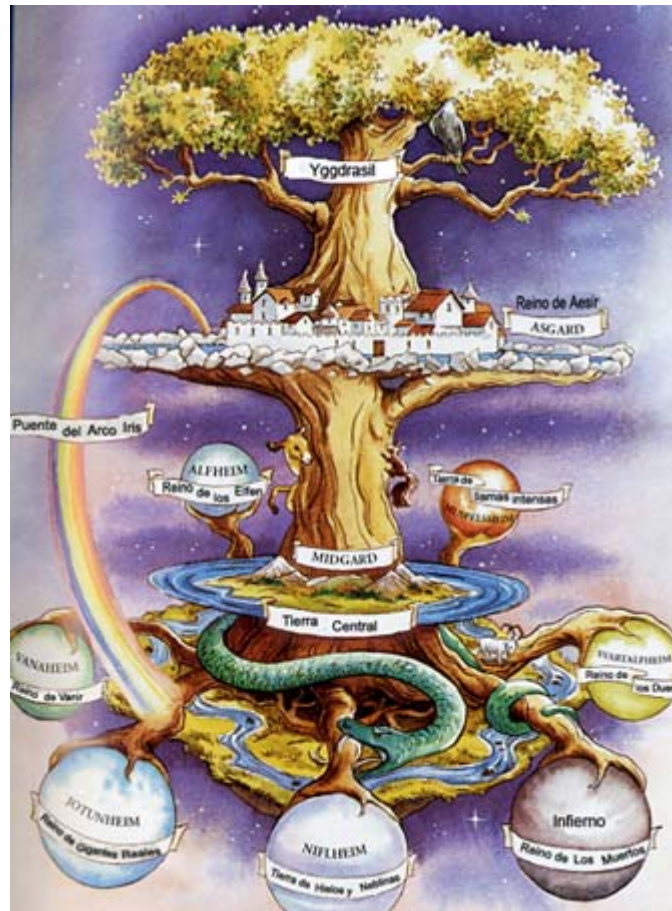


The Kalevala



The **Kalevala** is considered the national epic of [Finland](#), it was compiled and edited by [Elias Lönnrot](#) while he was a district health officer in (then under the governance of Russia) eastern Finland. The poem consists of 50 *runos* or [cantos](#) and 22,795 lines of poetry. The poem tells the story of a people, from the very beginning of the world to the introduction of Christianity.

The Kalevala has been translated into about 48 languages and has been an important cultural inspiration for the [Finnish people](#) for many years.

Cantos 1–10: The first Väinämöinen cycle: Creation of the world; the first man; Väinämöinen's and Joukahainen's encounter; Joukahainen promises his sister's hand to Väinämöinen in exchange for his life; Aino (Joukahainen's sister) walks into the sea; Joukahainen's revenge; the wounded Väinämöinen floats into Pohjola (Northland); Väinämöinen encounters the Maid of the North and

promises the Mistress of the North the Sampo in exchange for her daughter; Väinämöinen tricks the smith Ilmarinen into Pohjola where he forges the Sampo.

Cantos 11–15: The first Lemminkäinen cycle: Lemminkäinen steals the maid Kyllikki of the Island; they make a vow; she forgets her vow; Lemminkäinen travels to Pohjola to propose to the Maid of the North; deeds Lemminkäinen must accomplish: ski for the Demon's elk, bridle the Demon's horse and shoot the Swan of Tuonela (the land of the dead); a herdsman kills Lemminkäinen and throws his body into the River of Tuonela; Lemminkäinen's mother awakens him into life.

Cantos 16–18: The second Väinämöinen cycle: Väinämöinen' travels to Tuonela and to meet Antero Vipunen in order to get spells for boat building and sails to Pohjola; Ilmarinen and Väinämöinen compete for the hand of the Maid of the North.

Cantos 19–25: Ilmarinen's wedding: Ilmarinen accomplishes the needed deeds with the help of the Maid: ploughing the viper-field, quelling of the wolves of Tuonela and catching the pike out of the River of Tuonela; the wedding of Ilmarinen and the Maid of the North. The story of the brewing of the ale.

Cantos 26–30: The second Lemminkäinen cycle: Lemminkäinen is resentful for not having been invited to the wedding; he travels to Pohjola and wins the duel with the Master of Northland; an army is conjured to get back at Lemminkäinen; at his mother's advice he flees to the Island of Refuge; returning home he sees that his house is burned down; he goes to Pohjola with his companion Tiera to get revenge but the Mistress of the North freezes the seas and Lemminkäinen has to return home.

Cantos 31–36: The Kullervo cycle: Untamo kills his brother Kalervo's people except for the wife who begets Kullervo; Untamo gives Kullervo several tasks but he sabotages them all; Kullervo is sold as a slave to Ilmarinen; after being tormented by Ilmarinen's wife, he exacts revenge and the wife gets killed; Kullervo runs away and finds his family unharmed near Lapland; Kullervo seduces a maiden and later finds out she is his sister; Kullervo destroys Untamola (the realm of Untamo) and upon returning home finds everyone killed; Kullervo kills himself.

Cantos 37–38: The second Ilmarinen cycle: Ilmarinen forges himself a wife out of gold and silver but finds her to be cold and discards her; Ilmarinen then robs the sister of the Maid of the North from Pohjola; she insults him so he discards her; Ilmarinen tells Väinämöinen of the carefree life of Pohjola because of the Sampo.

Cantos 39–44: The plunder of the Sampo (third Väinämöinen cycle): Väinämöinen, Ilmarinen and Lemminkäinen sail to get the Sampo; they kill a great pike out of whose jaw bone the first kantele is made; Väinämöinen lulls everyone in the hall of Pohjola to sleep with his singing and the Sampo is stolen; the Mistress of the Northland conjures a great army, turns herself into an eagle and fights for the Sampo; the Sampo falls into the sea.

Cantos 45–49: Louhi's revenge on Kalevala: The Mistress of the North sends the people of Kaleva diseases and a bear to kill their cattle; she hides the sun and the moon and steals fire from Kaleva; Väinämöinen and Ilmarinen restore fire and Väinämöinen forces the Mistress to return the Sun and the Moon to the skies.

Canto 50: The Marjatta cycle: Marjatta gets impregnated from a berry she ate and begets a son, an allusion to Mary and Jesus Christ; Väinämöinen orders the killing of the boy; the boy starts to speak and reproaches Väinämöinen for ill judgement; he is then baptised king of Karelia; Väinämöinen sails away.

Runos 1 – 10: The first Väinämöinen cycle

After a brief introduction to the poem and story by the singers in poetic form the poem proper begins.

Runo I. - Birth of Väinämöinen.

Ilmatar (The daughter of the air) descends to the sea and is fertilised, she becomes the Water-mother, she gestates for centuries to no avail and laments her lot.

Time passes, and a teal floats over the water seeking a place to rest and make her nest. She sees the knee of the Water-mother rising above the waves and--confusing it for a grassy hill--decides to make her nest there. On the third day the Water-mother feels her knee is too hot and fears it is burning, she twitches her leg and the eggs fall into the water, crashing into fragments.

The fragments of the eggs grow into the earth and heavens and sun and moon and stars and the final pieces into the clouds.

Within the Water-mother's womb, Väinämöinen is growing and turning. He laments his situation and prays to the gods to release him from his dark prison, when the gods failed to give him freedom he forces his way into the world, he slips into the sea and floats for nine years until he hits ground, he turns himself over on this new land and beholds the moon and stars and sun for the first time.

Runo II. - Väinämöinen's Sowing.

Väinämöinen summons Sampsa Pellervoinen (the architect of the forests) to sow the land with trees, he sows many trees and in time they grow and flourish, however the oak will not grow.

The water giant Iku-Turso rises and burns a haystack, in the ashes he plants an acorn and it begins to grow. It grows taller than any other tree in the land, it grows up to heaven and blocks out the sun and moon. Väinämöinen calls the Water-mother to send him someone who can fell the great tree, presently a man appears from the water, clad in copper from head to toe, a man no taller than a man's thumb. Väinämöinen mocks the man, but the man grows so large his head in among the clouds, he swings his great copper axe and the great oak is felled on the third stroke.

The remains of the great oak tree bring great things to those who lay claim to it and all is well, forests grow well and the birds and woodland creatures thrive, however Väinämöinen notices his grains do not grow, he fells the forests, however he leaves a birch tree for the birds to rest upon, the eagle is grateful for this so he strikes up fire and burns the wood of the felled forest.

Väinämöinen takes his seeds once more and sows the land, in a matter of days the seeds are growing and the land is filled, Väinämöinen beholds the beauty of his fertile land, a Cuckoo comes and sings in joy.

Runo III. - Väinämöinen and Joukahainen.

The Lapland youth Joukahainen believes he can sing better songs than Väinämöinen, he informs his family he will defeat Väinämöinen in a battle of knowledge and song, his mother and father forbid him from such an unwise endeavour, but Joukahainen is young and arrogant and he does not listen. He sets out to do battle, and rides for three days solid, during the third day he and Väinämöinen collide, smashing both their sledges and causing a great mess.

A contest of knowledge ensues, Väinämöinen is not impressed with Joukahainen's primitive and childish knowledge and warns him to yield but the youth does not and he proceeds to lie about his achievements, this annoys Väinämöinen, young Joukahainen then challenges Väinämöinen to battle with blades, he informs him that he is not afraid of his childish threats and Joukahainen then begins to throw insults at Väinämöinen, this greatly angers the old wizard and he begins to sing, he sings Joukahainen's possessions into nature and the youth himself into the earth all the way to his shoulders.

Joukahainen panics, he offers all of his material possessions to Väinämöinen but the old man is not interested, then Joukahainen offers his sister Aino, as his wife, Väinämöinen grows joyful and reverses his song-spell and releases the young Joukahainen from the earth.

“ Glad of heart is Väinämöinen,
Full of joy the ancient minstrel,

That he thus has fought and won him

For his age a lovely maiden,

Sister of this Joukahainen.

So he seeks a place befitting,

Where to publish forth his pleasure,

Steps upon the rock of joyance,

On the stone of music seats him,

Sings a moment, sings and ceases,

Sings a second, then a third time,

So to turn away the magic,

So the potent spell to banish.

Now at last comes Joukahainen

Crawling from his oozy prison,

Lifts his knees from out the water,
Beard from out the bog and litter;
From the rock starts forth his stallion,
From the bramble glides his snow-sledge,
And from out the sedge his birch-rod.
”

Joukahainen returns to his home and weeps to his mother as he tells her the tale and his offer to Väinämöinen, his mother tells him not to sob, Aino overhears and weeps uncontrollably, her mother tries to comfort her but to no avail and Aino weeps for a long time.

Runo IV. - The Fate of Aino.

Aino goes to the forest to gather twigs and birch branches and meets with Väinämöinen, he asks her to be his and his alone and she responds with contempt, tearing her jewels and bangles from her person stating that she would rather wear the garb of a simple farm girl than be married to him, she runs home weeping.

When she arrives home she receives little sympathy from her father, brother or sister and when she goes for consolation to her mother she tells her to stop weeping and to prepare for married life. Aino's mother tells her of her younger life when she was a virgin bride and tries to instruct her in married life, but Aino does not want to listen, instead she goes away weeping. Aino weeps for days, her mother once again tries to console her.

Aino wanders to the storehouse and dresses in the finest clothes and jewels, she wanders through the countryside bewailing her lot, singing as she walks. She comes to a bay and over the water sees three maidens washing, she feels she should join them and throws her fine garments on the harsh rocks of the bay and proceeds to swim towards the rocky outcrop where the maidens are located. She reaches the rocky island and it sinks beneath her taking her form and soul with it.

A hare sets out from the waters edge to take the message of her death to her family. When her mother hears the tragic news she bitterly laments:

“ Never, O unhappy mothers,
Never while your life endureth,
Never may you urge your daughters,
Or attempt to force your children
To a marriage that repels them,
Like myself, O wretched mother,
Urging vainly thus my daughter,

Thus my little dove I fostered.

„

She then weeps for days, her tears forming three large rivers.

Runo V. - Väinämöinen's Fishing.

Väinämöinen hears of Aino's death and laments throughout the days and nights, he prepares his boat and fishing tackle and sets out to the water. He catches a fish and draws it into his boat, he is amazed at the fish as it is unlike any fish he's ever seen before, he prepares to cut the fish and it slips from his fingers.

The fish addresses him disdainfully, telling him that she is Aino in fish form come to be his companion and not to be cut to pieces, she leaves and tells him that he will never see her again. Väinämöinen tries to capture her again, he weaves a net and dredges the water but does not find the Aino-fish.

Väinämöinen laments heavily at his stupidity and rashness, he calls to his long dead mother who advises him that he should seek a bride in Pohjola, a worthy bride of fair complexion and bright eyes.

Runo VI. - Joukahainen's Crossbow.

Väinämöinen sets out upon his journey to Pohja. Joukahainen however had not forgotten his loss in the singing competition and the loss of his sister and his humiliation, he held a deep rage against Väinämöinen and plotted to kill him, he created a frightening crossbow, its string the hair from the Elk of Hiisi itself.

Joukahainen waits for Väinämöinen to pass by, he waits for a long time and one day he spies something on the horizon, confusing it for a cloud at first he soon realises it is the ancient wizard himself. He prepares his weapon, his mother asks him for whom he is preparing his mighty crossbow, when he tells her she pleads for him to reconsider, should Väinämöinen die the world will be plunged into sadness and stillness and the magical music will only be heard in the realms of Tuonela.

Joukahainen does not heed his mothers pleas, he prepares his first arrow and shoots high, his second arrow shoots low and the third while not hitting Väinämöinen himself, hits his horse in the chest, plunging Väinämöinen into the rushing waters.

Runo VII. - Väinämöinen Meets Louhi.

Väinämöinen drifts on the roaring sea for eight days, his body beaten and battered. On the eighth day an eagle from Lapland flies overhead and--remembering the great favour Väinämöinen did by leaving the birch tree--lifts him high and carries him to the dry land in Pohjola.

Väinämöinen weeps for three days but a young girl hears his weeping and goes to fetch Louhi, the hostess of Pohjola. She meets with him and questions who he is and where he is from, although she seems to already know. She offers to return him to his homeland in return for him forging the magical mill, Sampo, he informs her that although he cannot do it, he will get the great smith Ilmarinen--the forger of the sky dome itself--to do it.

Louhi promises her eldest and most magnificent maiden daughter to Ilmarinen if he forges a Sampo and she gives Väinämöinen a horse and sledge to get home, but warns him not to look skyward until he is home. Väinämöinen departs Pohjola.

Runo VIII. - Väinämöinen's wound.

Väinämöinen is speeding along on his journey when he hears something curious above his head and against the advice of Louhi he looks up and sees an enormous rainbow with a beautiful maiden at the end of it. He invites her to come to his sledge and be his wife. She acts coy and tells him she will come with him if he succeeds in numerous challenges the final and greatest being the creation and launching of a boat without touching or interfering with it. He works hard on the creation of the boat, for three days, on the third day Hiisi turns his axe head to Väinämöinen's knee and cleaves a mighty wound into the old wizard's knee.

Väinämöinen tries in vain to quell the bleeding, he rides hard along the road to find someone who can close his wound and stop his blood flowing, however nobody is capable, until he finds an old man in a small dwelling who says he is capable.

Runo IX. - The Origin of Iron.

The old man greets Väinämöinen and asks him, in amazement of the enormous loss of blood, who he is. He informs Väinämöinen that he can heal him, but he cannot quite remember the origin of iron, if he knew then the wound could be closed and the flow of blood stopped.

Väinämöinen proceeds to tell of the origin of Iron, of the great daughters of creation and the breast milk spilled over the land which created streams of iron throughout the world. He tells of fire and fire's desire to consume iron and of the birth of the ancient smith Ilmarinen. Ilmarinen comforts the iron telling it that it will become beautiful when combined with fire. Väinämöinen tells of Ilmarinen's struggle to find the tempering agent and of the evil Hiisi's poisoning of the iron with venoms and acids causing the iron to grow bitter and evil, and to shout to its relatives to cut and slice flesh and blood in revenge of this poisoning.

Now the old man knew the origin of iron he could help Väinämöinen. He directs his young son to make an ointment to salve the wound. The boy gathers oak branches, grasses and herbs and boils the ointment for many days. After the ointment is prepared he tests it on an aspen tree and broken stones and then returns to the old man.

The old man applies the ointment to Väinämöinen who struggles and thrashes in suffering, but the old man banishes the pain to the pain hill, he applies silken bandages to the wound. The old man informs Väinämöinen that it is the creator not himself doing the healing.

Runo X. - Ilmarinen Forges the Sampo.

Väinämöinen returns home and goes to the forge of Ilmarinen, he tells the smith of his ordeal and asks him to go to Pohjola to marry the maiden in exchange for the forging of the Sampo. Ilmarinen says he will never go to the Northland. Väinämöinen tells Ilmarinen that there are many wonders he must see, he tells him of a giant fir tree in the Osmo fields with the Great Bear living in its branches, which Väinämöinen himself conjured up on his way home.

Väinämöinen and Ilmarinen both go together to see the giant tree, Ilmarinen climbs the tree and Väinämöinen sings up a giant storm which carries Ilmarinen off to Pohjola.

Ilmarinen meets Louhi, she asks him if he will forge the Sampo, she brings her daughter dressed in finest garments and jewels and offers her in exchange for the forging of the Sampo. Ilmarinen accepts and begins work on creating his forge.

After the forge is created and the work begins, Ilmarinen works ceaselessly for four days and nights but nothing comes of his efforts but beautiful trinkets. He calls the wind to blow, to work his bellows, a wind blows from all direction, it blew for three days and at the end of the third day Ilmarinen checks his furnace and sees the wonderful Sampo forming, he works it with his hammer and anvil and finally completes the Sampo.

The Sampo grinds all day, it grinds vats of grain, salt and gold one each for eating, for storing and for trading. Louhi grows delighted and takes the Sampo to the mountain of copper and locks it away behind nine heavy locks.

Ilmarinen's task now completed, he goes to the daughter of Louhi and asks her to come with him. She tells him she cannot leave home yet. Ilmarinen becomes downhearted. He is consulted by Louhi who prepares him food and drink then sends him home.

[edit] Runos 11 – 15: The first Lemminkäinen cycle
Runo XI. - Lemminkäinen and Kyllikki.

Lemminkäinen was a handsome man, ruddy cheeked and tall but he was a reckless man, fond of maidens and fighting. He desires the Flower of Saari, Kyllikki, the one desired by the sun and moon and stars themselves. The young Lemminkäinen tells his mother about his journey to woo the maiden, his mother tries to dissuade him, she tells him he will be mocked and humiliated but Lemminkäinen does not listen.

Lemminkäinen sets out to the village where Kyllikki resides and as foretold by his mother the men of the village mock him and the women tease him. He takes employment as a herdsman and gains the favour of the maidens of the village, however he still desires the favours of Kyllikki, she mocks him and refuses his advances. One day the maidens were dancing and rejoicing and at the head was Kyllikki, this is when Lemminkäinen took his chance, he stole the fair Kyllikki away and drove away on her sledge. He shouts to the assembled maidens to never speak a word or he will come back and crush the village and destroy the young men.

Kyllikki protests heavily and tells Lemminkäinen that she has lost her life to a vicious warrior soul. Lemminkäinen then promises to never ride to war again if Kyllikki will promise never to go to the village and dance with the village men, to this she agrees and they return to Lemminkäinen's home.

Runo XII. - Kyllikki's Broken Vow.

Lemminkäinen and Kyllikki lived happily for a while until one day Lemminkäinen did not return from fishing as soon as he should. Kyllikki, growing bored decided to visit the village and dance with the men of the village. Ainikki, Lemminkäinen's sister spies Kyllikki and informs young Lemminkäinen of his gadabout wife.

Lemminkäinen is furious, he decides to leave for Pohjola, to win the maiden of the north's heart, he prepares for battle. His mother and Kyllikki try and dissuade him, they tell him of the dangers that face him and of the happiness he has at home, but he does not listen, his mother warns him he will be enchanted and killed but he does not listen. Lemminkäinen throws his hair brush down and warns his mother to look out for it because when blood flows from it he has met with his doom.

Lemminkäinen leaves his happy home and the love of his mother and his beautiful wife and sets out for battle. He rides for days and finally approaches his destination, he casts a spell to Hiisi to silence the dogs of Pohjola and proceeds to enchant all the men of Pohjola out of the homestead, he only neglects to enchant one wretched herdsman Märkähattu as he feels it would be a waste of his efforts.

Runo XIII. - The Elk of Hiisi.

Lemminkäinen full of bravado seeks the mistress of Pohjola, Louhi and demands her daughter. Louhi tells him that in order to woo her daughters he must first prove his worth by hunting the elk of Hiisi on skis. Lemminkäinen accepts and prepares for the hunt, he quickly makes his way to the workshop of Lyylikki the famous ski maker and asks him to make the finest skis for his task.

Lemminkäinen then sets out on his journey, he chases the elk wherever it goes, he catches it and pens it on a pen of oak but the elk grows angry and breaks free, Lemminkäinen makes chase once more but he breaks his left ski in a hole and the right against the ground, and loses the elk, he laments his hubris and arrogance and vows never to chase the elk of Hiisi on skis again for it will only lead to the loss of good skis and fine poles.

Runo XIV. - Lemminkäinen's Trials and Death.

Lemminkäinen thinks about his options, he chooses to continue the hunt, he calls to the great god Ukko and to Tapio and his household and with their guidance and support he finally captures the elk of Hiisi and returns it to Pohjola.

Louhi receives the elk and tasks Lemminkäinen with capturing and bridling the Hiisi gelding. Lemminkäinen takes a golden bridle and silver halter and leaves to find the gelding, he searches for three days and on the third day finds the grand courser on the sand with fiery mane and smoking nostrils. Lemminkäinen prays to Ukko and hail falls down on the back of the horse allowing him to bridle the gelding, mount it and return it to Louhi.

"I have reigned the mighty courser, Brought the foal of Hiisi bridled," Louhi tasks Lemminkäinen again, this time he has to shoot the black swan of Tuonela. Lemminkäinen sets off, crossbow in hand to complete this latest task. He reaches the river of Tuoni, little did he know that the snubbed herdsman, Märkähattu, was waiting for his return, he conjured up a sea serpent which tore through Lemminkäinen's body and he falls down to the ground and dies. Märkähattu approaches the body and pushes it into the river where it is cut into pieces by the son of Tuoni.

Runo XV. - Lemminkäinen's Restoration.

Kyllikki notices the comb of Lemminkäinen is oozing blood and shortly after so does his mother and she breaks down weeping. Sharply Lemminkäinen's mother sets off to Pohjola, when she arrives she demands of Louhi the location of her son, Louhi proceeds to tell her several lies, each time Lemminkäinen's mother replies with anger until Louhi tells her the truth.

Presently the aged mother goes in search of her sons body, she asks the trees, the path and the moon but none can help until she asks the sun, the sun tells her that he perished on the banks of the Tuoni river. She hastens to the forge of Ilmarinen and gets him to build her a giant rake of copper and steel. Lemminkäinen's mother--after getting further help from the sun--dredges the river and recovers the remains of her son. The aged mother reassembles her son and reconnects all of the parts into a complete man. She asks a tiny bee to bring her honey from heaven itself with which she salves her son and coaxes him back to life. After a brief talk, she manages to dissuade him from continuing his ridiculous quest and they return home.

[edit] Runos 16 – 18: The second Väinämöinen cycle
Runo XVI. - Väinämöinen's Boat Building.

Väinämöinen sets to building the boat the maiden of Pohjola tasked him to, he summons Sampsa Pellervoinen to find him wood suited to such a fine vessel, he searches hard and asks many trees if they are suitable and finds none that are until he comes across the mighty oak tree which he fells and makes into suitable planks for boat building.

Pellervoinen brings the wood to Väinämöinen who proceeds to cast spells to form the boat, but he is lacking three vital words. He laments heavily, he slaughters numerous animals to perform extispicy but does not find the words he needs.

Väinämöinen goes to Tuonela to find the words, Tuonetar (The daughter of Tuoni) is washing her clothes by the river and asks Väinämöinen why he wishes to travel to Tuonela, he lies at first but finally tells the truth. Tuonetar warns him that he is foolish and advises him to return home, but Väinämöinen does not. Then old Väinämöinen slips into death's domain and witnesses horrors and sadness like none other, through magic he manages to escape and warns all never to go willingly to Tuonela.

Runo XVII. - Väinämöinen and Antero Vipunen.

Väinämöinen on his return visits the ancient smith Ilmarinen to find where the old giant Antero Vipunen is. Ilmarinen tells him he is long since dead but Väinämöinen goes looking anyway.

Väinämöinen finds the location of Vipunen, although he is now covered in trees and other plant life, he forces his strong steel stake into Vipunen's mouth which wakes him and Väinämöinen is swallowed whole by the giant. Väinämöinen crafts a skiff and sails end to end in Vipunen's body and finding no way out begins to work metal in the stomach of the giant. Vipunen grows concerned and tries his best magic to rid his body of Väinämöinen but the ancient wizard will only leave when he has the ancient words he requires.

Vipunen recites ancient spells and incantations from the dawn of the world and when he had finished Väinämöinen leaves Vipunen's body and continues on home, he completes his grand boat with no assistance from hammer or saw.

Runo XVIII. - Väinämöinen and Ilmarinen, Rival Suitors.

Väinämöinen sets off to Pohjola to woo the beautiful Northland maiden, on his way he comes across Annikki--Ilmarinen's sister--who asks him where he is going, he tells her many lies but in the

end tells her of his purpose, on this note she rushes off to her brother to tell him that a rival suitor is heading to the Northland maiden's side.

Annikki reaches her brother and informs him of the news, he is gripped with worry and hurries off to prepare for his journey and his wooing. He adorns his sledge with sweet songbirds and prepares for departure with the finest horse in his possession in the harness. He prays to Ukko to clear his path and make for him an easy journey and he sets off on his journey.

Väinämöinen and Ilmarinen meet with each other along the journey, and shouting over the waters and snowfields agree to a friendly pact and agree to be happy for whomever wins the hand of the beautiful Pohjola maiden.

As the two suitors grow closer the dogs of Pohjola start barking and the master of Pohja goes to see what the fuss is about. He sees a red boat approaching the Lovers bay and a magnificently decorated sledge approaching along the bay of Sima. He rushes home and asks the pyromancer Suovakko for why they are coming, she throws logs on the fire and they flow with honey, she tells them that the approaching men are suitors and not warriors.

Louhi quickly runs to the yards to see who is coming, she realises that it is Väinämöinen and Ilmarinen and advises her daughter to choose the aged wizard for he is rich and magnificent. The daughter has other ideas however and when Väinämöinen is the first to arrive she tells him that she will not be his wife.

[edit] Runos 19 – 25: Ilmarinen's wedding
Runo XIX. - Ilmarinen's Trials and Betrothal.

Ilmarinen enters the halls of Pohjola and demands to see his betrothed, but Louhi demands several tasks be completed before he can marry her daughter. The first task set is the plough a field of poisoned snakes, Ilmarinen is distressed and goes to the maiden who advises him on how to complete the task so he sets out and crafts a plough of gold and silver and shoes of iron and completes the task.

The next task assigned to him is to capture the Bear and Wolf of Tuoni. Again he goes distressed to the maiden who advises him so he sets off to complete the task which he does with steel bits and muzzles of iron.

The third and final task given to him is to capture the giant pike without aid of net or rod, once more he goes to his betrothed and she advises him. He sets off and casts a mighty fiery eagle with iron talons and wings made of boat sides, the eagle tries numerous times to capture the pike and finally manages it, but it eats the body of the giant fish leaving only the head. Ilmarinen curses the bird and it flies off beyond heaven.

Ilmarinen with the pike head returns to Louhi who is annoyed that he didn't return the whole pike, but agrees to allow the marriage. Väinämöinen returns home and utters a warning to the older men, never to woo a maiden as rival to a younger man, as it can only lead to torment.

Runo XX. - The Brewing of the Beer.

A giant ox as tall as the clouds is brought from Karelia to Pohja intended for the great wedding feast, but no one can be found to slaughter it. One day an old man--small enough to fit under a wooden bowl--rose from the sea and slaughtered the animal.

Louhi wonders how to make a worthy beer and an old man relates to her how it is done. He tells of the growing of hops and barley, of the magic squirrel of Osmotar and the pine cones he brings. He tells of the magic marten of Osmotar and the magic bear spittle to use as a leavening agent. He tells of the bee of Osmotar and the honey he brings. He tells of the grand wooden barrels with copper bands used to store the feisty beer. Louhi then resolves to make beer, and places it in wooden barrels with copper hoops.

Louhi then sends messengers out into the land to invite the guests and inform them of the great feast and carousal. She warns not to invite Lemminkäinen because of his violent and trouble causing nature. Väinämöinen is asked to be the minstrel of the wedding.

Runo XXI. - Ilmarinen's Wedding Feast.

Ilmarinen and his entourage arrive at Pohjola and are greeted with the greatest respect, their mounts attended to in the greatest care and the finest place at the banquet table set for the bridegroom himself.

The feast begins, and the guests are given the finest of Northlands viands, the finest butters, creams, salmon, pork and breads. Then the ale is served and revelled by the great Väinämöinen, who sings to the guests on the happy occasion.

“ Beer, fine drink! Do not give a drink to an idling man.
Make the men sing, the golden voices ring out.
”

Runo XXII. - The Tormenting of the Bride.

When the wedding feast was over the preparations for the departure of the bride and her husband are made and the bride is told of her sacrifices she is making to leave her place of birth and go to her husband's home. The bride although aware of the sacrifices is still distressed and even though she has wanted to be a wife still has doubts and worries. She is brought to weeping by the older women.

She weeps hard, but is told that she is not being taken like a lamb to slaughter she is taken to a home by a worthy man, a man who will do her love justice, to a home that has all she has in her parents home, she has reached womanhood and must not lament.

Runo XXIII. - Osmotar Advises the Bride.

Osmotar, the most beautiful of Kalevala's people an experienced woman must instruct the bride in her duties. She instructs the bride in household duties, tells her that she must always be polite even if she is not received well by her in-laws. She instructs the bride on how to care for the livestock and young of the household and how to keep her husband satisfied. She tells the bride how to prepare sauna and firewood and how to greet strangers into the home. The bride is told never to speak ill of anyone in the household when she visits the village.

After he instruction an old poor woman relates a tale of her married life and the disapproval of her husbands family and of the eventual separation of her and her husband. She relates the story of her unhappy search for her kin and the mistreatment by her sister-in-law and of how even now she is not thought of kindly.

Runo XXIV. - The Departure of the Bride and Bridegroom.

Ilmarinen is instructed on how to treat his bride. He is told to allow her freedoms and not unnecessarily cause her sadness and weeping. He is told to not treat her like a slave or servant and to allow her total roam of the house. Ilmarinen is instructed never to speak with contempt at her, and treat her equally. He is told never to whip her like a slave or animal and not allow his family to chastise her, he is told to only whip her if she is continually disobedient and never to do it in the presence of others so as to not cause her humiliation.

An old man relates his story of how he could not instruct his wife and how she mistreated him because he spoiled her, he also tells of how he gained her respect and love.

The time has now come for the departure and the bride--realising this is the last time she will see her birth home--gets tears in her eyes and tells her woes. Ilmarinen then carries her off to his sledge and they depart Pohjola for Kalevala, they journey for three days and on the third they arrive.

Runo XXV. - The Homecoming of the Bride and Bridegroom.

Ilmarinen and his wife arrive to a great reception, his mother and sister relate the tales of their waiting and of rumour that Ilmarinen's wooing was unsuccessful. An infant speaks ill against the bride but Ilmarinen's mother reassures the bride that she will be treated well and with respect, she is told that she is lucky to be there, and she will not have to work the mills or fields.

Another feast is laid on and the ancient sagely wizard Väinämöinen sings songs of praise to the bride and bridegroom, to the mistress, the master, the houses and guests.

Väinämöinen sets off home singing and making merry and on the way damages his sledge, he asks if any of the young can go to Tuonela and fetch what he needs to repair his sledge but none can, so he makes his second trip to Tuonela and brings back what he requires and repairs his sledge and heads back home.

[edit] Runos 26 - 30: The second Lemminkäinen cycle

Runo XXVI. - Lemminkäinen's Journey to Pohjola.

One day Lemminkäinen hears shouts and revelling coming from the village and realises that there is a wedding in Pohjola and is angry that he was not invited. He calls to his mother to prepare his things for battle again, she tries to dissuade him but he has none of it.

Lemminkäinen's old and loving mother warns him of many deaths waiting for him, she warns him of the fiery river with a fiery island and the eagle of fire. She warns him of the trench of fire filled with the remains of a thousand heroes who have tried to pass. She warns him of the narrow gate of Pohjola, where a wolf will rush him and a bear will crush him. She warns him that when he enters Pohjola more death awaits him. She warns him of the heaven high fence of snakes and of the men

who will defeat him by song or blade. Lemminkäinen does not listen and he sets off on his journey and meets with all the deaths his mother mentioned and defeats all the deaths his mother mentioned.

Runo XXVII. - The Duel at Pohjola.

Young Lemminkäinen arrives in Pohjola and walks into the great hall, where the master of Pohjola is sitting at the head of the table. They exchange words, Lemminkäinen demands service, he is told the feast is over which makes him very angry, he shouts his anger at not being invited and demands a drink. Louhi gets her maid to bring a mug of beer which is filled with serpents, Lemminkäinen removes and kills them and drinks the foul beer. He demands more beer be brought which he will pay for.

The master of Pohjola grows furious and a magical contest begins which Lemminkäinen wins. The master of Pohjola is still angry and challenges Lemminkäinen to a duel with blades. They measure up and as the master of Pohjola has the greater blade Lemminkäinen allows him to take the first thrust and thus a great battle begins in which the master of Pohjola loses his head to Lemminkäinen's blade. Louhi grows livid and summons up a thousand soldiers of Pohjola to march against Lemminkäinen and his kind. Lemminkäinen flees Pohjola.

Runo XXVIII. - Lemminkäinen's Mother.

Lemminkäinen rushes home in the form of an eagle. He arrives home and is greeted by his mother who he informs of his trouble, she scolds him heavily for not heeding her warnings.

Lemminkäinen's old mother makes him vow never to go to battle again and tells him of an island where his father hid when he returned from battle once before. She tells him to hide for three years.

Runo XXIX. - The Isle of Refuge.

Lemminkäinen sets sail for the island refuge and sails for three days, when he reaches the island he asks the women of the island if there is room for him there, they allow him refuge. He asks if there is a house for him to stay and proceeds to sing to the women of the island and wins their hearts. He is in favour with all but one of the women of the island, the lonely woman curses him.

The men folk of the island return from war and proceed to group against him, so Lemminkäinen is forced to leave. He sails on but his boat is ruined in a storm, he lands on a small island and is given food and a new boat by the mistress. He sails on home, and reaches familiar shores, but he perceives a problem. When he lands and heads for home he finds his lands and home destroyed and weeps for the loss of his home, but most of all for his dear mother.

Lemminkäinen notices a path leading to the inner forest so he follows it and finds his mother in hiding, she tells him of the destruction wrought on his people by the soldiers of Pohjola. He tells her that they will build new homes and that Pohjola will have deadly war raged upon them. He then proceeds to tell his mother about his adventures on the island and of his forceful eviction.

Runo XXX. - Lemminkäinen and Tiera.

Lemminkäinen resolves to go back to Pohjola and seek revenge for the attack on his people, he goes to his old comrade Tiera and asks him to join him, they set sail for battle. The mistress of Pohjola

sends a frost to the waters to freeze the boat and its occupants. Lemminkäinen confronts Pakkanen (The personification of frost) and tells of his origin, which subdues the frost.

Lemminkäinen and Tiera leave the ship and head over the ice, they struggle on for days lamenting their situation. Lemminkäinen offers a charm against enchantment and fashions two powerful steeds and the companions ride home together.

[edit] Runos 31 – 36: The Kullervo cycle
Runo XXXI. - Untamo and Kalervo.

Three brothers are carried to various parts of the world, of the brothers, Kalervo is carried to Karelia and Untamo is left where he is. The brothers never really get along, Untamo always taking things from Kalervo. After a while Untamo begins threatening Kalervo and they go to war, Kalervo's people are wiped out bar one, a pregnant woman, she gives birth to a boy, who she names Kullervo.

Kullervo grows quickly and at three months old vows to avenge the destruction of his father and his people. Untamo naturally worried tries to destroy Kullervo, by drowning, burning and hanging but none work so he puts him to work. Kullervo is tasked to care for an infant but he kills him, he is tasked to cut trees so he levels the forest and renders the land barren and he is tasked to build a fence so he builds it sky high so none can ever pass. Untamo finally sells him as a slave to the great smith of Kalevala, Ilmarinen.

Runo XXXII. - Kullervo as a Shepherd.

Kullervo goes to Ilmarinen's wife in search of work, she tasks him as a cowherd and bakes him a loaf of bread for his lunch but cruelly bakes a stone into it. She utters magic charms for their protection, for the healthy production of milk, for safe passage and protection against animals. She then sends the cattle out into the fields to be watched by Kullervo.

Runo XXXIII. - The Death of Ilmarinen's Wife.

Kullervo goes about his job as herdsman, lamenting his lowly status and dry bread meal and his master's luxury. He prays to Ukko to shine the sun on him and not Ilmarinen and his family. In the late afternoon he settles down to eat his loaf he cuts into the loaf and his knife is broken on the stone, this he laments heavily and vows revenge on Ilmarinen's wife as the knife was the only keepsake of his lost people.

Kullervo sends the cattle into the mouths of wolves and bears and by magic gives the bears the appearance of cattle, he makes a pipe from the bone of a cow and brings the cattle home.

Ilmarinen's wife hears the homecoming and goes out to inspect the herd and perform her milking, as she bends down and begins to pull on a teat the wolves and bears bear down on her and tear her to shreds. She pleads to Kullervo to come to her aid but he refuses and she dies.

Runo XXXIV. - Kullervo Finds his Family.

Kullervo flees from the homestead of Ilmarinen and wanders through the forest, he calls to Ukko never to allow one so wretched and unfortunate as he be born again. He meets the Maiden of the

Forest who tells him that his family are not all dead, she tells him they are alive and well on Lapland's borders.

Kullervo walks for three days and finally finds his families homestead. His mother greets him and informs him that his sister has vanished and probably died.

Runo XXXV. - Kullervo Finds his Sister.

Kullervo attempts to do chores around his family farm, but proves to be hopeless at everything, his father sends him to pay taxes and on his way back he meets a young maiden. He drags her into his sleigh and seduces her with rich fabrics and jewels. They sleep together and wake the following morning.

Kullervo and the maiden tell of their clans and it is discovered that they are brother and sister, the maiden jumps out of the sleigh into her death in shame. Kullervo weeps with sadness and shame. He discards his sleigh and rides home to tell his mother, he tells her he will kill himself but she pleads against it. Kullervo promises to go to Untamo and avenge the destruction of his people.

Runo XXXVI. - Kullervo's Victory and Death.

Kullervo prepares to do battle with the destroyer of his people Untamo. His mother begs him to remain but he refuses, saying it is noble to fall in battle. His mother asks him who will care for his family but he dismisses her pleas. Kullervo asks his family who will weep for his death but none say they will and he sets off for battle.

On his way to battle several messengers come to inform him of tragedy at his home but he does not stop and carries on to Untamola. When he arrives he lays waste to Untamo's entire tribe and destroys all of the buildings leaving nothing standing.

On Kullervo's return home he finds the homestead deserted and cold with only Musti, his mother's little black dog as company, he retires to the forest and turning his sword's point to his chest thrusts himself to his death.

“ Thereupon the youth, Kullervo,
Wicked wizard of the Northland,

Lifts the mighty sword of Ukko,

Bids adieu to earth and heaven;

Firmly thrusts the hilt in heather,

To his heart he points the weapon,

Throws his weight upon his broadsword,

Pouring out his wicked life-blood,

Ere he journeys to Manala.

Thus the wizard finds destruction,

This the end of Kullerwoinen,

Born in sin, and nursed in folly.

”

[edit] Runos 37 – 38: The second Ilmarinen cycle

Runo XXXVII. - Ilmarinen's Bride of Gold.

Ilmarinen grieved for his lost wife for a long time, when he finally overcame his grief he decided to make himself a bride of gold and silver. He toiled, with his workers at the bellows, but they did not work well and Ilmarinen failed many times until finally he took control of the bellows himself and eventually produced the bride he desired.

At night Ilmarinen lies down with his golden bride and sleeps, he wakes up to find his bride cold as ice and realises that this is most unpleasant. He decides to take the bride to Väinämöinen for his enjoyment. Väinämöinen is shocked and annoyed that Ilmarinen would create such an atrocity, he instructs Ilmarinen to destroy it and create many nicer things from it or take it to places where gold is revered over life.

Runo XXXVIII. - Ilmarinen's Fruitless Wooing.

Ilmarinen sets out to Pohjola in search for another bride, he is met by Louhi who asks him for tidings of her daughter, Ilmarinen responds with the sad news and asks for her second daughter, this Louhi refuses.

Ilmarinen charges into the house and demands the second daughter of Louhi, she herself refuses his advances, he grasps her and drags her to his sledge and sets off for Kalevala. The maiden laments and struggles she threatens to smash his sledge but he tells her it is made of iron, she makes several other threats but Ilmarinen has none of it. The daughter of Louhi continues to insult and annoy Ilmarinen until he decides to rest, as he does so another man makes the maiden laugh. On waking Ilmarinen is so angered he sings the maiden into a sea gull and continues home alone.

When he returns home he consults Väinämöinen and informs him of Pohjola's prosperity because of the Sampo, he also tells him of the fate of Louhi's second daughter.

[edit] Runos 39 – 44: The plunder of the Sampo

Runo XXXIX. - The Expedition Against Pohjola.

Väinämöinen says to Ilmarinen that they will go to Pohjola and seize the Sampo, to which Ilmarinen tells him of the secure nature of the Sampo's hiding place and of the nine locks and of its roots deep into the earth. Väinämöinen is not downcast though and says that they will go and recover the Sampo.

Väinämöinen and Ilmarinen debate how to get to Pohjola and decide to go by sea. Ilmarinen forges a new sword for Väinämöinen The two heroes set out along the shore on fine horses and on the way hear a weeping, they go to investigate and find it is a warship lamenting it's being stuck in the bay.

Väinämöinen consoles the boat and pushes it on to the water and they proceed to Pohjola aboard the mighty warship with Ilmarinen at the oar and Väinämöinen at the tiller.

The heroes pass by the home of Lemminkäinen who asks to join them on their journey, they agree and the three heroes of Kalevala sail on to Pohjola.

Runo XL. - The Pike and The Kantele.

Väinämöinen, Ilmarinen and Lemminkäinen continue in their boat journey to Pohjola, on their way they are greeted by many maidens.

Lemminkäinen remembers that a great waterfall is in their path and proceeds to pray to the gods to calm the cataract and allow them safe passage. Väinämöinen guides the great ship through the rapids and over the waterfall without a scratch being made on the vessel however the boat runs aground on the back of a giant Pike.

Väinämöinen instructs Lemminkäinen to kill the Pike but he fails, Ilmarinen mocks Lemminkäinen but he himself fails and his sword is broken to pieces. Lemminkäinen and Ilmarinen plead to Väinämöinen for his magical assistance and with his mighty sword cleaves the pike to pieces and scatters its bones and flesh over the landscape.

Väinämöinen orders the pike's front portion be cooked and the bones be made useful, however nobody can find a use for fish bones so Väinämöinen endeavours to make a magnificent harp. After the harp's construction is complete Väinämöinen summons a worthy player, many try to play but none can do the magnificent instrument justice.

Runo XLI. - Väinämöinen's Music.

Väinämöinen himself sits down to play the harp, he calls to all peoples of Northland to listen and revel in his music.

On hearing Väinämöinen's playing all of the creatures of the world--be they from air, earth or water--come to hear the beautiful music. Väinämöinen's music is so beautiful even the gods themselves come to hear it.

All of Väinämöinen's audience begin weeping for the music, and soon Väinämöinen himself is weeping, his giant tears fall and flow to the water where they become magnificent blue pearls, more wonderful than anything on earth.

Väinämöinen summons a worthy collector for his tear-drops, he calls to a raven but the bird is unable to gather them, he calls to a duck who is able to gather the pearls and present them to Väinämöinen.

Runo XLII. - The Recovery of the Sampo

The heroes land at Pohjola and are met by the hostess Louhi who asks them why they are there, Väinämöinen tells her that the people of Kalevala wish to have the Sampo. She responds by saying that it cannot be shared among all the heroes and as it brings great prosperity to Pohjola it will not be surrendered. Väinämöinen then says they will take it forcefully which angers Louhi and she

summons soldiers to vanquish Väinämöinen and his people. Väinämöinen plays his harp which pacifies the people of Pohjola and causes them to fall into a deep sleep.

Väinämöinen's heroes then go to find the Sampo, they reach the copper mountain and Ilmarinen anoints the hinges and bolts of the chamber and the bolts unlatch and the doors fly open. Lemminkäinen then enters the chamber and with swelling ego praises himself until he sees the beautiful Sampo, he tries with all his might to move it but the roots of the mountain have firmly secured its place. Lemminkäinen then captures and harnesses a great ox, he uses it to plough the roots and free the Sampo.

Väinämöinen and the heroes carry the Sampo back to their boat and proceed to leave Pohjola and return home. They agree to leave the Sampo in safety on a fir covered island.

Väinämöinen prays for a safe swift and easy journey back to Kalevala. Lemminkäinen longs for food and song but Väinämöinen warns him that feasting and singing will prolong the journey home. Lemminkäinen nevertheless sings his songs but his singing is so foul that a crane flies away in pain, flies over Pohjola and wakes the people of the Northland with its crying.

Louhi wakes and checks her domain frantically and finding nothing awry she then checks the copper mountain and finds the Sampo missing. She calls to the sea-fog to cover the waters and to Iku-Turso to devour the heroes of Kalevala and return the Sampo finally she calls to Ukko to raise a giant storm and blow the heroes off course.

Väinämöinen and the heroes are caught in the thick fog for days until Väinämöinen in desperation cleaves the sea with his magic sword releasing them from their captivity.

Suddenly Iku-Turso comes toward them in great anger. Ilmarinen and Lemminkäinen are both filled with dread but Väinämöinen seizes the monster and asks him why he approaches in anger, he refuses to answer so Väinämöinen asks him again. Iku-Turso tells Väinämöinen of his instructions and promises to leave if he is released.

A short time passes and Ukko raises a great wind against the heroes causing the sea to fume with white wave and causes Väinämöinen to lose his pike harp which Väinämöinen laments heavily. Ilmarinen weeps and believes all is lost, however Väinämöinen recovers his composure and warns against weeping over the past, he commands the gods to stop the waves and calm the sea. Lemminkäinen calls to the birds to help save the sinking ship, and with the aid of the men of the vessel and Väinämöinen's magic the ship is saved.

Runo XLIII. - The Loss of the Sampo

Louhi, filled with rage, prepares her army for battle, she loads a great warship and sets sail to find and take the Sampo.

Väinämöinen asks Lemminkäinen to climb the mast of the ship and check for anything out of the ordinary, Lemminkäinen sees nothing but a dark horizon behind the ship to the north. Väinämöinen asks again for Lemminkäinen to check the situation, he reports of a vast forest to the north and an island to the south, Väinämöinen states there is no forest to the north and asks Lemminkäinen to check again this time he spies a ship making chase. Väinämöinen orders Ilmarinen and Lemminkäinen to row with the other oarsmen as hard as they can to escape their pursuers, but to no avail, they gain distance.

Väinämöinen casts a spark from his flint to the sea and utters words of magic to create a huge mountain in the sea to sink the boat of Pohja, this effort works and the boat and its crew are dragged to the bottom of the ocean. Louhi however changes form into a giant eagle made from the remains of the boat, she seats several heroes on her back and continues the pursuit of Väinämöinen and his heroes.

Louhi the eagle lands on the highest mast of Väinämöinen's ship, Ilmarinen prays to Ukko for help and protection while Väinämöinen asks Louhi once again if she will share the Sampo however she refuses again. She then attacks and swoops down to steal the Sampo in her talons but Lemminkäinen draws his sword and injures her she scolds him for breaking his promise to his mother not to fight. Väinämöinen fearing the worst may happen tears the rudder from the ship and strikes Louhi, striking her army from her back and causing her to fall, she takes one more grab at the Sampo and drops it into the sea where it sinks and breaks into pieces.

Louhi still furious warns Väinämöinen that she will steal the sun and moon from the sky and send nine diseases to his people. Väinämöinen answers that she cannot do this as only god has the ability. Louhi flies away weeping, to return to Pohjola whereas Väinämöinen rejoices when he returns home, takes the pieces of the Sampo which washed up on his beaches and prays to Ukko to always protect his people from evil and famine and disease and to protect them from Louhi and her armies.

Runo XLIV. - The Birth of the Second Harp.

Väinämöinen wishes to sing again, but laments that his harp is lost to the kingdom of Vellamo. He goes to Ilmarinen and asks him to forge him a giant rake to dredge the sea bed. Väinämöinen goes to a boat shed and addresses the younger of the two boats housed there, he commands the young boat to go to the place where his harp was lost, he begins to search for his lost harp, but to no avail.

Väinämöinen makes his way home and meets a weeping birch tree, he asks why it is weeping and the birch replies that it is sad because it is treated badly by the people, it is stripped of its bark and leaves and never feels safe to settle. Väinämöinen proceeds to make a new kantele from the wood of the sacred birch and strings of golden hair from a joyful maiden.

Väinämöinen proceeds to play the new harp which sounds so beautiful it causes the people of Kalevala to leave whatever they are doing and come to hear, old and young, male and female, they all listen and weep with joy. The same happens with the folk of Northland. The music is so fantastic even the animals themselves come to hear. Väinämöinen plays for three solid days.

[edit] Runos 45 - 49: Louhi's revenge on Kalevala

Runo XLV. - Louhi's Pestilence on Kalevala.

Louhi, growing angry at the prosperity of Kalevala calls to Loviatar (one of Tuoni's daughters) to bring the people of Kalevala disease and pestilence. Loviatar births her children of disease and tends to them:

“ Then Loviatar named them all in order,
As we do with all our children,

Thus proclaimed what she had wrought:

Cramps and Colic, Gout and Rickets,

Were the first four sons she named:

Cancer, Boil and Scab made seven,

And the eighth she named the Plague.

”

Louhi banishes the children of Loviatar to Kalevala causing the people to fall sick. Väinämöinen comes to his peoples aid, he fires up healing saunas, sends prayers and magic words to Ukko to deliver his people from peril and he uses healing balms on his ill people. Väinämöinen then calls to Ukko to send a healing balm by rain and successfully saves his people from destruction.

Runo XLVI. - Otso, the Bear.

Louhi on hearing the eradication of the disease sends the great bear Otso to destroy the cattle and people of Kalevala.

Väinämöinen instructs Ilmarinen to build him a spear to kill the bear with. He heads out on the hunt, offering spoken charms to the lord of the forest and to the bear. Väinämöinen approaches the bear who slips from his resting place and is killed in the fall, Väinämöinen comforts the bear, on his return a feast is held in the halls of Kalevala. Väinämöinen tells of the origin of the bear and sings songs wishing for peace and prosperity for his people.

Runo XLVII. - The Robbery of the Sun, Moon and Fire.

Väinämöinen's singing brings the Sun and Moon to the earth in joy, however Louhi steals them away and conceals them in Pohjola, she then steals the fire from the homes of Kalevala.

Ukko, confused as to the lack of sun and moon, strikes up a new fire, conceals it in a golden purse and tasks a maiden of the air to nurture it, however she fails and the new fire falls to the earth and is spotted by Väinämöinen and Ilmarinen, they go to hunt for it. They meet Ilmatar and she tells them that the fire has caused many a mischief and was finally swallowed by a fish in Lake Alue. Väinämöinen and Ilmarinen lay nets for the Fire-fish to no avail.

Runo XLVIII. - The Capture of the Fire-fish.

Väinämöinen asks his people to make him flaxen net to catch the fire-fish, his people go to work ploughing the land and sowing the seeds. When the flax had grown they harvest, thresh and weave it into threads, they then prepare the fishing net. When the net is complete the young folk go to catch the fish, but they do not succeed so Väinämöinen and Ilmarinen go to fish for the pike themselves. Their attempts fail, so they enlarge the net and try again. On their second failing Väinämöinen calls to Vellamo and Ahto for assistance.

A man of very small stature rises from the water and offers his help to drive the fire-fish to the nets, which Väinämöinen happily accepts. Väinämöinen draws his net in and discovers many fish have been caught including the Fire-fish, Väinämöinen dare not touch the Fire-fish and wonders how he

will recover the fire, Panu (The son of the Sun) hears and tells Väinämöinen he will open up the fish, he calls to the heavens for a magical fish knife which he is supplied with.

Panu cuts into the pike and finds the fire, Väinämöinen wonders how to return it to Kalevala. Suddenly the fire grows angry and flies over the lake burning Väinämöinen and Ilmarinen during its escape, the fire scorches many lands including Pohjola and Kalevala. Väinämöinen tracks the fire and finds it hiding, he offers a charm to coax the fire into obedience and places it in a tinder-box and returns it to his people.

Ilmarinen tries to sooth his burnt fingers by placing them in the water but this does not help, he calls to the children of the cold dark north to bring him icy slush and finally to Ukko, to bring snow and ice to help him soothe his pains. In time Ilmarinen attains his former health and vigour.

Runo XLIX. - The Restoration of the Sun and Moon.

Even though the fire had been restored to Kalevala the animals start to die and the people grow weak because of the lack of sun and moon. One day Ilmarinen is asked to forge another sun and moon which he agrees to do, but Väinämöinen tells him it is fruitless. Ilmarinen continues to forge the false sun and moon and when they are complete mounts them high in trees but they fail to shine.

Väinämöinen cuts chips from an alder tree to divine the location of the sun and moon, his divination tells him they are locked away in the mountains of Pohjola. Väinämöinen sets off to recover them, he gets within sight of the gates of Pohjola and calls for a boat to carry him across the river, but nobody hears him, so he makes a brushwood fire and lets the smoke drift into the heavens. Louhi sends a messenger to bring her news of the origin of the smoke. The messenger is asked by Väinämöinen to bring him a boat but the messenger tells him to swim across the river himself. At this Väinämöinen turns himself into a pike and swims over the river.

Väinämöinen makes his way to the halls of Pohjola and is met by armed men who ask him his intentions, he tells them that he is here to recover the sun and moon. The men of Pohjola and Väinämöinen engage in combat and Väinämöinen is victorious, lopping the heads off of the men like turnip roots.

Väinämöinen runs toward the mountain prison of the sun and moon and finds an enormous stone atop a rock with the light of the sun shining out of it. He cleaves the stone in three and discovers serpents drinking ale, he kills them but when he tries to free the sun and moon he finds his magic lacking, so he returns home and tells of his adventure and his inability to rescue the sun and moon.

Väinämöinen goes to Ilmarinen and asks him to make spears, axes and keys. Louhi at the loss of her men folk senses her peril, she takes the form of an eagle and talks to Ilmarinen, he tells her of his making implements to imprison her and render her in iron bondage for eternity. Louhi grows fearful and flies back to Pohjola. She unlocks the sun and moon and releases them to the sky. Louhi then takes the form of a dove and returns to Kalevala to speak with Ilmarinen again. The Louhi-Dove tells Ilmarinen that the sun and moon are now free, Ilmarinen goes to investigate and he sees that it is indeed true, he tells Väinämöinen.

Väinämöinen is joyful at the sight of the sun and moon and pleads with them to stay where they are and continue to illuminate and nourish his people for eternity.

[edit] Runo 50: Marjatta
Runo L. - Marjatta.

Marjatta lives a life of respectability and virtue. One day when she was shepherding her flock she lamented her maidenhood, and wished for a husband. She hears a cowberry crying that no one would pluck it, she reaches for the berry and it places itself in her mouth and is eaten.

Marjatta grows pregnant and hangs around the house, her parents wonder what is wrong. The time comes for Marjatta to give birth and she pleads with her parents to give her a place to go and rest and bathe, but she meets with disdain and anger.

Marjatta goes to her trusty maid-servant Piltti to seek her some place she can rest and give birth to her child. Piltti goes to the house of Ruotus but he is insulting and his wife only offers a cold old stable for her. Marjatta goes seeking the stable on her own and when her birth begins prays to Ukko for assistance and protection.

On arrival at the stable Marjatta asks the horse to keep her warm and supply her with steam for a bath. The child is born and cared for well, but one day the child vanishes and Marjatta weeps uncontrollably. She goes in search of her child and asks a star and the moon for assistance but they offer no advice, finally the Sun tells her that the child is in the swamp and Marjatta recovers him.

When the child had grown he was to be baptised by Virokannas. Virokannas refuses until the child is proven worthy however Väinämöinen tells him that he is not and advises the child be killed. On this the child speaks openly to Väinämöinen and chastises him for his rash judgement of him and foul deeds in the past. Virokannas baptises him the rightful ruler of Karelia.

Väinämöinen grows angry and recognises that he is weakening and his influence and importance failing, so he sings up a magic boat and sails away from Kalevala, with these parting words and his magic, songs and sacred kantele as a gift to his noble people.

“ Suns may rise and set in Suomi,
Rise and set for generations,

When the North will learn my teachings,

Will recall my wisdom-sayings,

Hungry for the true religion.

Then will Suomi need my coming,

Watch for me at dawn of morning,

That I may bring back the Sampo,

Bring anew the harp of joyance,

Bring again the golden moonlight,

Bring again the silver sunshine,

Peace and plenty to the Northland."

”

Epilogue

The poem ends with a sung farewell by the singers.

Retrieved from "http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kalevala_%28synopses%29"