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.

In my book, I fashioned the badger and bear dens after the Novgorod timber houses called izhas 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!

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