

**Ivan:** Fyodor, I can't tell you how grateful I am to you for showing me here, but you don't have to come with me.

**Fyodor:** And with all the *(gulp)* excitement?

**Ivan:** It might be safer if you wait outside.

**Fyodor:** Well, you don't have to tell me twice! Thee you thoon, Ivan. Good luck!

*FYODOR exits. IVAN continues towards center. He tiptoes around the sleeping OGRES, then closely examines a spiderweb. He sneezes, and we hear the shrieks of GOGO and DIDI, the wizard's monkey henchmen, as they enter.*

**Gogo and Didi:** Intruders! Intruders! Sound the alarm! Everybody WAKE UP!!!

*The OGRES begin to slowly wake up, yawn, rub their eyes, and stagger to their feet. KOSCHEI enters. He is imposing, hallow faced, and diabolical.*

**Koschei:** Who dares enter the Evil Fortress of Koschei?!

**Ogres:** Bless you.

**Koschei:** Gogo! Didi! Seize the trespasser!

*GOGO and DIDI grab IVAN, and hold him on his knees before KOSCHEI'S throne, where he now sits.*

**Koschei:** Who are you? What are you doing here?

**Ivan:** I am Prince Ivan. I come in search of the Firebird.

*Everyone gasps. KOSCHEI grabs IVAN by his shirt.*

**Koschei:** What do you know of the Firebird? Tell me now!

**Ivan:** Uh... I, um... Well, you see my mom really wanted apple pie for breakfast, so...

**Gogo:** Get to the point!

**Didi:** We haven't got all night!

**Ivan:** Ok! I think it maybe stole some of our golden apples!

*IVAN cringes, not sure what's going to happen next.*

**Koschei:** Release him!

*The monkeys let go of IVAN, and he stands up and dusts himself off. KOSCHEI stands and walks as he speaks. The OGRES begin to fall back to sleep.*

**Koschei:** Do you know who I am, little prince?

**Ivan:** You're the wizard Kosch...

**Koschei:** I am the wizard Koschei!

**Ogres:***(sleepily)* Bless you.

**Koschei:** You must be very brave to come here all alone.

**Ivan:** Actually, my trustly wolf pal Fyodor is just...

**Koschei:** It matters not! I have a proposition for you, boy. You are correct in thinking that the Firebird is mine. Like Gogo, Didi, and the Ogres, she did my bidding, but she was my most prized and beautiful. Unfortunately, she has been taken from me by a terrible witch named Baba Yaga, who holds her prisoner and uses her to gather treasures for her spells. I suspect this is where your golden apples have been going. Gogo! Didi! Summon the Princesses!

**Gogo:** The wizard demands your presense!

**Didi:** Come on, ladies! Let's go!

*PRINCESSES VASILISA, ANYA, SONJA, KATJE, BIANCA, and MARINA enter. They are beautiful, but unemotional. The moment he sees her, IVAN falls in love with VASILISA. Each princess curtsies when she is introduced.*

**Princesses:** You called us, master?

**Koschei:** Yes, my beauties. I'd like you to meet someone. Prince Ivan, may I present Princesses Anya, Sonja, Katje, Bianca, Marina, and Vasilisa.

**Princesses:** Pleased to meet you, sir.

**Ivan:** Uh, likewise, ladies.

**Koschei:** My dear Prince Ivan, I am prepared to make you a most gracious offer. If you can retrieve the Firebird and return her to me, I shall let you choose from my collection of Princesses.

**Ivan:***(pointing to VASILISA)* Her! I pick that one! I mean... I think that would work fine for me.