


ALL ABOUT

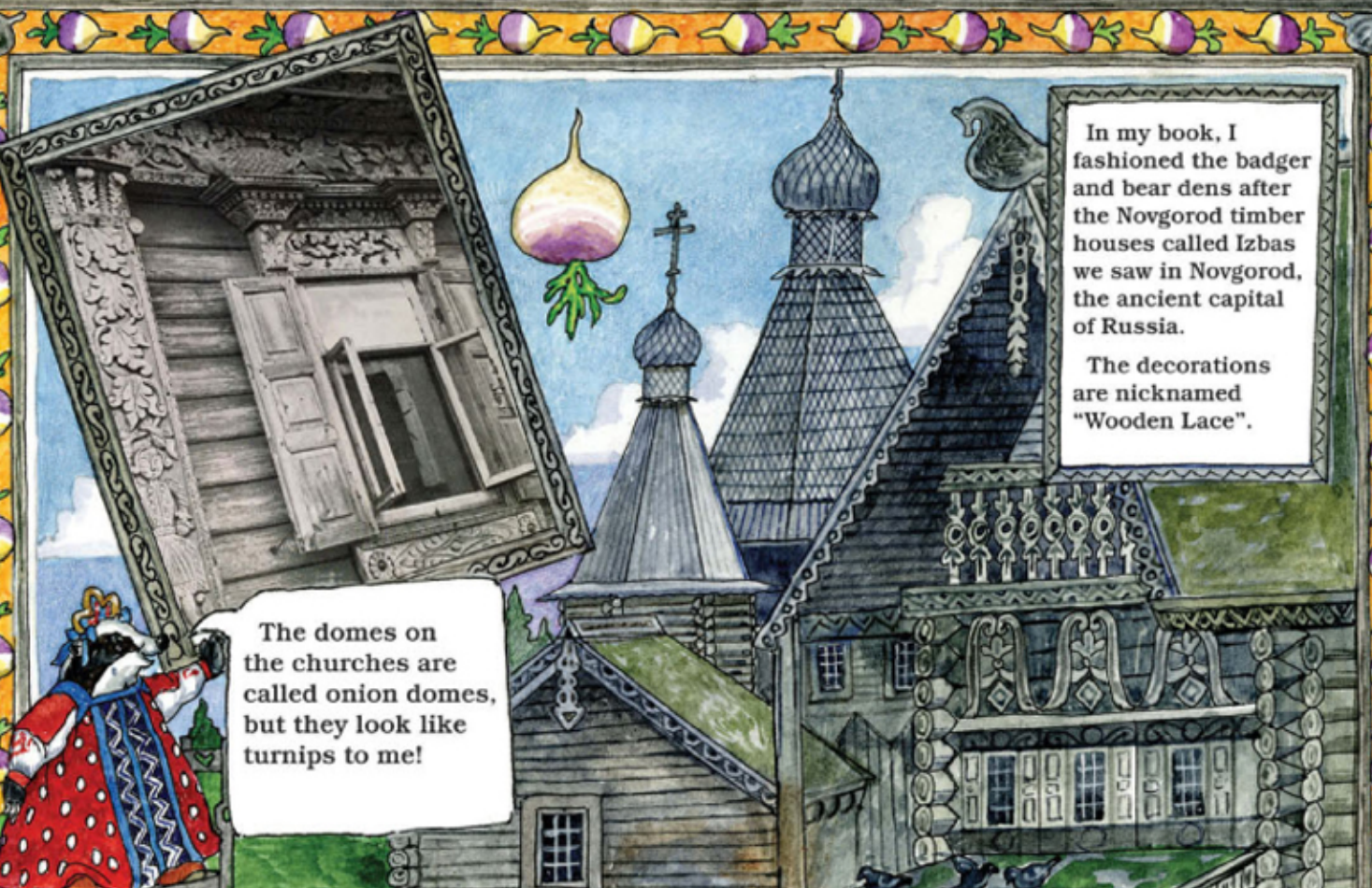
THE

TURNIPI




Hi!! This Russian folktale depends on a tongue-twisting rhyme. I knew I would need to think of a new twist. I fancied that a bear getting ready to hibernate finds the turnip growing in her underground bedroom. She gives it a big kick just as the animals above ground are trying in vain to pull it out. I am holding my favorite book, *War and Peace*, by Leo Tolstoy.

I was inspired when a book friend, Savina, gave me this carved turnip toy from the village of Bogorodskoye.



In my book, I fashioned the badger and bear dens after the Novgorod timber houses called Izbas we saw in Novgorod, the ancient capital of Russia.

The decorations are nicknamed "Wooden Lace".



The domes on the churches are called onion domes, but they look like turnips to me!

The European Badger
meles meles

a member
of the
mustelidae
family



The
American Badger



Taxidea
Taxus

Since The Turnip is set in St. Petersburg, the badgers in my book are European Badgers. In Sweden, on my friend's farm, I saw a badger's den. I embellished it for my book.

The Dutch bantam is a very
old breed found throughout
Europe.



The breed has
many color
varieties.
He is a

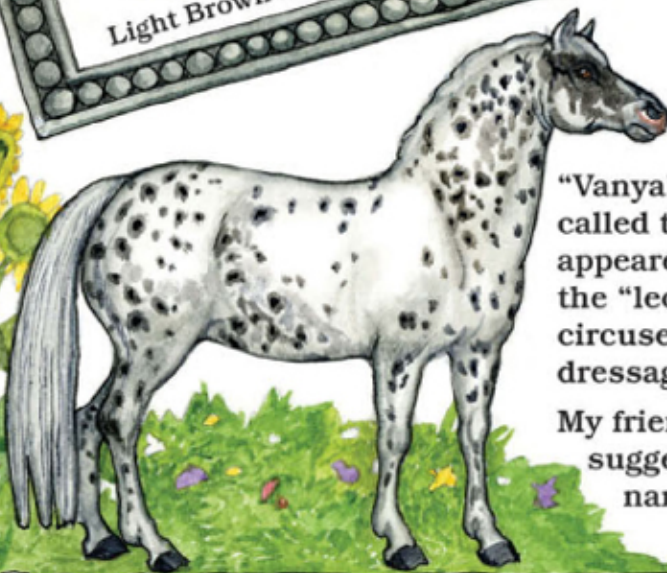
Light Brown Dutch bantam cockerel.

I am holding
Rueben, the
unlikely hero
of my story.



"Vanya" the spotted horse is of a Danish breed called the Knabstrupper. The color pattern appeared in the early 1800's and is caused by the "leopard" gene. The breed was used in circuses but today they make excellent dressage horses and jumpers.

My friend Aza, who was born in Moscow, suggested the name "Vanya", a man's name typically heard in villages.





Copy and use as place cards on your Thanksgiving table.

Turnip Pancakes – serves 4

Grate a medium, mature potato with a grater that carves longish curls.

Grate an equal amount of turnip.

Grate 1/2 a vidalia or yellow onion.

Wrap all in a linen towel and squeeze out the liquid – let rest in towel for 1/2 hour.

In a bowl with the potato, turnip and onion mixture, blend 3 tablespoons flour and 3 well-beaten eggs, adding salt and pepper to taste.

Form into patties 1/4" thick and 3" in diameter.

Take a hot griddle and put in a liberal amount of olive oil and a pat of butter.

Fry the pancakes until golden and crisp on the edges.



When I first thought of making pancakes out of the giant turnip I thought, “Well, a badger might like them”. Then I made some, adapting a recipe for traditional potato pancakes. They were delicious! The turnip caramelizes a bit and makes them taste sweet and savory. I topped them with a rosette of smoked salmon and a dollop of sour cream with a parsley garnish. Applesauce is another tasty addition.



“Lapti” my Bearded Buff-Laced Polish male... similar coloring.



Lapti, traditional Bast shoes of Russia

My favorite thing about The Turnip is the woven birch bark shoes worn by the characters. “Bast” is the inner bark.

I have always loved birch. It is my favorite tree. In Russia you can find beautiful boxes made of layers of birch bark carved into intricate lacy patterns.