Writing a Précis

Read through this edited version of Chapter 5. Remember to look up any words that you are not sure about. Next, look at the underlined words and use these to help you sum up what happens. Work on one paragraph at a time.

The young couple settled down to sleep for the night in the forest. While they were sleeping, Ivan's brothers happened to travel through the forest. They too were returning from their quest to find the firebird, but their efforts had just ended in disappointment, until then at least.

Dmitry noticed the firebird first. Its vibrant flames were impossible to miss, even from some distance and as the brothers got closer, they saw too the magnificent horse with the golden mane and finally they set eyes on a beautiful sleeping princess and their younger brother. "Look," whispered Dmitry bitterly to Vasily, "he has everything and now he will be rewarded with half our father's kingdom too. It really isn't fair."

"I know," sighed Vasily, "but what can we do about it?"

"This!" thundered the jealous Dmitry suddenly and he sank his sword into his sleeping brother, killing him instantly.

Dmitry's violent yell had woken Princess Helena from her sleep. The sight that met her when she awoke was horrifying and she ran over to her beloved Ivan and embraced him. Dmitry and Vasily took Helena back to Tsar Vislav.

Inevitably, Tsar Vislav welcomed his sons home with open arms. He was overjoyed to have the firebird. His love of all things shiny meant he was enamoured with the horse with the golden mane and he was pleased to offer such a beautiful princess a place to stay. He hoped that one of his sons might marry her. It had been too many years since a wedding had been held at the palace, he thought to himself. Dmitry revelled in the attention. While Vasily took some pleasure in the fact that his father was happy, he generally seemed very pale and was seen to eat very little at mealtimes.

Meanwhile, the wolf happened to be looking for food in the forest when he came across his dear friend's body. He ran to Ivan and looked carefully at all his wounds. As the wolf wept, his tears fell onto Ivan's wounds. As the magical water landed, the wounds began to miraculously heal. Eventually, all the wounds were healed and Ivan opened his eyes. He had been brought back to life by the elixir of life in the wolf's tears.

Although Ivan was still weak, he managed to climb onto the faithful wolf's back and the pair returned to the kingdom of Tsar Vislav, where they found everyone seated at a glorious banquet. The look of horror and fear in Vasily's eyes when he saw him, told Ivan all he needed to know. Princess Helena blurted out the truth when she saw Ivan, that Dmitry had stabbed his brother and that it was in fact, Ivan who had obtained the firebird and the horse with the golden mane for his father. Tsar Vislav was horrified that Dmitry and Vasily had done such awful things and they were sent to the dungeons. He hugged Ivan and praised him for his bravery.

Some weeks later, Ivan and Helena were married in joyous celebration. Tsar Vislav gave them half of his kingdom and Prince Ivan helped his father rule until his father became too old to govern. Although the horse with the golden mane was the tsar's most treasured thing until the day he died, he gave Ivan the firebird. Princess Helena said she could not bear to see such a splendid creature in a cage and so they set the firebird free to live in the forest, although it often visited the kingdom and all who saw it could delight in its beauty.

And what became of the grey wolf? After the wedding, he disappeared and Ivan never saw him again.

Can you write your final précis here?

Writing a Précis **Answer**

Suggested Answer

Helena and Ivan slept in the forest for the night. While they slept, Dmitry and Vasily passed by and Dmitry killed Ivan. Dmitry and Vasily took Princess Helena back to the kingdom. Tsar Vislav welcomed them. While Dmitry was very pleased with himself, Vasily seemed withdrawn. Meanwhile, the wolf resurrected Ivan with the elixir of life in his tears. Ivan and the wolf returned to the kingdom and revealed the truth. Ivan's older brothers were imprisoned and Ivan and Helena got married. They decided to set the firebird free and the wolf was never seen again.

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Read through Chapter 5 and underline the most important information. Remember to look up any words that you are not sure about. Next, look at the underlined words and use these to help you sum up what happens. Work on one paragraph at a time.

You may want to cut out some parts and rework your final précis at the end.