mouth, and the eagle began to eat. While it was busy, Lemminkäinen drove past the first danger.

A little later, the horse stopped again. Before them lay the pit of fire, full of burning stones. Lemminkäinen prayed to Ukko, asking for snow from all sides of the sky. Clouds gathered, and snow fell thickly over the fire. The burning pit became like a cold lake. Then Lemminkäinen sang a bridge of ice from one side to the other and crossed safely.

He drove on, and the horse stopped for the third time. At the gate of Pohjola stood the wolf and the bear. Lemminkäinen reached into his pouch and took out bits of wool. He rubbed them between his hands, and a flock of sheep appeared. The wolf and bear rushed after the sheep, and Lemminkäinen passed through the gate.

Then he came to the iron fence. It stood high and terrible, set with spears and living snakes. Lemminkäinen took out his knife and cut an opening through it. He drove forward to the gate, but there lay the great serpent across the road. Its eyes were like large grains, its tongues were long as spear shafts, and its back was like seven boats placed side by side.

Lemminkäinen did not dare touch it with his hands. He spoke to it first, telling it to close its mouth, hide its tongue, and move away from the traveler’s path. The serpent did not obey. It raised its head and hissed toward him. Then

Lemminkäinen remembered the old words his mother had taught him.

He spoke the birth of the serpent. He told how evil spit had floated on the water, how the wind had carried it, and how Hiisi had given life to it when the Creator would not. He named its heart, brain, eyes, mouth, tongue, teeth, back, tail, and dark body. When the serpent heard its own beginning, its power weakened. It moved aside and let Lemminkäinen pass.

So Ahti Lemminkäinen reached the yard of Pohjola after many dangers. He entered the house without being invited. As he stepped onto the floor, the floor shook under him and the wooden room sounded around him. He greeted the house and then spoke to the master of Pohjola. "Is there food for my horse," he asked, "and beer for a man to drink?"

The master of Pohjola sat at the long table. He answered with insult. "There is ground outside for your horse," he said. "And if you behave well, there is room for you by the door, under the beam, between the pots and hooks." Lemminkäinen's beard shook with anger. "Let someone else stand by the door and clean soot from your walls," he said. "My father never stood in such a place."

He moved higher in the room and sat at the end of a bench. The bench cracked under him. Then he said, "I must not be a loved guest, because no beer has been brought to me." The mistress of the house answered sharply. She said he had come too late, after the wedding food was eaten and the drink was finished. If he had come earlier or later, she said, it might have been better.

Lemminkäinen accused her of holding the feast in a shameful way. "You invited the poor, the weak, and every low man," he said. "You invited all kinds of people, but you left me without a call. You made beer from grain that I helped grow, yet you gave none to me." His words struck the hall like small stones.

At last the mistress ordered a servant girl to bring him food and beer. But the food was poor: bones without meat, fish heads, old turnip tops, and hard pieces of bread. The beer was worse. When Lemminkäinen looked into the cup, he saw worms, snakes, and lizards moving inside it. He remembered his mother's warning.

He took a hook from his pouch and fished the creatures from the cup. He pulled

out snakes and frogs and dark crawling things, threw them onto the floor, and cut off their heads with his knife. Then he drank the beer. After that he said, “This is not the drink for a good guest. Bring better beer in a larger cup, or kill a great ox for me.”

The master of Pohjola grew angry. “Why did you come here?” he asked. “Who called you?” Lemminkäinen answered, “An invited guest is fine, but an uninvited guest can be finer. Give me beer if you have it. I can pay for what I drink.” Then the master used magic and sang a pool of water onto the floor in front of him.

“There is your drink,” said the master. “Drink from that pool.” Lemminkäinen answered, “I am not a calf or a tailed ox, to drink water from the floor.” Then he sang a great golden-horned bull onto the floor, and the bull drank the pool dry. The master sang a wolf to kill the bull. Lemminkäinen sang a white hare to draw the wolf away.

The master sang a dog to kill the hare. Lemminkäinen sang a squirrel onto the beam to make the dog bark upward. The master sang a marten to catch the squirrel. Lemminkäinen sang a fox to eat the marten. The master sang a hen before the fox. Lemminkäinen sang a hawk, and the hawk seized the hen. Thus their magic fought in animal shapes across the floor.

The master then said, “This feast will not improve while such guests remain. Leave this house and go back to your own land.” Lemminkäinen answered, “A man is not driven from his place by curses.” Then the master took a sword from the wall and called him to a duel. Lemminkäinen agreed, because he would not let his father’s family be shamed.

They measured their swords. The master’s sword was a little longer, so Lemminkäinen told him to strike first. The master struck once, twice, and then a third time, but he missed. His blade hit the beam of the house and broke wood from the roof. Lemminkäinen said, “Why hurt the house? Let us go outside. Blood is better on snow than on a clean floor.”

They went into the yard and spread a cowhide on the ground. Again Lemminkäinen gave the master the first strikes. The master struck again and again, but he did not touch him. Then Lemminkäinen’s own blade flashed with fire. He

told the master that his neck looked red as morning. The master turned his eyes toward his own neck for a moment.

In that moment, Lemminkäinen struck. His sword cut off the master's head, and the head rolled into the yard. Outside stood many stakes with many heads on them, and one stake was empty. Lemminkäinen lifted the head of the master of Pohjola and placed it on that empty stake. Then he returned to the house.

He called for water to wash his hands from the blood of the master. Louhi, the mistress of Pohjola, grew full of anger. She began to sing armed men into being, hundreds and thousands of sword-bearing men, all against Lemminkäinen's head and neck. The day was turning dangerous. It was no longer safe for Ahti to remain in the halls of Pohjola.

#### Part 14: Flight, Hiding, and Failed War

Lemminkäinen saw the danger rising around him. Louhi was singing armed men into the house, and each man seemed ready to strike at his head. The room was no longer a feast hall. It had become a place of death. Lemminkäinen knew that even a brave man should not wait when a whole country was called against him.

He hurried out of the house and went to the yard. He looked for his horse, but he could not find it. He searched among the fences, near the gate, and by the road, but the horse was gone. Then he knew that he must escape by another way. He changed his shape and became an eagle. He rose into the air and flew away from Pohjola.

Louhi did not let him go easily. She changed herself into a strong bird and flew after him. The sky became a road of fear. Lemminkäinen flew before her, and Louhi followed behind him. At last she came near enough to speak. She asked, "Why do you fly away, Ahti? Why do you leave Pohjola so quickly?"

Lemminkäinen answered from the air, "There is no good place for me in Pohjola now. I have killed the master of the house, and men with swords are rising behind me. I must go home while I still have breath." Louhi flew near him and

said, “You will not live easily after this. I will send men to burn your home and cut down your family.”

Lemminkäinen used his skill and flew on. He did not fly straight like a foolish bird. He moved over water and land, through clouds and open sky, until at last he came near his own island. When he reached home, he took his own shape again and went quickly to his mother. His face and voice told her that trouble had followed him.

His mother asked, “Why have you come home like this, my son? Your face is pale, and your eyes are troubled. Have you been beaten in battle? Has your sword failed you?” Lemminkäinen answered, “No sword has beaten me. I struck down the master of Pohjola. But now Louhi has raised a great danger against me. She will send men after my head.”

His mother was deeply afraid, but she did not waste time in tears. She said, “I told you not to go. I warned you many times, but you did not listen. Now you must hide, or you will die. There is one place I know. Long ago, your father hid there during great wars. It is on an island across many seas, a place where few people can find you.”

Lemminkäinen asked where it was. His mother told him about the hidden island. She said it lay beyond nine seas and half of a tenth. It was a place of safety, but he must not behave proudly there. “Do not fight for ten years,” she said. “Do not draw your sword for silver or for gold. Live quietly, and do not bring shame or danger to yourself.”

Lemminkäinen promised with his mouth, though his heart was not quiet. He said, “I will not fight there for ten years. I will keep my sword in its place.” Then he prepared a boat for the journey. His mother gave him food, drink, advice, and sad looks. She knew her son’s nature and feared that even a safe place might become dangerous if he carried pride with him.

He pushed his boat into the water and began to row. The sea was wide before him. He rowed over one sea, then another, then many more. The boat rose and fell on the waves, and white foam moved along its sides. For a long time he saw no familiar shore. At last he came to the island his mother had described.

The island people saw the stranger coming. The women looked from windows, the girls looked from the doors, and the men wondered who he was. Lemminkäinen stepped onto the shore and spoke carefully at first. He asked if there was room for a poor man to live among them. The island people received him, and he began his hidden life there.

At first he remembered his mother's advice. He did not start war. He did not lift his sword. But he was still Lemminkäinen. He was handsome, bold, and full of quick words. Soon he joined the dances, games, and songs of the island. The young women liked him, and he liked their company too much.

Day by day, he forgot the danger behind him. He moved from house to house and from dance to dance. Many women looked kindly at him, and many doors opened to him. But not all people were pleased. The men of the island began to hate him. He had come as a guest, but he had brought unrest into their homes.

At last the anger of the island men grew strong. They began to sharpen their swords and speak together in secret. Lemminkäinen heard enough to understand the danger. Once again he had stayed too long in a place where he should have lived quietly. The island that had saved him was becoming another Pohjola.

He went to his boat and prepared to leave. The women of the island were sad. Some asked why he was going. Some cried by the shore. Lemminkäinen said farewell to the island, to its fields, its trees, its houses, and its young women. His words were warm, but he did not stay. He pushed the boat out into the water and rowed away.

A storm rose on the sea. The wind struck the boat, and the waves lifted it high. Lemminkäinen fought with the water, but the boat broke apart beneath him. He was thrown into the sea and had to swim for his life. He struggled through the waves until he reached a bare piece of shore, cold, tired, and alone.

He found another boat there, or enough pieces to make one. With hard work and strong hands, he got himself across the remaining water. At last he came back to his own land. But when he reached the place where his home had stood, he stopped in pain. The house was gone. The yard was empty. The buildings had been burned.

Lemminkäinen walked through the blackened place. He saw ashes where rooms had been. He saw broken wood and cold stones. He thought of his mother and began to fear the worst. "Poor me," he said. "My mother has been killed. The dear woman who carried me and cared for me is gone."

He searched the ruins and cried out for her. Then he saw a small path leading away into the forest. Hope rose in him. "My mother's foot may have made this path," he thought. He followed it through the trees until he came to a hidden hut. There he found his mother alive.

His heart became lighter at once. His mother told him what had happened. Men from Pohjola had come, burned the house, and destroyed everything. But she had escaped and hidden in the forest. Lemminkäinen was full of anger when he heard this. He forgot the promise to live quietly. He wanted revenge against Pohjola.

"Mother," he said, "do not grieve over the burned house. We can build better rooms from stronger wood. But the people of Pohjola must pay for this. I will go there again and make war." His mother tried to stop him. She had lost her home and nearly lost her son before. But Lemminkäinen's anger was already moving like fire in dry grass.

He wanted a companion for the war. He thought of his old friend Tiera, a man of battle and courage. Lemminkäinen went to Tiera's house and found him with his family. He called to him and said, "Old friend, come with me. Let us go to Pohjola and answer the burning of my home."

Tiera did not hold back. His wife warned him, and others in the house tried to keep him from going. They said it was foolish to leave for war. But Tiera was like Lemminkäinen in spirit. He chose battle over safety. He took his weapons, joined his friend, and the two men made ready to travel by sea.

They pushed their boat into the water and began the journey toward Pohjola. The boat moved well at first. Lemminkäinen and Tiera sat proudly, both thinking of war. They spoke of swords, revenge, and the shame they would bring upon the northern people. But Louhi of Pohjola soon heard that they were coming.

Louhi did not wait for them with open battle. She used magic against them.

She sent a terrible cold over the sea. Ice began to form around the boat. The water grew still and hard. The wind cut their faces, and frost tightened over the waves. Soon the boat could no longer move.

Lemminkäinen saw that the sea itself had become his enemy. He spoke against the frost and tried to drive it away with words. He told it of its birth, of cold places, and of the power that had made it. He ordered it not to freeze human flesh or destroy men without cause. His words were strong, and the frost did not kill them, but it still held the boat.

The two friends were trapped far from their goal. They could not go forward to Pohjola, and they could not return easily. At last they had to leave the boat and continue over the ice. They walked across the frozen sea, hungry and tired. Their proud war journey had become a hard struggle for survival.

They wandered for a long time. Their feet hurt, their strength became small, and their fine plans fell away. There was no battle, no victory, and no revenge. The northern magic had stopped them before they reached the enemy's door. Lemminkäinen had to understand that courage alone was not enough against Pohjola.

At last the two men found their way back toward home. They came through danger, but not in glory. Lemminkäinen returned to his mother again, without revenge and without honor from war. His anger had taken him far, but it had not given him what he wanted.

The song leaves Lemminkäinen there for a time. He is alive, but his pride has brought him danger after danger. He has lost homes, boats, and peace. His mother has saved him more than once, and still he has not learned to live carefully. Now the story turns away from him and moves toward a darker fate, the sorrowful life of Kullervo.

## Part 15: The Birth and Bondage of Kullervo

Now the song turns to a darker story. There were two brothers, Kalervo and Untamo, but peace did not live between them. Their trouble began with small

things, as great anger often does. Untamo set his nets in Kalervo's fishing water, and Kalervo took the fish from them. Untamo became angry, and the first quarrel grew.

After a time, Kalervo sowed oats behind Untamo's house. Untamo's sheep ate the young grain. Then Kalervo's dog attacked the sheep. Again the anger between the brothers grew stronger. Neither man forgot the wrong done to him, and neither man tried to make peace.

At last Untamo decided to destroy Kalervo and all his family. He gathered men with swords, weapons, and sharp tools. They marched against Kalervo's house like a dark cloud coming over the fields. Kalervo's wife looked from the window and wondered if she saw smoke or storm. But it was not smoke and not a cloud. It was Untamo's men coming to war.

Untamo's men killed Kalervo's people and burned the house to ashes. The rooms fell, the yard became empty, and the family was almost gone. Only one woman was left alive. She was Kalervo's wife, and she was carrying a child. Untamo's men took her away to their own house and made her work there as a servant.

After a little time, the child was born. His mother called him Kullervo, but Untamo looked at the baby as the son of an enemy. The child was placed in a cradle and left to rock. But he was not like other children. On the third day, he kicked and struggled so strongly that he broke his cradle, tore his cloths, and freed himself.

People in Untamo's house looked at the child and thought he might become useful. They hoped he would grow into a strong servant, worth many other men. But when Kullervo was only three months old, he spoke words that frightened them. "If I become strong," he said, "I will pay back my father's suffering and my mother's tears."

Untamo heard this and understood the danger. "This child will bring death to my family," he thought. "Kalervo lives again in him." Then the men and women of the house wondered how they could get rid of Kullervo. They decided first to put him into a barrel and throw him into the water.

They pushed the barrel into the waves and left it there. After two or three nights, they went to see if the boy had drowned. But Kullervo had not died. He had broken free and was sitting on the waves with a fishing rod in his hand. He was calmly fishing in the sea, as if the water itself were his floor.

Untamo was troubled, but he tried again. He ordered his servants to gather a great pile of wood. They brought birch, pine, dry logs, and many kinds of burning wood. They set the pile on fire and threw Kullervo into the middle of it. The fire burned for one day, then a second day, and then a third.

When they came to look, Kullervo was not dead. He sat in the ashes up to his knees and in the coals up to his arms. He held a small iron tool and moved the burning coals around. His hair was not burned, and not even one curl had been harmed. Untamo saw that fire could not kill him.

Then Untamo tried a third death. He had Kullervo hanged from a great oak tree. After two or three days, he sent a servant to see if the boy had died. The servant came back with strange news. "Kullervo is not dead," he said. "He is sitting in the tree with a small knife in his hand. The whole tree is full of pictures. He has cut men, swords, and spears into the wood."

Untamo finally grew tired of trying to kill him. He decided to keep Kullervo as a slave and use him for work. He said, "If you live quietly and behave well, you may stay in this house and do a servant's work. Later we will give you your pay. Perhaps you will get a fine belt, or perhaps you will get a blow on the ear."

When Kullervo grew a little bigger, Untamo gave him his first task. He was told to watch a small child, feed the child, wash the cloths, and keep everything in order. But Kullervo was hard, angry, and badly raised. He did not know how to care for the weak. He hurt the child, threw the cloths into the river, and burned the cradle.

Untamo saw that Kullervo could not care for children. He said, "This boy is not fit for such work. I do not know what task to give him." Then he sent Kullervo to clear forest land. Kullervo was pleased at first, because now he had an axe in his hand. He thought, "Now I will be a man. With an axe I will be worth five or six men."

He went to a smith and asked for an axe strong enough for him. The smith made it, and Kullervo sharpened it for a whole day. Then he went into the thick forest and began to cut. He struck good trees and bad trees alike, but after only a few blows he became angry with the work. He cut only a few trees and then cursed the whole clearing.

He stood on a stump, shouted, and whistled through the forest. He said that nothing should grow there again, not grass, not young shoots, not grain, and not strong stems. When Untamo came to see the work, he found the best trees spoiled and no useful clearing made. Again he said, "This boy is not fit for this task."

Untamo then sent Kullervo to build a fence. Kullervo used whole pine trees for fence posts and great fir trees for stakes. He tied them together with long rowan branches. He made a fence without a gate, without a hole, and without a way through. It rose from the earth as if it reached the clouds.

When Untamo came to see it, he could not get over it and could not get through it. He said, "This boy is not fit for fence work. He has made a fence that no one can use." Then he sent Kullervo to thresh grain. But Kullervo beat the grain into dust and broke the straw into useless pieces. Every task given to him turned into loss.

At last Untamo decided that Kullervo was no use to him. "Whatever work I give him, he ruins it," he said. "I will sell him away." So he sold Kullervo to Ilmarinen, the great smith, in Karelia. The price was small and shameful: broken pots, old hooks, worn scythes, and useless pieces of tools. That was the price paid for Kalervo's son.

Kullervo came to Ilmarinen's house as a slave. In the evening he asked the master and mistress what work he should do. "Give the work a name," he said. "Tell me where I must go and what I must do." Ilmarinen's wife looked at the new slave and thought about what task would suit him.

She decided to make him a shepherd. He would take the cattle into the forest and watch them through the day. But she did not send him kindly. She baked bread for him and hid a stone inside the loaf. She put oats below, wheat above, and the hard stone in the middle. Then she covered the outside with fat, so it looked good.

She gave the bread to Kullervo as his food for the day. “Do not eat this before the cattle have gone into the forest,” she said. Kullervo took the bread and did not know what was hidden inside it. The mistress then began to send the cattle out. She spoke many words over them, because cattle were precious, and the forest was full of danger.

She asked God and the Creator to protect the animals from harm. She asked the powers of summer, the daughters of nature, and the women of the forest to watch the herd. She asked that the cows would walk safely through open fields, green woods, birch groves, and soft grass. She asked that they would find sweet food and clean water.

She asked the forest to be kind. She asked the marshes not to take the cattle’s feet and the wet ground not to pull them down. She asked for rich grass, shining hay, and good water from springs and streams. She wished for milk to fill the cows’ bodies and run like small rivers when evening came.

Then she spoke against bears and wolves. She asked the forest king to keep his dogs away from the cattle. She asked that their noses be stopped, their eyes covered, and their ears closed, so they would not smell, see, or hear the moving herd. If that was not enough, she asked Ukko to bind their jaws with strong bands of wood, copper, or iron.

The mistress prayed for every danger to be held back. She wanted the cattle to return in the evening with full bodies and full milk. She wanted no jealous person, no evil power, no wolf, and no bear to take the good things from her herd. Her words were long, strong, and full of care for the cattle.

At last she opened the cattle shed and sent the cows into the summer forest. The animals moved out one by one, with Kullervo behind them. He carried the bread in his bag and drove the herd away from Ilmarinen’s yard. The mistress stayed at home, and Kullervo went into the woods as the new shepherd.

## Part 16: Kullervo’s Revenge Begins

Kullervo drove the cattle deep into the forest. He was still only a slave in

Ilmarinen's house, but his heart was full of old anger. He remembered Untamo, who had destroyed his father's home. He remembered the hard life of a child raised without love. Now he also carried the bread that Ilmarinen's wife had given him, not knowing that a stone lay hidden inside it.

The day grew warm, and the cattle moved slowly through the trees. Kullervo sat down on a grassy place and took out his food. He looked at the loaf and spoke bitterly to himself. "Many cakes are beautiful outside," he said, "but inside they may be rough and poor." Then he took his knife from its cover and began to cut the bread.

The knife struck the stone hidden in the loaf. The blade broke at once. Kullervo stared at the broken knife in his hand, and his heart sank. This was not just a tool to him. It was the only thing left from his father's house, the one piece of love that still belonged to his own family.

He began to cry. "This was my father's knife," he said. "It was my only dear iron, the one thing left from old home and old blood. Now it is broken on the stone in the bread of that evil woman." His grief quickly turned into anger. He thought of Ilmarinen's wife laughing at him in her heart.

A raven cried from the bushes, and its voice seemed to give him dark advice. It said, "Why sit there in sorrow, son of Kalervo? Take a branch from the forest. Drive the cattle into the swamp. Give half to the wolves and half to the bears. Then call the wolves and bears together and drive them home as cattle."

Kullervo listened. The idea entered him like poison. He said, "Wait, evil woman. If I cry for my father's knife today, you will cry for your cows before night." Then he took a juniper branch as a whip. He drove the cows into the wet ground and left them there for wolves and bears.

After that he called the wild animals together. By his magic words, wolves became like cows, and bears became like cattle. He gave them the names of the lost cows and gathered them into a false herd. When the evening came and it was time for milking, he drove the wolves and bears toward Ilmarinen's yard. From a distance, they looked like the mistress's own animals returning from the forest.

Before he reached the house, Kullervo gave the wild herd his final order.

“When the mistress comes to milk you,” he said, “tear her and bite her. Pay her back for the stone she put in my bread.” Then he made a horn from the bone of a cow and another from the horn of an ox. He blew them on the hill and near the lane, so the sound came clearly to the house.

Ilmarinen’s wife heard the horn. For a whole week she had waited for milk, and all summer she had waited for butter. When she heard the sound, she was glad. “Thank God,” she said. “The horn is sounding, and the cattle are coming home.” But she also wondered where the slave had found such a loud horn, because the sound seemed to strike through her ears and head.

Kullervo called from outside, “Your cattle are in the yard. Come and milk them.” Ilmarinen’s wife asked him first to milk the cows himself. She said she was busy with bread and dough. But Kullervo answered sharply, “A good mistress milks her own cows. A lazy mistress sends another person.” His words touched her pride, and she came out with her milk pail.

She looked at the herd and did not see the truth. The backs and sides seemed like cattle, and the evening was growing dim. She sat down to milk the first animal. At once the wolves and bears showed what they were. They attacked her fiercely, as Kullervo had told them to do.

Ilmarinen’s wife cried out in pain and fear. She understood then that this was Kullervo’s revenge. She called him an evil shepherd and asked what she had done to deserve such a terrible end. Kullervo answered, “You did wrong when you baked a stone into my bread. You broke my father’s knife, the only thing left to me from my family.”

The dying woman tried to soften him. She offered him better bread, fresh butter, fine shirts, new clothes, and a kinder place in the house. She said, “Save me now, and you will have good things from me. You will not be treated as before.” But Kullervo did not believe her. His heart was too hard, and his pain was too old.

Then Ilmarinen’s wife called to Ukko in the sky. She asked for help against the wild animals and against the angry slave. But help did not come in time. The wolves and bears killed her in the yard. So the wife of Ilmarinen, the woman who had once been the maiden of Pohjola, died because of the stone hidden in the

bread.

Kullervo knew he could not stay. He had killed the mistress of the house, and Ilmarinen would never forgive him. He took his old path away from the yard and went into the forest. He did not walk like a man going home. He walked like a man followed by his own deed.

In the forest he began to think of where he could go. He could not return to Ilmarinen's house. He did not wish to go back to Untamo, the enemy who had destroyed his family. He had no true home that he knew. The trees stood around him like silent judges, and the road before him seemed empty.

Kullervo spoke to himself in sorrow. "Where shall I go now?" he said. "Shall I hide in the forest? Shall I live in a swamp? Shall I go where no person knows me?" But the thought of his family rose again. He wondered if any of Kalervo's people might still live somewhere under the sky.

As he wandered, he met an old woman of the forest. She asked him why he walked alone and why his face was dark. Kullervo told her that he was Kalervo's son and that he did not know whether his family lived or had all died. The old woman answered, "Your father and mother are not dead. They live far away near the border of Lapland, beside fish waters."

Kullervo's heart moved strangely when he heard this. Hope and fear came together. He asked the way, and the old woman told him how to go. He must walk for several days through forests and marshes, over hills and along water, until he came to a place where smoke rose from a lonely home. There he might find the people who had been lost to him.

Kullervo began the journey at once. He walked through dark woods and over open ground. He crossed wet places and followed narrow paths. At night he slept where he could, and in the morning he rose again. The thought of his father and mother pulled him forward.

At last he came to a house in a lonely place. He went near it with a troubled heart. The people inside looked at him and did not know him at first. He had been taken from them long ago, and many sorrows had passed since then. But when they heard his name and knew he was Kalervo's son, his mother's heart opened.

His mother received him with tears and joy. A child she had thought lost had come back alive. His father was there too, and there were others of the family. Kullervo had found the home he had never known. For a short time, it seemed that his hard road might become softer.

But even in this house, sorrow remained. His mother told him that one daughter was still missing. Long ago the girl had gone into the forest to pick berries and had never returned. The mother had called and called for her, asking, “Where are you, my daughter? Come home.” But only the hills and woods had answered. They had said that the girl would never again return to her mother’s rooms or her father’s shore.

Kullervo listened to this story of the lost sister. He did not yet know what it would mean for him. He had found his parents, but the shadow over his family had not lifted. The house gave him shelter, yet his heart had not learned peace. The song leaves him there for the moment, under his parents’ roof, with old grief waiting quietly beside him.

## Part 17: The Fall of Kullervo

Kullervo stayed for a time in his parents’ house, under the roof he had found so late. But peace did not grow in him. He had been raised badly, with cruelty and anger around him. Even now, when he was among his own blood, he did not know how to live like a good son or a steady man.

His father tried to give him useful work. First he sent Kullervo to row a boat while men worked with a great net. Kullervo took the oar in his hand and asked whether he should row with all his strength or only as much as the work needed. The man at the back of the boat told him to row strongly, because a true rower should use his power.

Kullervo rowed with all his strength. But he did not help the work. He broke the wooden oar rests, cracked the boat parts, and damaged the whole boat. When Kalervo came and saw what had happened, he said, “You are not fit to row. You have broken the boat. Go and work with the net instead.”

Kullervo went to pull and beat the net. Again he asked whether he should work with all his strength or only as much as the task needed. The other worker told him to use his full power. Kullervo did so. He stirred the water into mud, tore the net into pieces, and crushed the fish into useless waste.

Kalervo came again and saw the ruined work. He said, "You are not fit for this either. You have destroyed the net and spoiled the fish. Perhaps you are better on the road. Go and pay the taxes and carry what must be carried." So Kullervo was given a sleigh and sent away with goods and payments.

Kullervo drove out to do the task. He paid what had to be paid and finished the work on the road. Then he climbed back into the sleigh and began to return home. The horse ran well, and the road passed under him. His heart was not peaceful, but for a short time the journey moved without trouble.

As he drove through the fields of Väinö, a young woman came toward him on skis. She had bright hair and moved lightly over the snow. Kullervo stopped the horse and spoke to her. "Come into my sleigh," he said. "Sit here behind me on the warm skins." The young woman answered with anger and wished death on his sleigh. She passed by and left him.

Kullervo struck the horse with the whip and drove on. Later he met another young woman on the open sea ice. Again he stopped and spoke carefully at first. "Come into my sleigh, beautiful one," he said. "Come with me on my road." But she also refused him and cursed his journey. Kullervo drove away again, angry and restless.

A third young woman came toward him in the northern fields. She was bright and well dressed, and Kullervo wanted her at once. He stopped the horse and asked her to come under the warm cover of the sleigh. She refused him harshly and said his sleigh was a cold and hateful place. But Kullervo did not let her go.

He seized her and pulled her into the sleigh against her will. She struggled and told him to release her. She said she would break the sleigh and tear it apart if he kept her there. Kullervo then opened his chest of goods. He showed silver, fine cloth, rich stockings, and belts with shining ends.

The gifts changed the young woman's mind, and her anger became weaker.

Kullervo drove on with her, and they spent the night together under the cover in the sleigh. Morning came, and the light returned to the road. Then the young woman asked, “What family do you come from? Are you from a great house?”

Kullervo answered without pride. “I am not from a great family, and not from a low one either. I am from the middle. I am the unhappy son of Kalervo, a poor and foolish child.” Then he asked her family in return. He did not know that the answer would open the deepest wound of his life.

The young woman said, “I am not from a great family, and not from a low one either. I am from the middle. I am the unhappy daughter of Kalervo, a poor and lost child.” Then she told her story. When she was young, she had gone into the forest to pick berries. She had picked for one day and rested at night, then picked again the next day.

On the third day, she lost the way home. The path led her deeper into the forest, and the road carried her into strange places. She sat down and cried for a day, then for another. On the third day she climbed a high hill and called out, asking if anyone could hear her and bring her home.

Only the woods answered. The hills told her that her voice would not reach home. She tried to die after days of wandering, but even death did not take her then. She lived on, lost and alone, until this road brought her to Kullervo’s sleigh. Now both of them understood the truth. The woman was his lost sister, the daughter their mother had mourned for years.

The sister cried out in horror. She had met her own brother without knowing him. She had been taken into his sleigh, and now shame and pain were too much for her. She rushed away from him and ran toward the river. Before Kullervo could bring back the lost moment, she threw herself into the fierce water and died in the rapids.

Kullervo sat alone in the sleigh. The horse stood before him, and the road home lay behind him, but he felt that no road could lead him back to ordinary life. He had found his sister only to lose her again. He had done wrong before he knew the truth, and now the truth struck him harder than any sword.

He drove home in misery. When he came to the yard, he called to his mother

with bitter words. He wished that she had ended his life when he was a baby, before he could grow into a man of sorrow. His mother came out and asked what terrible news had come. She saw his face and knew that he had returned like a person from the land of death.

Kullervo told her everything. He said, "I came back from paying the taxes. A young woman came onto my road. I took her into my sleigh, and she was my sister, your own child. Now she has gone into the rapids and died." He did not know where to turn his own death. He thought of wolves, bears, whales, and great fish, but none seemed enough for his pain.

His mother tried to save him from himself. "Do not go to the wolf," she said. "Do not go to the bear or the great fish. Finland is wide, and Savo is large. Hide your shame for five or six years, even nine years. Time may bring mercy, and the years may make the sorrow lighter."

But Kullervo would not hide. His shame turned back into anger, and his anger turned toward Untamo. "I will not run away," he said. "I will go to the mouth of death. Untamo still lives. He has not paid for my father's suffering, my mother's tears, and all the pain of my childhood." So he began to prepare for war.

Kullervo sharpened his sword and made his spear ready. His mother warned him again. "Do not go to great war, my poor son," she said. "A man who seeks battle may fall in battle. You may leave on a goat and come back on a dog, if you come back at all." But Kullervo answered that death in battle seemed better than the life he had.

His mother asked, "If you die, what will be left for your father in his old age?" Kullervo answered cruelly that his father could die in the yard. She asked what would be left for his mother, brother, and sister. He gave hard answers for all of them. His heart had become like cold iron, except in one hidden place where his mother still lived.

Before leaving, he said farewell to his father. "Will you cry for me if you hear that I am dead?" he asked. His father said he would not cry. He could have another son, perhaps a better and wiser one. Kullervo answered in the same hard way. He said he would not cry for such a father either.

He asked his brother the same question. His brother said he would not cry, because another brother could be found. Kullervo answered coldly again. Then he asked his sister, and she too said she would not cry if he died. Kullervo spoke to her with the same bitter heart and turned away.

Last of all, he spoke to his mother. "Dear mother," he asked, "will you cry for me if you hear that I am dead and gone from the family?" His mother answered differently from all the others. "Do you not know a mother's heart?" she said. "Of course I will cry. I will cry in the rooms, in the storehouse, in the yard, on the paths, in the fields, and in the dark bathhouse where no one sees me."

Kullervo left home and went toward war. He went with music and noise, as if he were going to a feast instead of death. As he traveled, a message came after him. "Your father has died at home," the messenger said. "Come back and see how he is buried." Kullervo answered, "If he is dead, let him be dead. There is a horse at home to carry him to the grave."

He went on. Another message came and told him that his brother had died. Kullervo gave the same cold answer. Later a third message came and told him that his sister had died. Again he did not turn back. He said there was a mare at home to carry the dead one to the grave.

Then a fourth message came. "Your good mother has died," it said. "The woman who loved you has fallen. Come back and see how the poor people bury her." This time Kullervo stopped. Pain went through him. He said, "Poor me. My mother is dead, the one who made my clothes and cared for me. I was not there when her breath left her."

He wondered if she had died of cold, hunger, or sorrow. He told the people at home to bury her with honor. They should wash her well, wrap her in clean cloth, and lay her in the grave with care. But even then he did not return. His road of revenge had taken hold of him, and he went on toward Untamo.

Kullervo reached the house of Untamo and began his terrible work. He destroyed the people of Untamo's house and burned the rooms. He left no living enemy behind him. The house that had once destroyed Kalervo's family was itself destroyed. Kullervo had taken the revenge he had spoken of since childhood.

After the fighting, he returned toward home. But the road did not bring comfort. When he came to his own yard, he found it silent. No one came to greet him. He looked at the house and knew his mother was not living. He looked at the shore and saw no boat, and he knew his brother was gone. He looked at the paths and the rooms and understood that his family was finished.

Kullervo began to cry. He cried for one day, then for another. “Dear mother,” he said, “why did you leave me here? You cannot hear me now, even if I call with my eyes, my brows, and my whole head.” Then his mother seemed to answer from under the earth. She told him that she had left him the black dog Musti, so he could go into the forest and seek food there.

Kullervo took the dog with him and went into the woods. He walked only a little way before he came to the place where he had met the young woman in the sleigh. It was the place where he had destroyed his own sister’s life without knowing her. The grass and flowers seemed to cry there. No fresh green thing grew properly on that dark place.

Kullervo stood on that ground and looked at his sharp sword. He turned it in his hands and spoke to it as if it could understand. “Sword,” he asked, “would you be willing to eat guilty flesh and drink guilty blood?” The sword seemed to know the mind of the man. It answered, “Why would I not eat guilty flesh? I have eaten innocent flesh too.”

Then Kullervo knew what he would do. He set the sword with its handle in the ground and its point upward. He threw himself onto it and found his death there. That was the death of young Kullervo, the end of the hard-fated man. His life had begun in violence, had grown in cruelty, and had ended in sorrow.

When Väinämöinen later heard that Kullervo was dead, he spoke a serious warning. “People of the future,” he said, “do not raise a child badly. Do not leave a child in the care of cruel people or strangers who hate him. A child raised without care will not easily learn wisdom, even if he grows strong and old.” Thus the dark story of Kullervo came to its end.

Part 18: Ilmarinen’s Second Sorrow

Ilmarinen was now alone in his house. His wife, the maiden of Pohjola, had died through Kullervo's revenge. The rooms that had once been full of wedding joy became quiet and cold. The great smith worked by his fire, but even the sound of the hammer could not fill the empty place beside him.

He cried in the evening, and he cried in the morning. At night he could not sleep well, because sorrow lay beside him like a stone. For one month, then another, he lived with this pain. He remembered the young woman who had come from Pohjola, and the memory stayed with him in the forge, in the room, and on the road.

At last Ilmarinen began to think in a strange way. He was the greatest smith in the world. He had forged the Sampo, and long ago he had even shaped the sky. So he thought, "If I have lost my wife, perhaps I can make another. I will make a woman from gold and silver."

He gathered gold and silver in great amounts. He put the metals into the fire and worked them in the forge. The fire grew hot, and the bellows breathed all day and all night. Ilmarinen ordered the servants to blow harder, because he wanted the metal to soften and take a living shape.

The servants worked for one day, then for another, and then for a third. The fire shone red, and the sparks rose like small stars. At last Ilmarinen looked into the forge. Something was forming there, but it was not yet the woman he wanted.

He saw a strange shape coming from the fire. It had beauty, but it was not true life. Ilmarinen broke the shape and put the gold and silver back into the heat. He did not want a poor image or an empty form. He wanted a wife who could sit beside him and share his house.

Again the servants blew the fire. Again Ilmarinen hammered, turned, shaped, and smoothed the metal. His hands knew every movement of the work. He made the head, the arms, the body, the hair, and the fine parts of the form. Slowly the golden woman became beautiful.

Ilmarinen looked at what he had made. The face shone, and the hair was bright. The body was fair to see, and the form was finer than ordinary work. But she did

not breathe. She did not speak. Her eyes did not answer him.

Still, Ilmarinen hoped. He carried the golden woman into his room and placed her beside him. He thought that perhaps warmth might come to her in the night. He lay beside her under the covers, but soon the cold of gold and silver came against his body. One side of him grew cold and stiff.

In the morning he understood more clearly. Gold could shine, but it could not love. Silver could be shaped, but it could not speak. The woman he had made was beautiful, but she had no heart. She was only metal, cold under his hand.

Ilmarinen did not want to keep her. He thought of taking her to Väinämöinen. Perhaps the old singer would accept such a strange bride. So Ilmarinen brought the golden woman to him and said, "Here is a wife for you. She is made of gold and silver. Take her to your house."

Väinämöinen looked at the golden woman and understood the matter at once. He did not want her. He said, "Why do you bring me this cold image? Gold is cold, and silver gives no warmth. A man cannot live with metal as with a living woman." His words were simple, but they cut deeply into Ilmarinen's hope.

Then Väinämöinen gave a warning to the young men of the future. "Do not seek a woman made of gold," he said. "Do not choose a woman made of silver. Gold shines, but it is cold. Silver is bright, but it gives no life." He wanted people to understand that wealth and beauty without a living heart are empty things.

Ilmarinen heard the warning, but his sorrow did not end. He left the golden woman behind and began to think of Pohjola again. His first wife had come from that northern house. Perhaps Louhi had another daughter. Perhaps he could bring home the younger sister and place her where the dead wife had once sat.

So Ilmarinen harnessed his horse and made his sleigh ready. He climbed into it with a heavy heart and drove toward Pohjola. For one day he traveled, and then for a second day. On the third day, he came into the yard of the northern house.

Louhi came out to meet him. She asked about her daughter, the young woman who had gone to Ilmarinen's house as a bride. "How does my child live with you?" she asked. "How is my dear daughter in her husband's home?" Ilmarinen lowered his head and could not answer with joy.

At last he said, “Do not ask me about your daughter. Death has taken her. She lies in the ground now, and sorrow has covered her.” Then he spoke of the reason he had come. “Give me your other daughter,” he said. “Let the younger sister take the place of the one who died.”

Louhi was angry and full of grief. She said, “I did wrong when I gave you the first one. I gave my child into danger, as if I had put her into the mouth of a wolf or bear. I will not give you another daughter. I will not send her to clean the soot from your forge or suffer in your house.”

Ilmarinen did not accept her refusal. His mouth twisted with anger, and his dark beard moved as he turned his head. He pushed into the house and went under the roof. There he saw the younger daughter of Pohjola. He said, “Come with me. Take your sister’s place. Come to my house to bake sweet bread and make good drink.”

A child on the floor began to sing a warning. The child told the maiden not to trust this suitor’s mouth, his fine words, or his strong steps. The child said that Ilmarinen had already brought ruin to the house once before. The warning was sharp, but it spoke the fear that many in the room felt.

The maiden answered Ilmarinen herself. “I will not go with you,” she said. “You killed the wife you had before. You killed my sister. If I went with you, you might kill me too.” She said she was worthy of a better place than the smoky corner of a smith’s house.

Ilmarinen’s anger grew stronger. He seized the maiden and carried her out. He took her to the sleigh and forced her into it. Then he drove away from Pohjola, one hand on the reins and the other holding the young woman. The road began under the horse’s feet, but there was no joy in that journey.

The maiden cried and struggled. She said, “Let me go. If you do not free me, I will kick your sleigh to pieces.” Ilmarinen answered that his sleigh was built with iron, strong enough to hold even a struggling maiden. She cried again and said she would turn into a fish and go into the sea. Ilmarinen said he would follow her as a pike.

She said she would go into the forest as a small animal and hide in a stone.

Ilmarinen said he would follow her as an otter. She said she would fly into the sky as a bird and hide behind a cloud. Ilmarinen said he would follow her as an eagle. Each time she tried to imagine escape, he answered with another form of pursuit.

They drove on for a while. The horse stopped and moved its ears. The maiden looked up and saw tracks in the snow. She asked what had passed there. Ilmarinen said it was a hare. The maiden sighed and said she would rather follow a hare's tracks than sit in his sleigh.

They drove farther. Again the horse stopped, and the maiden saw more tracks. Ilmarinen said a fox had crossed the road. The maiden said she would rather sit in a fox's sled than under Ilmarinen's cover. Her words cut him, and he bit his lip, but he drove on.

A third time the horse stopped. The maiden saw tracks again, and Ilmarinen said a wolf had passed. She answered that even the wolf's path would be better than this journey. Now Ilmarinen's anger was hard to hold. The road was cold, the girl hated him, and his own heart was dark.

They came at night to a new village. Ilmarinen was tired from the journey and fell into deep sleep. While he slept, another man made the maiden laugh. In the morning, Ilmarinen woke and understood that shame had come upon him. His face changed, and anger rose again.

He thought, "Should I sing this woman into the forest, so she belongs to the trees? Should I sing her into the water, so she belongs to the fish?" Then he thought that the forest would feel sorrow, and the fish would turn away if such a woman came among them. In his anger, he considered using his sword instead.

But the sword seemed to know better than the man. It did not wish to drink a woman's blood. Ilmarinen understood that he had not been made to kill women. His anger changed into another kind of magic. He began to sing.

He sang the maiden into a gull. She was sent to a rock in the sea, to cry against the wind and call on the stones. So the younger daughter of Pohjola did not become his wife. Ilmarinen returned to his sleigh alone, with his head low and his heart heavy.

He drove back toward his own lands. On the road he met Väinämöinen. The

old singer saw his sorrow and asked, “Brother Ilmarinen, why do you come from Pohjola with such a dark face? How does Pohjola live now?” Ilmarinen answered, “Pohjola lives well, because the Sampo is there. It grinds food, goods to sell, and wealth for the house.”

Väinämöinen then asked, “Where is the young woman? Why do you come back without a wife?” Ilmarinen answered, “I sang that woman into a gull. Now she cries on the sea rocks and calls into the wind.” So Ilmarinen’s second search for a wife ended in sorrow and shame, and the thought of the Sampo in Pohjola began to grow stronger in Väinämöinen’s mind.

## Part 19: The Plan to Take the Sampo

When Ilmarinen came back from Pohjola, he told Väinämöinen that the northern land lived well because of the Sampo. The Sampo was grinding in Louhi’s hidden place, behind strong doors and deep locks. One day it ground food, another day it ground things to sell, and a third day it ground wealth for the house. Because of it, Pohjola had ploughing, sowing, growth, and lasting good fortune.

Väinämöinen listened carefully. The thought of the Sampo entered his mind and stayed there. At last he said, “Brother Ilmarinen, let us go to Pohjola and look at the Sampo. Let us bring it away from the dark northern land.” Ilmarinen did not like this plan. He knew how strongly the Sampo was guarded.

The smith said, “The Sampo cannot be taken. It is in a stone hill, inside a copper mountain, behind nine locks. Its roots go deep into the earth. One root is in the ground, one is by the water, and one is in the home hill. It will not come away easily.”

Väinämöinen still did not turn back from the thought. He said, “Then we must make a large boat. We will carry the Sampo from the stone hill and bring it over the water.” Ilmarinen answered that the land road might be safer. He feared the open sea, the wind, and the waves. He said that at sea their fingers might become oars and their hands might become paddles.

Väinämöinen answered that the land road was also hard. It was longer, more

difficult, and full of turns. The sea road was better if they had a good boat. So Väinämöinen sang, and a new boat was made ready. It was strong enough for a great task, and soon the two men prepared to leave.

They pushed the boat onto the water and stepped inside. Väinämöinen sat at the steering place, and Ilmarinen took his place in the boat. The wind filled the sails, and the boat moved over the blue sea. It went past shores, points of land, and wide waters, toward the far north where the Sampo lay hidden.

As they traveled, they came near the home of Lemminkäinen. Lemminkäinen was standing on the shore, and he heard the boat moving over the water. He called out, "Where are you going, old Väinämöinen? Where are you going with Ilmarinen in that fine boat?" Väinämöinen did not hide the truth. He said, "We are going to Pohjola to bring away the Sampo."

Lemminkäinen wanted to join them at once. He said, "Take me with you. When strength is needed, I can be useful. If a man must row, fight, or lift something heavy, I am ready." Väinämöinen let him come. Lemminkäinen stepped into the boat, and the three heroes went forward together.

The boat moved well, but Lemminkäinen was not quiet by nature. He looked at the wooden sides and began to speak as if he were wiser than the others. He said the boat needed side boards and strong places for battle. Väinämöinen told him not to speak too much. A man's mouth could bring trouble before his hand brought help.

Soon they came to a dangerous place in the water. There were rapids and strong waves. The boat moved toward them, and the water roared around the rocks. Lemminkäinen remembered some words for passing rapids. He called to the water and told it to stop rising against the boat. He called to the maidens of the rapids and asked them to smooth the waves.

He asked the stones to lower their heads and the rocks to sink down under the boat. He asked the water people to make a path through the dangerous place. He asked for a soft thread of mist to lie over the waves, so the boat could slide along it safely. His words were bold, and for a while the boat moved through the rapids without breaking.

Väinämöinen guided the boat between rocks and white water. The boat did not strike the stones, and the waves did not fill it. Ilmarinen and Lemminkäinen watched the sides carefully. At last they passed the worst of the rapids and came again to wider water. But then a new trouble came.

Suddenly the boat stopped. It did not move forward, though the water was open. Ilmarinen and Lemminkäinen pushed their paddles into the sea and tried to free it. They pushed and pulled, but the boat stayed still. It was held fast by something under the water.

Väinämöinen said, "Lemminkäinen, look under the boat. See if we are on a stone, a stump, or something else." Lemminkäinen bent over the side and looked into the water. He saw the reason. The boat was not caught on a stone or a tree. It was resting on the shoulders of a huge pike.

Väinämöinen said, "If it is a pike, take your sword and cut it in two." Lemminkäinen drew his sword and struck down into the water. But he leaned too far and fell from the boat into the waves. Ilmarinen caught him by the hair and pulled him back into the boat. The bold man had shown more noise than skill.

Then Ilmarinen drew his own sword and struck at the fish. His sword broke into pieces, and the pike did not seem to feel it. Väinämöinen looked at the two men and spoke sharply. "When real need comes," he said, "your courage runs away, and your skill goes somewhere else." Then he drew his own sword.

Väinämöinen pushed the blade under the boat and into the mouth of the great pike. The sword held fast in the fish's jaws. He pulled with strength and raised the huge fish from the water. The pike broke in two. Its tail sank to the bottom, but its great head came up with the boat.

Now the boat was free again. Väinämöinen guided it to a small rocky island and brought it to shore. The men looked at the head of the pike, which lay there like a strange thing from the deep. Väinämöinen asked who should cut it apart for food. The men and women answered that the hand of the one who caught it should also be the hand that cut it.

So Väinämöinen took out his knife and cut the pike into pieces. He asked the young maidens to cook it for a meal. Many came quickly to help. The fish was

cooked, and the people ate it together on the island. When the meal was finished, bones and teeth lay on the rocks.

Väinämöinen looked at the bones for a long time. He turned them in his hands and thought deeply. Then he said, "What could be made from these teeth and from this wide jawbone, if they came into the hands of a skilled maker?" Ilmarinen answered, "Nothing can be made from empty bones, not even in a great smith's forge."

Väinämöinen did not agree. He saw something that the smith did not see. He said, "A small kantele could be made from these fish bones, if there were someone who knew how to make such a thing." No other maker came forward. So Väinämöinen himself began to make it.

He made the body of the kantele from the jawbone of the great pike. He made the pegs from the pike's teeth. He made the strings from the hair of Hiisi's horse. Slowly the strange instrument took shape in his hands. It was not like any other instrument in the world.

When it was finished, people gathered around it. Young men came, old men came, boys, girls, young women, old women, and people of every kind. They wanted to see the new kantele made from the bones of the fish. Väinämöinen told them to try it. "Let the young play it," he said. "Let the old play it too."

They tried one after another. Young fingers bent over it, and old hands shook above it. But no joy rose from the strings. The sound was rough and empty. It was not music yet. The kantele lay there like a locked door, waiting for the right hand.

Lemminkäinen laughed at the others and spoke proudly. "You foolish boys and foolish girls," he said. "There is no true player among you. Bring the kantele to me. I will show you how it should be played." They placed it before him, and he set his fingers on the strings.

But Lemminkäinen could not make real music either. He turned the kantele, touched it, and tried to play, but the sound did not become joyful. Väinämöinen saw this and understood that no one there could open the voice of the instrument. Then he wondered if the people of Pohjola might do better.

The kantele was sent to Pohjola. Men played it there, women played it, boys

and girls played it, and all kinds of people tried their hands. But the sound was still ugly. The strings twisted, the horsehair cried badly, and the music hurt the ears instead of bringing joy.

An old blind man woke from sleep near the stove and became angry at the noise. He told them to stop. “This sound goes through my ears and head,” he said. “If this instrument cannot bring joy or make people sleep sweetly, throw it into the water, or take it back to the man who made it.”

Then the kantele itself seemed to answer. It said, “I am not ready for the water. I will first be played by the one who made me and the one who has suffered for me.” So they carried it carefully back to Väinämöinen. The fish-bone kantele returned to the hands that had shaped it, and the true music still waited to begin.

## Part 20: The Music and the Theft

The fish-bone kantele came back to Väinämöinen. No young man, old man, woman, or child had been able to make it sing. The people of Pohjola had tried it too, but the sound had been harsh and painful. Now the instrument rested again in the hands of the one who had made it.

Väinämöinen washed his hands and made himself ready. He sat on a stone of joy, on a rock of song, with the kantele across his knees. He placed his fingers on the strings and touched them softly at first. Then he began to play, and the voice of the kantele opened.

The sound was unlike any sound heard before. It was not rough like the playing of the others. It moved gently, then strongly, like water over stones and wind through trees. The strings seemed to speak with many voices at once. The music filled the air, crossed the land, and moved far over the sea.

All people came to listen. Young men stopped their work, and old men lifted their heads. Women smiled at first, then grew quiet. Boys knelt on the ground, and girls stood still at the doors. No one wanted to speak while Väinämöinen played.

The animals of the forest came too. Bears came from their quiet places, wolves came from the dark woods, and small animals left their holes. Birds flew down

from the sky and settled on branches, roofs, fences, and stones. Even the fish in the water came near the shore, lifting their heads toward the sound.

The music reached high places and deep places. The daughters of the air stopped their work and listened. The moon's daughter and the sun's daughter paused in their shining tasks. The whole world seemed to grow still. Even the waves of the sea moved more softly, as if they did not want to break the song.

Väinämöinen played with great skill, but his song was not proud. It was full of old sorrow, deep memory, and quiet joy. The listeners felt things they could not easily name. Some remembered lost homes. Some thought of parents, children, love, death, and the short days of human life.

Tears came to many eyes. Strong men wept without shame. Women wept softly. Old people wept for long years already gone. Young people wept without knowing why. Even the birds seemed to cry in their own way, and the animals stood with wet eyes in the forest shadow.

At last Väinämöinen himself began to weep. His tears were large and bright. They rolled down his face, over his beard, and onto his clothes. From there they fell to the ground and then into the sea. They sank through the water and went down to the dark bottom.

When the song ended, Väinämöinen noticed that his tears had gone into the deep water. He said, "Who will bring back my tears from the sea? They have fallen into the blue water and down into the black mud. Whoever brings them back will receive a fine reward."

The young people tried, but they could not find them. The old people tried in thought, but no human hand could reach so deep. Then a bird came over the water, a blue duck of the sea. Väinämöinen spoke to it and asked it to dive into the deep places.

The duck went down under the water. It searched among dark stones, mud, fish paths, and roots of sea plants. At last it found the tears of Väinämöinen. They were no longer only tears. In the deep sea they had changed into shining pearls.

The duck brought them back and laid them before Väinämöinen. The old singer looked at them and knew that sorrow itself could become beauty. His tears

had changed into treasures. The people wondered at this, and the kantele rested quietly again after its first true music.

After this, the heroes continued their journey to Pohjola. They reached the northern shore and pulled their tar-black boat onto the land. Then they went quickly toward Louhi's house. They did not come as wedding guests now. They came for the Sampo.

Louhi, the mistress of Pohjola, saw them and asked, "What news do you bring? Why have you come here?" Väinämöinen answered plainly. "We have come about the Sampo. We want to share it. Let us divide the good thing, so both Pohjola and Kalevala may have its help."

Louhi refused at once. "A small bird cannot be divided between two men," she said. "A squirrel cannot be divided among three. The Sampo is good here in Pohjola. It grinds well inside the stone hill and the copper mountain. I am its owner, and it will stay with me."

Väinämöinen did not step back. He said, "If you will not give us half of the Sampo, then we will take all of it. We will carry it to our boat and take it away from Pohjola." When Louhi heard this, anger filled her. She called the people of Pohjola together, young men with swords and strong men with weapons, to stand against Väinämöinen.

The hall grew dangerous again. Men lifted swords, and the people of Pohjola gathered around the heroes. But Väinämöinen did not reach first for a sword. He reached for the kantele. He sat down calmly, placed the instrument before him, and began to play.

The music moved through the house like a soft power. The angry men lowered their weapons. The women stopped speaking. The young and the old stood still and listened. Their anger grew weak, and their eyes became heavy.

Väinämöinen played until all the listeners became tired. The people of Pohjola sat, leaned, and then sank into sleep. The young slept, the old slept, the armed men slept, and even the watchers slept. The music had taken their strength without bloodshed.

Then Väinämöinen took sleeping needles from his pouch. He touched the eyes

of the sleepers and closed their lashes more firmly. He set them into a deep sleep that would last for many days. All the family of Pohjola and all the village people lay quiet under the power of his song.

When the house was silent, the heroes went to the place of the Sampo. It was inside the stone hill, in the copper mountain, behind nine locks and a tenth strong bar. Väinämöinen stood before the doors and sang. The gates began to move, and the iron hinges shook.

Ilmarinen then came forward. He greased the locks and hinges with fat, so they would not cry out or make a loud sound. He touched the locks with his fingers and lifted the bars with a tool. One by one the locks opened. The strong doors stood apart, and the hidden place of the Sampo lay before them.

Väinämöinen turned to Lemminkäinen. “My lively friend,” he said, “go and take the Sampo. Pull away the bright-covered thing.” Lemminkäinen was always quick when praise and action were near. He went at once into the deep place and put his arms around the Sampo.

He pulled with his hands, pressed with his knees, and used all the strength in his body. But the Sampo did not move. He boasted as he worked and said that if there was manhood in him, the Sampo would shift under his right foot and heel. Still it did not move, because its roots went nine fathoms deep.

Then they looked for another way. There was a strong ox in Pohjola, wide in body and powerful in its muscles. Its horns were very long, and its head was heavy. They took the ox from the field and brought a plough from the edge of the land. With that ox and plough, they cut the roots of the Sampo.

The roots broke loose from the earth, the water edge, and the home hill. Then the Sampo began to move. Väinämöinen, Ilmarinen, and Lemminkäinen lifted the great thing together and carried it out of the copper mountain. They took it down from the stone hill and brought it to their boat.

They placed the Sampo carefully in the boat. Then they pushed the boat back into the water. The boat splashed into the waves and began to move away from Pohjola. For a moment, the heroes felt joy. They had taken the Sampo from its dark hiding place.

Ilmarinen asked, “Where shall we take the Sampo? Where shall this bright-covered thing live?” Väinämöinen answered, “We will take it to the misty headland and the far island point. There it can live in peace and bring good fortune. There is a small safe place there, untouched by hunger, sword, and war.”

Then Väinämöinen turned the boat away from Pohjola and toward home. He called to the boat and told it to leave the northern land. The sea opened before them, and the stolen Sampo lay inside the boat. The heroes were glad, but the danger was not finished. Behind them, Pohjola still slept, and Louhi would not sleep forever.

## Part 21: The Breaking of the Sampo

Väinämöinen, Ilmarinen, and Lemminkäinen had placed the Sampo in the boat. The people of Pohjola still slept behind them, held by the power of the kantele. The sea opened before the heroes, and the boat moved away from the dark northern shore. For a while, all seemed safe.

Lemminkäinen was full of joy. He was not a man who could keep quiet for long. He said, “Now would be a good time for singing. We have the Sampo, and the sea carries us well.” Väinämöinen answered, “Do not sing yet. It is too early to sing before we are home. Joy is better after the danger is past.”

But Lemminkäinen did not listen well. He opened his mouth and began to sing. His song was not beautiful like Väinämöinen’s music. It was loud, rough, and careless. The sound crossed the water and frightened a crane standing in the wet marsh. The crane cried out with a sharp voice, and that cry flew back to Pohjola.

The cry woke the sleeping people. Louhi, the mistress of Pohjola, opened her eyes and felt at once that something was wrong. She went to the stone hill and the copper mountain. The nine locks were open, the doors stood apart, and the Sampo was gone. Then anger and grief filled her heart.

Louhi called on the powers of the north to stop the thieves. First she sent a thick mist over the sea. The fog came down on the boat and covered everything. For three days the heroes could not see the sky, the water road, or the shore. The

boat moved slowly, as if it were wrapped in wool.

Väinämöinen did not lose courage. He drew his sword and struck at the mist. He cut the heavy fog apart and opened a path through it. The air cleared around the boat, and the sea became visible again. The heroes could see the water, the clouds, and the way forward.

Louhi then sent a second danger. She called Iku-Turso, a terrible being of the sea, to rise from the deep water and stop the boat. The dark creature lifted itself under the waves. The sea swelled, the boat shook, and the men felt the great force beneath them. The Sampo lay heavy in the boat, and the danger pressed close.

Väinämöinen leaned over the side and seized the sea creature. He pulled it up from the water and asked, “Why have you come here? Why do you rise against us from the deep sea?” Iku-Turso trembled and answered that Louhi had sent him. He had come to sink the heroes and send the Sampo back to Pohjola.

Väinämöinen spoke strongly to him. “Go back under the water,” he said. “Do not rise again to harm people without cause.” Iku-Turso promised that he would never again come from the sea to frighten human beings. Then Väinämöinen threw him back into the waves. The dark being sank down, and the boat moved forward again.

Louhi did not stop. She sent a great wind over the water. The storm rose suddenly, and the waves became high and wild. The boat rolled from side to side. The mast creaked, the ropes shook, and water flew over the sides. In the storm, the fish-bone kantele fell from the boat into the sea.

Väinämöinen saw it fall and felt deep sorrow. His music, his joy, and the strange instrument made from the great pike were gone. It sank into the water and disappeared among fish, stones, and the people of the sea. But there was no time to dive after it. The Sampo was still in the boat, and Pohjola was still behind them.

The heroes continued over the water. At last the storm became weaker, but the danger had only changed its face. Louhi gathered the men of Pohjola. She prepared a great war boat and filled it with fighters, rowers, and men with weapons. Then she set out after Väinämöinen, following the path of the stolen Sampo.

The boat of Pohjola came fast over the sea. Its oars struck the water like many

wings, and its front cut the waves. Ilmarinen looked behind them and saw something dark on the horizon. He asked, “Is that a cloud, or is it an island moving on the sea?” Väinämöinen looked carefully and understood the truth.

“It is not a cloud,” he said. “It is not an island. It is the boat of Pohjola, full of men, coming after us.” The heroes rowed harder, but the enemy boat came nearer. Louhi’s anger drove it forward, and the men of Pohjola pulled with all their strength.

Väinämöinen knew they needed more than speed. He took a small piece of fire-making wood and cast it into the sea. Then he spoke words over the water. At once a hidden rock grew there, a dangerous reef under the waves. It stood in the path of Louhi’s boat.

The boat of Pohjola rushed forward and struck the reef. Its wooden ribs cracked, its oars broke, its mast fell into the sea, and its sails dropped into the wind. Louhi ran into the water and tried to lift the broken boat, but it would not rise. The war boat was ruined, and many of its parts were scattered on the waves.

Louhi thought quickly. She would not give up the Sampo. She changed herself into a great eagle. She made claws from scythes and iron tools. She made wings from the sides of the broken boat and a tail from its back part. She placed many armed men under her wings and behind her tail.

Then she rose into the sky as a terrible bird. One wing touched the clouds, and the other swept the water. She flew after Väinämöinen’s boat, and the air grew dark around her. The water mother saw her coming and called to Väinämöinen, “Turn your head. Look behind you. A strange bird is flying from the north.”

Väinämöinen looked back. He saw Louhi coming like a great eagle of war. Soon she reached the boat and landed on the top of the mast. The boat bent under her weight. It leaned to one side, and for a moment it seemed that the whole boat would turn over and throw the Sampo into the sea.

Ilmarinen was afraid and turned his heart to God. He asked for protection, so that no child of a mother would fall from the boat into the water. He prayed for a fiery coat and a strong covering, so he could stand safely in the fight. The danger was now above them, not behind them.

Väinämöinen spoke to Louhi from the boat. “Mistress of Pohjola,” he said, “will you now share the Sampo with us? Will you take part and let us take part, so both lands may live?” Louhi answered with anger. “I will not share the Sampo with you. I will not divide it with you, Väinämöinen.”

Then Louhi reached for the Sampo with her claws. Her sharp iron fingers came down toward the bright-covered treasure. The men under her wings shouted, and the boat shook again. Lemminkäinen struck at the men and cried, “Down with the men, down with the swords!” But Louhi mocked him from the mast.

She said, “Lemminkäinen, you broke your promise to your mother. You said you would not go to war for gold or silver for many years, but here you are in battle again.” Her words were true enough to hurt him, but the fight did not stop. The eagle still held the mast, and the Sampo was close to her claws.

Väinämöinen understood that the moment had come. He pulled an oar from the sea and struck Louhi’s claws. The blow broke most of them. Only one crooked finger remained. The men under her wings fell into the water, and the armed fighters dropped from her tail into the waves.

Louhi herself fell hard onto the boat’s side. With the one finger left to her, she still reached for the Sampo. She caught it enough to pull it from its place, but not enough to hold it safely. The Sampo rolled over the red side of the boat and fell into the middle of the blue sea.

There it broke into pieces. The bright cover was shattered, and the great treasure became many parts. Large pieces sank under the quiet water and down into the dark mud. They stayed in the deep places as treasures for Ahto and the people of the sea. Because of those pieces, the sea would never be without wealth.

Other smaller pieces stayed on the surface. The wind moved them, and the waves carried them. They floated over the wide blue water and came slowly toward land. The sea pushed them forward, and the waves threw them onto the shore.

Väinämöinen saw the waves bringing pieces of the Sampo to the land. His sorrow became joy, because not everything had been lost. He said, “From these pieces will come the seed of lasting fortune. From these will come ploughing,

sowing, and growth of every kind. From these will come the moon's light and the happy sun over the broad fields of Finland."

Louhi heard him and grew bitter. She had lost the full Sampo, and her power had fallen into the sea. Still she threatened him. She said, "I will find other ways to harm your ploughing, your sowing, your cattle, your growth, your moon, and your sun. I will hide the moon in stone and the sun in rock. I will send frost, iron hail, bears, and sickness against your people."

Väinämöinen answered without fear. "You do not hold my fortune in your hand," he said. "God holds the keys of good luck. The Creator, not an angry person, gives safety and growth." Then he turned her threats back upon her. He told her to hide her evils in stone, send frost to her own fields, and drive the bear to the roads of Pohjola.

Louhi saw that she could not win. She said, "My power has fallen. My honor has gone down. My wealth has gone into the sea, and the Sampo is broken in the waves." She left for the north weeping. She could not take the whole Sampo home. She carried only a small piece, the handle or part of the cover, back to Pohjola.

After that, life in Pohjola became poor. The full treasure was gone, and the grinding good fortune was lost. But Väinämöinen went to the shore and gathered the small pieces of the Sampo that the waves had brought. He carried them to the misty headland and the far island point, where they could grow and increase.

He placed them there for future good. He wanted them to become barley beer, rye bread, food, growth, and honor for the land. Then he prayed for his people. He asked the Creator to give them good fortune, a good life, and an honorable death in sweet Finland and beautiful Karelia.

Väinämöinen also asked for protection. He asked that evil thoughts, jealous minds, witches of land and water, bad winds, hard frost, and cruel weather would not harm his people. He asked for an iron fence and a stone castle around his life and around his nation, reaching from earth to heaven and from heaven to earth. So the Sampo was broken, but its pieces still brought hope to the land.

Part 22: New Music and Dark Sickness

After the Sampo was broken, Väinämöinen thought again of music. The land had received pieces of the Sampo, and new hope had come to Kalevala. But his heart still missed the old kantele made from the bones of the great pike. That instrument had fallen into the sea during the storm, and the waves had carried it down to the deep places.

Väinämöinen said to himself, “Now music would be good in these new days. Joy would fit these beautiful yards. But my kantele is gone. My old happiness has fallen into the fish-filled water, among the stones of the sea and the people of Vellamo.” He did not believe Ahto, the lord of the sea, would give it back without effort.

So Väinämöinen went to Ilmarinen, the great smith. “Brother Ilmarinen,” he said, “you have forged many things before. Forge one more thing for me today. Make me an iron rake, with many close teeth and a long handle. With it I will search the waves, the reeds, the sea bottom, and every shore, so I may find my lost kantele.”

Ilmarinen listened and went to his forge. He made an iron rake with a copper handle. The teeth were many and strong, and the handle was very long. Väinämöinen took it and went to the shore, where two boats waited on the rollers. One was old, and one was new.

Väinämöinen spoke to the new boat. “Go into the water,” he said. “Move onto the waves without my hand pushing you and without my thumb touching you.” The boat obeyed. It slid from the rollers into the water. Väinämöinen sat in the back and began to search the sea.

He raked through the waves and through the shore water. He gathered water lilies together and pulled through the broken reeds. He searched the narrow reed beds, the pike holes, the rocks, and every hidden place near the shore. But he did not find the kantele. The old music did not rise from the sea.

At last Väinämöinen turned home with his head low. He said, “The joy made from the pike’s teeth is gone. The sound made from fish bones will not return.” He walked through the fields and along the edge of the forest. As he went, he

heard a birch tree weeping.

Väinämöinen went closer and asked, “Beautiful birch, why are you crying? Green tree, why do you complain? No one is taking you to war. No one is calling you to battle.” The birch answered like a living person, full of sorrow. It said people thought it lived in joy, but truly it lived with fear.

The birch said, “I am poor and empty on this open ground. Other trees wait gladly for summer, but I fear it. In spring, children come with knives and cut my body for sap. In summer, shepherds take my white bark for small things. Girls sit under me and cut my leaves and branches for bath branches.”

The tree spoke of many hurts. Men cut trees for burned fields, chop them into firewood, and come close with axes. Winter was no better than summer. Wind brought pain, and frost brought grief. The wind took its green coat, and the frost took its beautiful dress. Then the poor birch had to stand naked in the cold.

Väinämöinen comforted the tree. “Do not cry, green birch,” he said. “Do not complain, white-barked tree. You will soon have a better life. You will soon cry from joy, not from sorrow.” Then he began to shape the birch into a new instrument. He worked for a whole summer day on the misty headland and the island point.

From the strong birch he made the body of a new kantele. The wood was firm and beautiful. When the body was ready, he wondered where he could get pegs and small turning pieces. Nearby stood an oak tree in the yard. On every branch there was an apple, on every apple a golden wheel, and on every golden wheel a cuckoo.

When the cuckoos sang, gold and silver fell from their mouths onto the bright hill. Väinämöinen took that gold and silver and made the pegs and turning pieces for the kantele. Then he looked at the instrument and said, “Now the body is ready, and the pegs are ready. But five strings are still missing. Where shall I find strings for this lasting joy?”

He went out to seek strings. In a meadow he saw a young maiden sitting by a small stream. She was not crying, but she was not fully happy either. She sang to pass the evening, waiting for the man she loved to come. Väinämöinen came to

her and gently asked for some of her hair.

“Young maiden,” he said, “give me some of your fine hair. I will make it into strings for my kantele, into voices for lasting joy.” The maiden gave him five, six, and then seven fine hairs. Väinämöinen took them carefully and set them onto the instrument. Now the new kantele was complete.

Väinämöinen sat on a stone step and placed the kantele on his knees. He turned the top upward and set the sounds in order. Then he turned it across his lap, put his ten fingers onto the strings, and began to play. The birch wood answered, the cuckoo’s gold answered, and the maiden’s hair began to sing.

The music rose sweetly. Mountains moved, rocks shook, and stones danced in the water. Pine trees showed joy, and old stumps seemed to leap on the heath. Women left their sewing and came running like a river. Men came with hats in their hands, old women came with hands on their cheeks, girls listened with tears in their eyes, and boys knelt on the ground.

Everyone said the same thing. “We have never heard such sweet music before.” The sound traveled through six villages. No living thing could stay away from it. Forest animals crouched on their claws to listen, birds came down to the branches, fish came near the shore, and even small creatures under the earth rose toward the sound.

Väinämöinen played beautifully for a long time. He played at home, and the roof, floor, doors, windows, stove, and pillars all seemed to answer. When he walked among fir trees, the firs bowed and the pines bent toward him. When he moved through groves and fields, the flowers turned, the young branches bent, and the whole land seemed to take part in the joy.

But Louhi, the mistress of Pohjola, heard that Kalevala was living well. She heard that Väinölä was growing strong because of the pieces of the Sampo. This made her bitter with envy. She began to think of what death or suffering she could send against the people of Kalevala.

Louhi prayed to Ukko and asked him to strike Kalevala with iron hail and steel-tipped needles. Then she asked for sickness to kill the people, to cast men into yards and women onto the floors of cattle sheds. Her wish was dark, and the

song turns to a dark birth. Loviatar, the blind daughter of Tuonela, carried terrible children in her body.

Loviatar searched for a place to give birth to them. She went to rocks, springs, rapids, and wild waters, but no place was right. At last a voice from the sky told her to go to a hidden sauna in dark Pohjola. Louhi took her there secretly, heated the sauna, and softened the doors with drink so that no one would hear them move.

In that hidden place, Loviatar gave birth to nine cruel sons in one summer night. Louhi named eight of them with the names of pains and sicknesses. One became stabbing pain, another became sharp breath, another became bone pain, another became wasting sickness. Others became swelling, skin disease, a devouring sickness, and a terrible plague. The ninth child was left without a name, and he became the worst of all.

Louhi sent those evil children toward Kalevala. They came against the people of Väinölä and brought strange sicknesses whose names were not known. The young men became ill, and the people of Kalevala lay in pain. Floors seemed to rot beneath them, and covers grew wet above them. Death began to move near the houses.

Then old Väinämöinen rose to save his people. He did not go with a sword first. He heated the sauna and made the stones ready. He carried water, prepared bath branches, and threw sweet steam over the hot stones. Then he called on God to enter the warm place and bring health and peace.

Väinämöinen spoke against the sicknesses. He said they had no right to eat people without cause or kill them without the Creator's permission. He asked Ukko to come from the clouds and drive away the pains. He asked for a fiery sword to cut evil and send suffering into empty fields, stone cellars, and iron ruins, where stones could bear pain better than human bodies.

He called also to the maiden of pain, who sat on the pain stone beside three rivers. He asked her to gather the pains and throw them into blue stone, deep water, or the bottom of the sea, where no wind touched and no sun shone. He asked Kivutar and Vammatar, the women of pain and wounds, to help make the sickness harmless, so the weak could rest without fear.

Väinämöinen then used healing salves and careful words. He asked Ukko to send honey water and healing rain from the clouds. He said, “I can do nothing unless the Creator allows it. Let God’s hands go where my hands cannot go. Let God’s fingers touch where my fingers cannot reach.” His words were humble, but strong.

By these words and healings, Väinämöinen drove away the cruel sicknesses. He freed the people from pain and saved Kalevala from death. Louhi had sent dark children against the land, but the old singer stood between them and his people. The new kantele had brought joy, and his healing words now brought life back to the houses of Kalevala.

### Part 23: The Bear and the Hidden Lights

Louhi, the mistress of Pohjola, heard that Kalevala had escaped the dark sickness. She heard that Väinämöinen had healed the people and driven away the pains she had sent. This made her angry again. She thought, “I still know another way. I will send the bear from the forest against the cattle of Kalevala.”

So Louhi raised a bear from the deep woods and sent it toward the fields of Väinölä. The bear came to the cattle lands, where horses, cows, and other animals moved in the open places. It was strong, dark, and heavy. If no one stopped it, it would tear the horses, scatter the cows, and bring fear to every cattle shed.

Väinämöinen heard of the danger. He went to Ilmarinen and said, “Brother smith, forge me a new spear. Make it strong and good, with a copper shaft. There is a bear to take, a forest one to bring down. It is harming my horses and threatening my cattle.”

Ilmarinen went to his forge and made the spear. It was neither too long nor too short, but just right for a strong hand. On it he made signs of forest animals, the wolf, the bear, the elk, the foal, and the reindeer. When it was ready, Väinämöinen took it and prepared himself for the forest road.

Snow had fallen a little, soft and new. Väinämöinen looked at the white ground and felt the wish to go into Metsola, the land of the forest. He did not go only with

weapon and strength. He also went with words. He called to Tapio, Mielikki, Tellervo, and the people of the forest, asking them to help him find the bear.

He asked the forest to take him as its own man for the day. He asked Mielikki to tie up the forest dogs, so they would not harm him. Then he spoke gently to the bear itself. “Dear bear, forest apple, honey-paw,” he said, “when you hear me coming, hide your claws in your fur and your teeth in your gums. Do not strike me, and do not rise against me.”

Väinämöinen moved through the forest and listened. Soon he heard his dog barking near the bear’s place. He first thought it sounded almost like a cuckoo singing, but then he knew it was his own good dog. The sound guided him through the trees. At last he came to the place where the bear had made its bed.

There Väinämöinen met the bear. The song does not speak of the killing in a rough way. Väinämöinen thanked God for giving him the forest prize, but he also spoke politely to the bear. “Do not be angry with me,” he said. “I did not truly throw you down. You slipped from a branch, and the rough wood hurt you.”

Then he asked the bear to leave its cold home and come with him. He did not speak to it like a dead enemy. He spoke to it like a high guest who must be led with honor. “Come now, dear one,” he said. “Come from this small forest place to the houses of men. There you will not be treated badly. There you will be given honey and sweet drink.”

Väinämöinen brought the bear from the forest with music and song. The sound came to the house before he arrived. The people inside heard it and asked, “What sound is this? Is it the forest pipe? Is the gold of the forest coming?” They came out to the yard and saw Väinämöinen arriving with the bear.

The people welcomed the bear with respect. They did not call it a simple animal or a low thing. They greeted it as a famous guest, the gold of the forest and the silver of the wild land. They said they had waited for it like people wait for a good year, for summer, or for new snow under skis.

Väinämöinen asked where he should place his guest. The people answered, “Bring our guest under the fine roof. Bring the forest gold into the house. The floor has been swept, the benches are clean, the food and drink are ready, and the

women have put on clean clothes.” So the bear was brought into the house with honor.

Väinämöinen told the women and young people not to be afraid. The bear was no longer dangerous. The cattle would not be frightened, and the small animals would not run wild. He asked that the bear be placed carefully on a wooden board and an iron bench, so its fur could be looked at and its body prepared. Then the feast began.

The bear’s skin was taken and placed in a safe high place. The meat was put into a great copper pot and cooked with salt brought from far away. The tables were set with good dishes, cups, spoons, and knives. When the food was ready, the people placed the forest gift at the head of the long table.

Väinämöinen called also to the forest people. He invited Tapio, Mielikki, Tellervo, and all the house of the forest to come to the feast of their own animal. “There is enough to eat,” he said. “There is enough to drink. Let the forest people come and share this honor.” The bear feast was not only a meal. It was a careful act between people and the forest.

Then the people asked, “Where was the bear born? Did it grow in straw, or in a poor corner of a bathhouse?” Väinämöinen answered, “No. The bear was not born in straw or dust. It was born near the moon, near the sun, on the shoulders of the Great Bear in the sky, among the daughters of the air.”

He told how a maiden of the air walked along the edge of the sky with wool in her hand. She threw the wool and hair into the water, and the wind and waves carried them to a sweet forest shore. Mielikki, mistress of the forest, gathered them from the waves. She placed them in a cradle and rocked them under a green tree.

There the bear grew beautiful. It had short legs, round knees, a broad head, a small nose, and thick fine fur. At first it had no claws and no teeth. Mielikki wished to give it claws and teeth, but only if it promised not to do evil. The bear made that promise before God and the forest mistress.

Mielikki then searched for claws and teeth. She did not find them in rowan trees, junipers, roots, or old stumps. At last she found a silver branch on a pine

and a golden branch on a fir. From those branches she made the bear's claws and teeth. Then she sent the bear into the forest to live its days among marshes, hills, and winter hiding places.

The people asked how the forest had become so willing to give up its own dear animal. Väinämöinen said that the forest had not been forced in anger. Mielikki and Tellervo had guided him, marking the road through the trees and leading him to the bear's place. He said again that the bear had not fallen by a cruel spear. It had slipped from its bed and fallen against branches.

Then Väinämöinen took the bear's teeth and other honored parts. He did this with careful words, asking the bear not to be angry if bones sounded or teeth struck together. After the feast, he carried the bear's head to a high and clean place. He did not throw it into water, marsh, or dirt, where dogs, birds, worms, or ants could trouble it.

He placed it in a noble pine, on a strong branch high above the ground. It was not too high, where wind and cold could damage it, and not too low, where pigs might push it about. There it could be seen with honor by people passing through the forest. The bear had come as danger, but it left as a guest of great respect.

When the bear feast ended, Väinämöinen sang again. He asked God to give such joy in future days too. He asked that the forest horn might sound again and that the pipe of the woods might be heard in the yards of Finland. He wished that young people growing up would still know these songs and these ways.

After this, Väinämöinen played the kantele for a long time. He sang and made music until even the sky heard him. The sound reached the houses of the moon and the windows of the sun. The moon came from its room and sat on a birch branch to listen. The sun came from its strong place and sat in the top of a pine.

Louhi saw her chance. She reached up and caught the moon from the birch branch. Then she took the sun from the pine top. She carried both of them to dark Pohjola. There she hid the moon inside a colored stone and shut the sun inside a steel mountain.

Then Louhi stole fire from the houses of Väinölä. The rooms of Kalevala became dark and cold. The sky itself was dark, and even Ukko in the high heavens

wondered what had happened. There was no moonlight, no sunlight, and no fire in the houses. People suffered, and even the lord of the sky felt the loss.

Ukko walked along the edge of the clouds and searched for the moon and sun. He could not find them. Then he struck fire with a bright sword and made a new spark. He placed the spark in a golden little cradle and gave it to a maiden of the air to rock and care for. He hoped it might become a new moon or a new sun.

The maiden rocked the fire in the golden cradle. But she held it carelessly, and the fire slipped from her fingers. The spark fell through the sky, through many bright covers of heaven, and down toward the earth. It tore holes in the sky as it fell and flashed like a red stone.

Väinämöinen saw the strange fire falling. He called to Ilmarinen and said, “Brother smith, let us go and see what that fire is. Perhaps it is the circle of the moon, or perhaps it is the ball of the sun.” The two men set out together to follow the path of the fallen spark.

Soon they came to a great river, almost like a sea. Väinämöinen built a boat in the forest, and Ilmarinen made oars and paddles. When the boat was ready, they pushed it into the water and rowed along the river. They went around points of land and past wide waters, looking for the place where the fire had fallen.

On the water they met Ilmatar, the old daughter of the air. She asked who they were and where they were going. Väinämöinen answered, “We are sea travelers. I am old Väinämöinen, and this is Ilmarinen the smith. Our fire has gone out, and darkness has covered us. We are looking for the fire that fell from heaven.”

Ilmatar told them that the fire had caused great harm after it fell. It had fallen first into a house and burned people there. It had hurt a child and the child’s mother, and the child had died because death had been written for him. But the mother lived, because she knew words to control fire and send it away.

Väinämöinen asked where the fire had gone after that. Ilmatar said that it had burned lands and marshes, and then fallen into the water of Lake Alue. The lake had boiled under the force of the fire. Fish suffered in the burning water, and the lake rose in terrible waves before it became quiet again.

Then the fire passed from fish to fish. First a whitefish swallowed the spark

and suffered from it. Then another fish swallowed the whitefish. After that, a great pike swallowed the second fish and carried the fire in its belly. The pike swam through the waters, full of pain, and no fish could bring it down.

Väinämöinen and Ilmarinen made a net from linden and juniper and tried to catch the pike. First the women went out with the net, but they pulled it wrongly and caught nothing. Then the men went out and tried in bays, near islands, and around rocky places. Still they could not catch the fish that carried the fire.

The fish in the water wondered if the famous men of Kalevala had died, because no one seemed able to catch the pike. Väinämöinen heard this and answered them. "The men of Kalevala are not dead," he said. "One man may die, but two are born. Better nets and stronger tools will still be made." The fire had not yet returned, but the search for it had truly begun.

#### Part 24: The Return of the Sun and Moon

Väinämöinen and Ilmarinen had learned where the fire had gone. It had fallen from heaven, burned through the world, and at last entered the belly of a great pike. That pike swam deep in Lake Alue, carrying the spark inside it. The houses of Kalevala still needed fire, and the people still lived in darkness. So Väinämöinen began to think of a strong net.

He asked if there was anyone to sow flax, grow it, and make a net with many eyes. A small piece of unburned land was found in the middle of a great marsh, between two old stumps. Under the roots, people found flax seed hidden in the earth. They sowed it in ashes near Lake Alue, in soft clay ground.

The flax grew in one summer night. It was pulled, cleaned, soaked, dried, broken, combed, spun, and woven with great speed. Sisters spun it, brothers wove it, and other family members set the net together. Before long the net was ready. It was wide, strong, and long enough to reach through deep water.

The young people went first with the net, while the old people waited at home and wondered whether the right fish would be caught. They pulled the net through the water in many ways. They caught small fish, bony fish, perch, and other water

creatures. But they did not catch the pike that held the fire.

Then Väinämöinen said to Ilmarinen, “Brother smith, let us go ourselves with the nets.” The two great men went out on the water. They set one end of the net near an island and the other near a meadow point. Väinämöinen lifted and handled the net, while Ilmarinen worked with the oars.

They pulled through the water and caught many fish. There were perch, trout, bream, salmon, and many other kinds. The boat became full of fish from the lake. But the one fish they wanted was still missing. The great pike with the heavenly fire did not come into the net.

Väinämöinen did not stop. He made the net even larger and added more rope to its sides. “Let us go deeper,” he said. “Let us cast the net farther out and try another place.” They carried the net into deeper water and began again. Then Väinämöinen called to the people of the water for help.

He spoke to Vellamo, the mistress of the water, and offered her a fine linen shirt in place of her rough dress of reeds and foam. He called to Ahto, the lord of the waves, and asked him to drive the fish from the deep holes, dark places, and salmon paths into the net. He asked the water powers to bring up the hidden fish from places where no sun shone and no sand moved.

A small man rose from the sea and stood on the water. He asked, “Do you need someone to beat the water and drive the fish?” Väinämöinen answered, “Yes, we need such a helper.” The small man took a long pine from the shore and used it as a great water pole. He struck the water strongly and drove many fish toward the net.

This time the net grew heavy. Väinämöinen felt the pull in his hands and knew that something great had entered it. The men lifted the net into the boat and shook it open. There lay the fish they had sought for a whole week: the gray pike that carried the fire. Väinämöinen guided the boat to land and brought the catch beside a bridge and a red landing place.

The pike was large and dangerous to handle. Väinämöinen wondered whether he should touch it with bare hands, without iron gloves, stone mittens, or copper protection. Then the son of the Sun heard him and spoke. “I can cut open the pike,”

he said, “if only I had my father’s knife.” At once a knife fell from the clouds, with a golden handle and a silver blade.

The son of the Sun took the knife and opened the pike. Inside the pike he found another fish. Inside that fish was a whitefish. Inside the whitefish was a blue ball, and inside the blue ball was a red ball. When the red ball was opened, the small spark of fire was found at last. It was the spark that had fallen from heaven through the high sky.

Väinämöinen thought about how to carry the fire safely to the dark houses. But before he could decide, the spark leaped from the hand of the son of the Sun. It burned Väinämöinen’s beard and hurt Ilmarinen even worse. It burned the smith’s cheeks and hands, then rushed away across the waves of Lake Alue.

The fire ran wild. It jumped into a juniper wood and burned the low trees. It leaped into a fir wood and burned the beautiful firs. Then it went farther still and burned across great stretches of land. It touched the borders of Savo, the sides of Karelia, and part of Pohjola. The small spark had become a fierce danger again.

Väinämöinen followed the path of the fire. He climbed into the wild forest and searched for the place where it had gone. At last he found it under the roots of two stumps, hidden inside a rotten alder. He spoke to it firmly but not cruelly. “Fire, made by God,” he said, “why did you run so far without reason?”

He told the fire where it truly belonged. It should not burn fields, forests, and people. It should live in the stone stove and rest in its coals. By day it should be kept in wooden houses, and by night it should sleep safely under the golden cover of the hearth. Fire was needed, but it had to be held and guided.

Väinämöinen took the spark and placed it in a piece of hard birch fungus. Then he put it into a copper kettle and carried it on birch bark back to the misty headland and the island point. He brought fire to the houses without fire and light to the rooms without light. At last the people of Kalevala had their hearths again.

Ilmarinen, however, had been badly burned. He went into the water and sat on a stone near the shore, suffering from the fire’s anger. He spoke to the fire and asked why it had turned cruel. Then he called for cold help from the north. He asked a cold maiden from Lapland to bring icy water, frozen socks, icy shoes, and

a cold kettle for the burned places.

He called also for a great cold man from Pohjola, carrying ice and frost from snowy mountains. He asked for ice from frozen rivers, frozen lakes, and the cold village of the north. If that was not enough, he called on Ukko above the clouds to send healing ice, cold rain, and good medicine onto the burns. With those words, Ilmarinen cooled the fire's harm and became whole again.

Yet the sun and moon were still missing. Fire had returned to the houses, but the sky remained dark. No sun shone over Väinölä, and no golden moon gave light over Kalevala. The grain suffered from cold, the cattle lived in hard conditions, birds were confused, and people did not know clearly when morning began or when night came.

Young people and old people gathered to think. Maidens and kinswomen spoke together. At last they went to Ilmarinen's forge and said, "Rise, smith. Make us a new moon and a new sun. It is bad to live without moonlight and strange to live without sunlight." Ilmarinen rose and began to work.

He forged a moon from gold and a sun from silver. The hammer rang in the forge, and the fire shone on the metal. Väinämöinen came to the door and asked, "Brother Ilmarinen, what are you making with so much noise?" Ilmarinen answered, "I am making a golden moon and a silver sun to set in the sky."

Väinämöinen shook his head. "You are making useless things," he said. "Gold does not shine as the moon. Silver does not warm as the sun." Ilmarinen finished them anyway. He lifted the golden moon to the top of a fir and the silver sun to the top of a pine. But they gave no true light. The dark sky did not become bright.

Then Väinämöinen decided to ask deeper knowledge. He cut small pieces from alder wood and prepared them for signs. He turned them with his fingers and asked the Creator to make the truth known. "Tell me truly," he said. "Where has the sun gone? Where has the moon disappeared?"

The signs gave a clear answer. The sun and moon were not destroyed. They were hidden in Pohjola, inside a stone hill and a copper mountain. Väinämöinen said, "Then I will go to Pohjola. I will bring out the moon and set the sun free." He began the journey at once.

He walked for one day, then for another. On the third day, he reached the river of Pohjola. He called across the water and asked for a boat. No one brought one. He called again, and a son of Pohjola answered harshly, “No boats are free here. Come across with your fingers as oars and your hands as paddles.”

Väinämöinen understood that no help would come from them. He changed himself into a fish and swam across the river. Soon he reached the shore of Pohjola and walked up into the yard. The men of Pohjola told him to enter the house, and he stepped inside. There men sat drinking, all with swords at their belts and weapons ready for his death.

They asked him why he had come. Väinämöinen answered, “I have strange news about the moon and the sun. Where have you taken our sun? Where has our moon gone?” The men of Pohjola answered proudly, “Your sun and moon are inside a colored stone and an iron rock. They will not come out unless someone releases them.”

Väinämöinen said, “If they will not come out by peace, then let us try swords.” He drew his sword, bright with the light of moon and sun on its blade. The men of Pohjola measured their swords against his. Väinämöinen’s sword was just a little longer, by the height of a grain of barley. Then they went outside to fight.

Väinämöinen struck once and then again. The heads of the men of Pohjola fell like soft turnip tops or flax heads cut in the field. He passed through them and went to seek the hidden moon and sun. His sword had opened the road, but the stone prison still waited.

He came to a green island. On the island stood a beautiful birch, and under the birch was a thick stone. Beneath that stone was rock, with nine doors and many bars. He saw marks on the stone and drew his sword again. With the fiery blade he cut into the rock, and the stone split apart.

Inside the stone he saw snakes drinking beer and worms taking the good drink. Väinämöinen understood why poor housewives had so little beer. The snakes had been stealing it inside the rock. He cut off the heads of the snakes and said, “After this day, snakes shall not drink our beer or take our malt drink.”

Then he tried to open the doors by hand and by the power of words. The doors

would not open. The bars did not care for his song, and the locks did not break under his fingers. Väinämöinen understood that even wisdom and strength were not enough without the right tools. He turned back home with a dark mind, because the moon and sun were still inside the mountain.

Lemminkäinen saw him and spoke with his usual pride. “Why did you not take me with you?” he asked. “The locks would have opened, and the bars would have broken.” Väinämöinen answered, “Locks do not break by boasting. Bars do not open by loud words.” Then he went to Ilmarinen’s forge.

He said, “Brother Ilmarinen, forge tools for me. Make a three-pronged hoe, strong picks, and a great bunch of keys. With them I will free the moon from the stone and the sun from the rock.” Ilmarinen began to work. He forged picks, keys, and other tools of good size, not too large and not too small.

Louhi heard of this work. She knew that danger was coming to her. She changed herself into a hawk and flew across the sea to Ilmarinen’s forge. The smith opened the window and saw the bird there. He asked, “What are you looking for under my window?”

The hawk praised his skill and asked what he was making. Ilmarinen answered, “I am making an iron collar for the old woman of Pohjola. With it she will be tied to the side of a strong mountain.” Louhi understood that her own ruin might be near. Fear entered her heart, and she flew quickly back to Pohjola.

There she released the moon from the stone and freed the sun from the rock. Then she changed herself into a dove and flew again to Ilmarinen’s forge. She came to the door and the threshold. Ilmarinen asked, “Why have you come here, bird?” The dove answered, “I have come with news. The moon has risen from the stone, and the sun has come out of the rock.”

Ilmarinen went outside and looked carefully at the sky. He saw the moon shining and the sun giving light. Then he hurried to Väinämöinen and said, “Old singer, come and look. The moon and sun are back in their old places.” Väinämöinen went out into the yard and lifted his head toward the sky.

He saw the moon and the sun in their proper paths. Joy came into his heart. He greeted the moon for showing its face again and the sun for rising once more. He

asked them to rise every morning after this day, to bring health, success, good fishing, and good fortune. The light had returned to Kalevala, and the dark power of Pohjola had failed again.

## Part 25: Marjatta's Child and Väinämöinen's Farewell

Marjatta was the youngest daughter in her home. She grew up in her father's high house and in her mother's familiar rooms. She was careful, quiet, and pure in all her ways. She would not eat food that seemed unclean to her, and she would not touch animals that had been with males.

Her mother once told her to go and milk the cows. Marjatta refused, because the cows had been near bulls. Her father told her to sit in a horse sleigh, but she would not do that either. Her brother brought a mare, but she still refused. She wanted to keep herself apart from everything that felt impure.

One day Marjatta became a shepherd girl and went out with the sheep. The sheep climbed the hill, and the lambs moved along the high ground. Marjatta walked through open fields and leafy woods while a cuckoo sang in the trees. She sat down on a small hill where berries grew and listened to the bird's bright song.

Then a berry cried out from the hill. It called to Marjatta and asked her to come and pick it before a snail or a worm ate it. Many people had seen the berry, but no one had taken it. Marjatta went closer and saw that it was a strange berry. It was too high to eat from the ground and too low to climb for like fruit on a tree.

She took a stick and knocked the berry down. But the berry did not fall like an ordinary berry. It rose from the ground to her clean shoes, then to her knees, then to her dress, then to her breast, then to her chin and lips. At last it slipped into her mouth, moved over her tongue, and went down into her body.

From that berry, Marjatta became pregnant. For many months she carried the child, and her body grew heavy. Her mother looked at her and wondered what had happened. A small child in the house guessed that the long days with the sheep had changed her, but the truth was stranger than that.

When the time came for the child to be born, Marjatta asked her mother for a

warm room and a safe place. Her mother answered harshly and accused her of shame. Marjatta said, "I have not been with an unmarried man or a married man. I went to pick a berry on the hill. The berry entered me, and from that I carry this child."

Marjatta then asked her father for help. Her father also rejected her. He told her to go away and give birth in a place fit for wild animals. Marjatta answered with dignity. "I am not what you call me," she said. "I will give birth to a great child. He will have power even greater than Väinämöinen's power."

Marjatta did not know where to go. She called her small servant Piltti and sent her to ask for a bathhouse in the village. Piltti ran quickly to the house of Ruotus. Ruotus was eating and drinking like an important man, and his wife walked proudly across the floor. When Piltti asked for a warm place for Marjatta, Ruotus's wife refused with cruel words.

Piltti returned and told Marjatta what had been said. No bathhouse would be given. Marjatta began to cry, but she could not stay where she was. She gathered her clothes in her hands and went, like a poor servant, to a stable in the woods, where horses stood in the cold air.

In her pain she prayed to the Creator. "Come and help me," she said. "Protect me in this hard hour. Do not let me fall under my suffering." Then she spoke to the horse in the stable. She asked it to breathe warm air for her, as if its breath could make a bathhouse steam.

The good horse breathed, and warm air filled the place. Marjatta received the help she needed. There, beside the horse, she gave birth to a small son. She washed him, wrapped him in cloth, took him on her knees, and held him close. The child was dear to her, like a golden apple or a silver staff.

Marjatta hid the child and cared for him quietly. She fed him in her arms and turned him gently in her hands. One day she set him on her knees while she combed her hair. Suddenly the child disappeared from her lap. Marjatta was filled with fear and began to search everywhere.

She searched under the grinding stone, under the sleigh runner, under the sieve, under the water pail, and among wood, grass, and hay. For a whole week she

searched for her little son. She looked on hills, among pines, in heather, under juniper roots, and along branches. Still she could not find him.

As she walked, the Star came toward her. Marjatta bowed and asked, “Star, made by God, do you know where my little son is?” The Star answered, “I might know, but I will not tell. He created me for cold nights, to shine in the dark.” Then the Star went on its way.

Marjatta walked farther, and the Moon came toward her. She bowed and asked, “Moon, made by God, do you know where my little son is?” The Moon answered, “I might know, but I will not tell. He created me to stay awake at night and sleep by day.” Then the Moon also went on.

At last Marjatta came to the Sun. She bowed and asked, “Sun, made by God, do you know where my little son is?” The Sun answered kindly. “Yes, I know where he is. Your little son is in the marsh, held by his belt in the wet ground and by his side in the heath.” Marjatta went there and found the child in the swamp.

The child was brought home, and he grew into a beautiful boy. But no one knew what name should be given to him. His mother called him her flower. Others called him a poor fatherless child. Then people looked for someone to baptize him and give him a proper place among them.

An old man named Virokannas came to baptize the child. But before doing it, he said the child must first be examined and judged. Who could judge him? The people called old Väinämöinen, the lasting singer and wise man. He came to give judgment over Marjatta’s son.

Väinämöinen judged harshly. He said, “If the boy came from a berry and was found in a marsh, he should be put back on the ground or taken to the swamp.” His words were hard and wrong. He did not understand that a new power stood before him. He thought with the old mind of the old world.

Then the small child spoke, though he was only half a month old. He said, “Old man, you have judged badly. You have given a wrong law. You were not taken to the swamp when, as a young man, you gave away Aino, another mother’s child, to save your own life. You were not struck down when young maidens were lost under the waves because of you.”

Everyone heard the child's words. Väinämöinen had no answer that could stand against them. Virokannas then baptized the child and named him king of Karelia, guardian of all power. The child had spoken justice before the old singer, and a new age had begun. Väinämöinen felt anger and shame rise in him.

Väinämöinen went down to the shore of the sea. There he sang one last time. By his song he made a copper boat, a closed boat of shining metal. He sat in the back of it and pushed out onto the open water. Before he left, he spoke to those behind him.

He said, "Let time pass. Let one day go and another come. People will need me again. They will look for me and miss me. They will need someone to make a new Sampo, to make new music, to bring a new moon, and to free a new sun, when there is no moon, no sun, and no joy in the world."

Then old Väinämöinen sailed away in his copper boat. He went toward the upper lands and the lower heavens, beyond the ordinary world of people. He did not return to rule among them. But he left something behind. He left the kantele, the beautiful music of Finland, lasting joy for the people, and great songs for his children.

Now I must also stop my song. Even a horse breathes after a long road. Even iron grows tired after cutting summer grass. Even water slows after running through many bends of a river. So my song too must become quiet after this long evening of singing.

I do not give all my water at once, as no waterfall gives all its water in one moment. I do not give all my skill in one song, as no good singer does that. It is better for me to leave some song in the mind than to break off with nothing left. So I roll up my songs like a ball of thread and place them safely away. They may sleep there until another mouth opens and another tongue moves.

I was not taught in great schools or in the houses of powerful men. I learned at home, under my own roof, near my mother's work and my brother's wood chips. I may have sung badly in places, or too much in places, but I have still opened a road. Now a new path lies ready for greater singers, richer songs, young people rising, and a growing nation.