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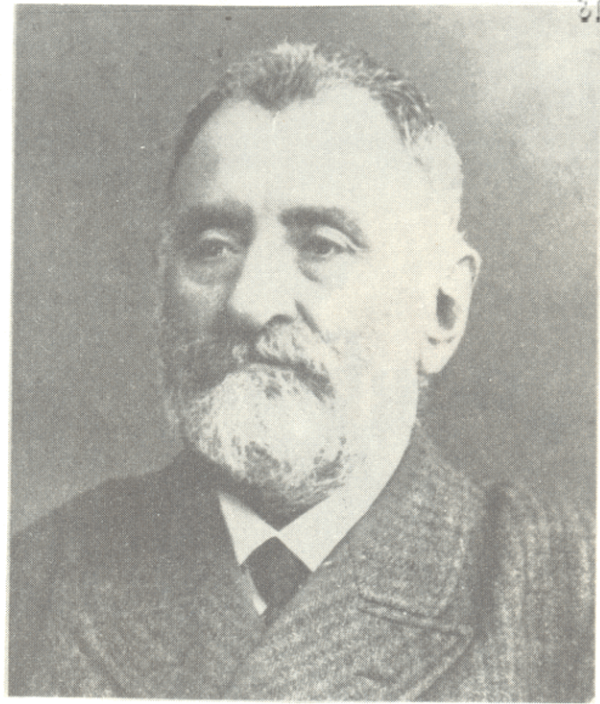
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IACOB GOGEBASHVILI

# The Lullaby and Other Stories







# 150

Iacob Gogebashvili (1840-1912) a great educationalist, writer and essayist, the founder of Georgian pedagogy, understood child's psychology well. He was a writer of broad outlook and scope in this sphere. All his stories about and for children are written with great tact and kindness. They show the writer's mastery in every detail that concerns children.



იაკობ გოგებაშვილი

„იანანამ რა ჰქმნა“ და  
სხვა მოთხრობები

რედაქტორი მერი სინთა კარლაილი

გამომცემლობა „განათლება“  
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**iacob Gogebashvili**

**The Lullaby and  
other stories**

editor miss Marie Cynthia Carile

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Tbilisi - 1991



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The present book contains stories by I. Gogebashvili: "The Lullaby", "King Erekle and the Ingilo Girl" and some other stories from his "Mother Tongue".

The stories were published at different times. They are intended both for schoolchildren and adults.

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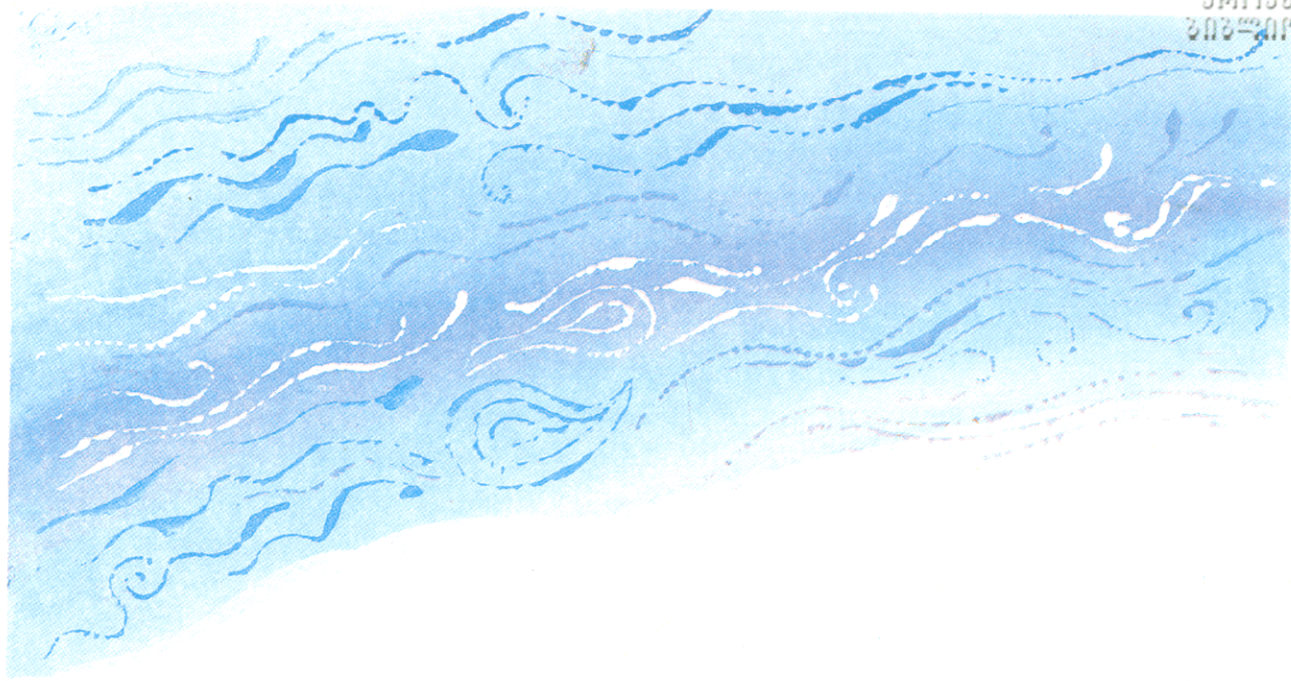
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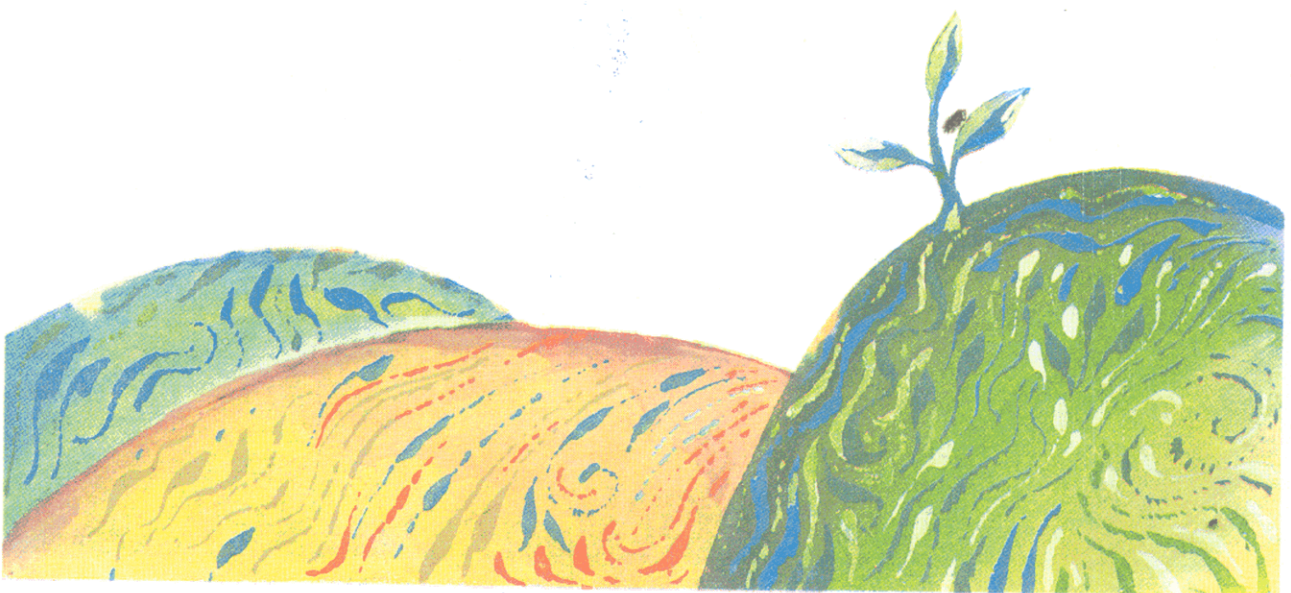
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# The Lullaby









## THE LAND OF WINE

Travelling eastwards from Tbilisi, after a day's journey you will come to a high mountain called Tsivis Mta. If you climb up the mountain and look to the East, you will see a vast plain, a green sea of vineyards. In the middle of the plain you will perceive a long, glittering streak stretching from North to South. This plain is the valley of Kakheti and the glittering streak is the river Alazani, which divides Kakheti into two, almost equal parts. The part nearest to you is called This Side and the other part is called That Side. The eastern part of That Side is bordered by great and lofty mountains; they separate Kakheti from Daghestan, which begins beyond the mountains and is the homeland of the Lezghins.

If you look closely at That Side you will notice a large ravine cutting deep into the foot of the mountains. It is all farm land now. But if you draw closer and examine it you will see the ruins of some stone houses at its edge. These witness to the fact that there used to be a village there.

### THE VILLAGE OF VASHLOVANI

Indeed, in olden times, there flourished in this place a fairly large village called Vashlovani. On the west the village was bordered by vineyards, while to the east a tall, dense forest covered the mountain-side and caused a spring of clear water to shoot up like a fountain in the middle of the village. Its icy water was the favourite drink of the villagers. The houses were of stone and mortar which proved that the village was prosperous.

On the outskirts of Vashlovani, near the forest, there stood a two-storeyed mansion encircled by a beautifully wrought wooden balustrade. This house belonged to Zurab Kartveladze, a nobleman, famous for his wealth and hospitality. His wife, Magdani, came from Kartli. She was fair of face and gentle of heart. The food cooked in their house every day would have been enough to satisfy two or three families, but the Kartveladzes often went without a meal because of Magdani's generous heart; she used to send out many provisions to those who suffered from poverty, starvation and illness. In addition, Magdani had a wonderful voice and was known in those parts for her beautiful songs. Her voice and her songs so moved the hearts of her hearers that they could never forget them. Her husband Zurab played the tari wonderfully. There could be no greater pleasure than to hear the husband playing his tari and the wife singing to it.

Zurab and Magdani had been married for five or six years and now they



had a little girl of two named Keto. She was a beautiful child with a snow-white complexion and was always prattling gaily. She was very fond of her mother's songs and she often made her sing. She used to sit beside her, listening with bated breath. She was a sweet child and the darling of her parents.

## THE LEZGHINS IN KAKHETI

In those days many Lezghins used to wander around Vashlovani and all over Kakheti. In olden times there had existed warm ties of friendship between Georgia and Daghestan. Daghestan was an enemy to every enemy of Georgia and every friend of Georgia was looked upon as a friend by Daghestan. Nobody had ever heard of Lezghins invading Georgia and fighting against the Georgians. Later on when Lezghins had adopted Islam and Georgia drew closer to orthodox Russia, they became enemies, although in the past there had been only mutual respect and sincere friendship between them. Still, as they had been good neighbours in the past, Lezghins continued to come to Georgia. They brought with them Caucasian felt cloaks and weapons for which they were famous.

## KETO IS KIDNAPPED

For many years two thick-set and ugly Lezghins had come to Vashlovani to trade. They were both ne'er-do-wells, despised by their own countrymen. Yet nobody thought they would cause harm to anybody. But soon it became clear that still waters run deep.

One day one of them said to the other:

-Do you know what has occurred to me? We've been trading here for a long time, but still we are as poor as ever and our lives are wretched and miserable. There is something we could do to get rich at once and put an end to our miserable wanderings.

-What do you mean? - the other asked.

-Zurab Kartveladze is very rich, isn't he?

-He is; but what's to us?

-If we act wisely, his wealth will be of some use to us. He loves his only daughter greatly, doesn't he?

-He does; but so what?

-Then listen, if we kidnap his daughter, he won't spare anything to save her - surely, he won't.







The other liked his friend's suggestion. So they decided to watch for an opportunity to capture Keto and carry her away to Daghestan.

We already know that the eastern part of Vashlovani bordered on a tall dense forest. Magdani would often walk at the edge of the forest as their house was nearby. So would Keto's nurse. One evening the nurse went towards the forest for a walk, taking the child with her. As they approached the forest the child noticed a bird under a tree and ran towards it. The bird scurried away and the child followed it. Little by little she disappeared farther and farther into the trees and the nurse after her. Suddenly a Lezghin appeared. He seized the child with one hand, covering her mouth with the other, and carried her away. Neither did the nurse have time to utter a sound before the other Lezghin crept up on her from behind and, striking her over the head, sent her unconscious to the ground. Keto was kidnapped.

## THE PURSUIT

Keto's parents didn't suspect anything. They thought the nurse and the child were with some neighbours and would return in due time. But when night fell and they didn't appear, the parents grew anxious. They inquired of all the neighbours and were told that nobody had seen the nurse and the child that day. Then the alarmed parents, with lighted torches in their hands, began to search for them in the neighbourhood of the village. They searched for a long time and at last they found the nurse lying half-dead under a tree in the forest. The noise and the cool night air brought her back to her senses. But she still didn't feel well when Magdani, pale and agitated, cried: - Where is Keto? - Slowly, in a faint voice, the nurse began to recount how the Lezghins had kidnapped the child. On hearing this, Magdani fainted. Zurab, too, was shaken, but he bravely mastered his pain and cried out: - After them!

In those days men were well-armed and experienced in war as the King of Georgia used to muster them in the time of need. Thus an hour had scarcely elapsed since Zurab had called for help, when twenty brave men, armed from head to toe, stood in front of his house. Presently Zurab came out armed. He greeted them and they set forth with him at their head.

It was a dark cloudy night. Some time had already passed since Keto had been carried away. The way to Daghestan lay along narrow paths across mountains and through forests. A stranger could scarcely find his way in the darkness of the night. The Lezghins who had kidnapped Keto knew those paths so well that they could follow them even with their eyes closed, while Zurab and his attendants had scarcely ever ridden there before. So the Lezgh-

ins, riding hard the whole night without any hindrance, left the Georgians far behind.

The next day Keto was brought to Daghestan. Zurab, broken-hearted, was obliged to return home with his men.

### KETO IS BOUGHT BY A NAIB

First the Lezghins took Keto to a large village near the borders of Kakheti. In this village there lived a rich Naib who ruled over the whole eastern part of Daghestan. His wife was a courageous and tender-hearted woman. They had been married for a long time but they were childless and they had decided to adopt a child.

The evening was drawing on when the Lezghins passed by the Naib's house. The husband and his wife were sitting in the porch. They saw the two Lezghins passing by and noticed that one of them had a sheepskin bag on his back from which a child's face and head could be seen. They called to them. The men approached, bowing obsequiously to the ruler, the Naib. The Naib and his wife inquired about the child, but the men were afraid of being chastised and didn't tell them the truth; they said they had found the child on the way and had taken it with them.

Little Keto looked pale, being tired and hungry after the journey. She could hardly open her eyes, but that only made her look more attractive. As soon as the Naib and his wife saw her, they took her to their hearts.

-What will you take for her? - the wife asked.

-Let her be a present for you, my lady, if you like, - the men answered.

The Naib went in, took a large purse full of gold and gave it to them. His wife took the little girl and pressed her to her heart. The men thanked them and went away.

The motherly caress made Keto feel better. True everything was strange to her but, after all her sufferings in the hands of the two rough-mannered men, the love and care of the Naib and his wife comforted her. At first she was listless and shed many tears; she missed her parents and relatives, she missed her village, but her new mother and father were kind to her and soon she forgot her past.

### KETO TURNS INTO A LEZGHIN GIRL

A child exists in the present. It grows unceasingly with every passing day. It develops in body and spirit; its senses develop too. It feels its growth and





progress, and enjoys this feeling; the whole world is a source of joy to it. Rejoicing in the present, it thinks neither of the past nor of the future. Therefore the past, with its memories, sensations and thoughts, soon grows dimmer and dimmer till it seems to disappear altogether. The present dominates the child and wholly replaces the past.

This is what happened to Keto. The love of the Naib and his wife made her forget her own parents, what they had looked like, how much they had loved her. Two or three years went by and Keto never doubted that the Naib and his wife were her own parents; they were her whole happiness, her life. The memory of her own flesh and blood seemed to have been wiped from her mind.

Day after day the Lezghin tongue pushed her native Georgian language from her memory and then replaced it altogether. The Lezghin village made her forget her native village of Vashlovani. Only one thing did she miss for a long time, and that was Magdani's wonderful voice, her sweet songs. These she forgot too, but only much later on. In short, the present reigned over her spirit. First the past faded in her memories and then it disappeared completely. The Georgian became a Lezghin, the daughter of Kakheti became a daughter of Daghestan.

The Naib had issued strict orders that nobody ever dare let Keto know that she was an adopted child and not their own, and this, too, greatly helped her to become a Lezghin.

### THE FATHER TRIES IN VAIN

What were Keto's parents doing all that time, what were they thinking? For a long time they didn't know what the Lezghins had done with their child. Zurab thought she had been taken to central Daghestan, the home country of the Lezghins who had carried her away. But in vain did his men look for her there.

Three or four years went by. At last a Lezghin, an acquaintance of the father's, informed Zurab that a Naib, the ruler of East Daghestan, had adopted Keto and brought her up as his own daughter. Zurab sent a messenger to the Naib to tell him that the girl was his, Zurab's, daughter, she had been kidnaped and he was ready to pay any ransom the Naib might require to get her back. The Naib sent back the messenger with the answer that if he had known then that she was Zurab's daughter, he would have sent her back himself, but now it was too late. She was all the world to him and to his wife, and she, Keto, in her turn loved them very much too, and had forgotten her real









parents. She was accustomed now to her new home in Daghestan. So he wouldn't give her back to them, not even for all the wealth of Kakheti.

When Zurab received this reply he understood that he could only get his daughter back by force or by a ruse. The thought of Keto remaining in Daghestan was unbearable to her parents, and all the more so since, after the birth of her daughter, Magdani had had no more children. Many a time did Kartveladze go to Daghestan with about twenty armed men to take Keto away but in vain. The Naib knew of Zurab's intentions and always sent his men to lie in ambush in such places where one man could stand against twenty or even forty. The number of the Georgian party made it difficult for them to approach the Naib's village unnoticed.

When Zurab failed to achieve his aim by force, he decided on a ruse: he spread the rumour that he had forgotten his daughter and no longer wished to carry her away from her foster-parents. The rumour reached the Naib's ears. At first he doubted the truth of it, but then he came to believe it, as he had heard nothing from Kartveladze for two years. Until then the Naib had only allowed Keto to go out with great caution, but now, like the other Lezghin girls, she was free to go everywhere without restraint; she went from one district to another to see her acquaintances.


Zurab learned about this from some Lezghins he knew, and decided on a new course of action.

### KETO IS CARRIED OFF BY HER FATHER

It was the tenth spring after Keto's kidnapping. The forest was already in full leaf, which made it easier for the Georgians to approach the Naib's village unnoticed. Zurab summoned from the Naib's village a Lezghin whom he had known for a long time and who had often enjoyed his hospitality. The Lezghin agreed to help. Zurab took only ten armed men and followed the Lezghin. They rode the whole distance so cautiously that they did not meet a single other Lezghin on their way. The next evening they drew close to the Naib's village and lay in ambush in the woods. That night the Lezghin stole into his village, discovered what he wanted to know, and came back at daybreak with good news. It seemed that every morning Keto used to go to see a friend of hers, the daughter of the former Naib, who had died not long before. The girl mourned for her father and Keto went to comfort her.

As soon as the sun rose, Zurab hid himself behind a clump of trees at the roadside and watched the place where Keto was to pass. Opposite him, on the other side of the road, there rose a great hill which divided the village into





two parts. Keto was to pass between the forest and the hill on her way to the other part of the village. Some time went by while they waited, and Zurab feared that Keto wouldn't come. But suddenly, in the distance, there appeared a young girl in Lezghin dress walking fearlessly. Zurab gazed at her and his heart began to beat more quickly. Little by little she drew nearer. He stared at her as if he could never get his fill of looking at her. Keto had grown and had changed a little, but her face and her complexion were the same as in her childhood. Her father's heart filled with joy when he saw that she was still his Georgian girl. Keto came up to the trees behind which Zurab was hiding. Seizing his opportunity he came out cautiously, so as not to frighten the girl, and stood before her. Keto was alarmed and sprang away like a young doe.


-Don't be afraid, my child, I'm your father, I've come to take you home to your mother. - Zurab spoke with the tender voice of a father but Keto heard the unfamiliar speech with fear. She couldn't understand what the stranger wanted of her. Zurab saw it was useless to waste his time in words. Someone might surprise them and the plan would fail. So he came up to Keto, seized her in his arms and carried her away into the forest. The girl let out piercing screams. At first nobody could recognize the voice or discover where it came from. The whole village was alarmed. Some men learned what had happened and ran to tell the Naib, but he was away. When he was told, he was overcome with grief and said: - It must be Kartveladze who has carried away the girl, - and he rallied his men to go in pursuit.

Thirty armed and valiant men gathered at once. There were three roads to Vashlovani. The Naib divided his men into three parties. Ten men were sent along one road, ten along another and the last party, led by the Naib himself, galloped along the third road. They rode in hot pursuit almost as far as Vashlovani, but they found no trace of the father and daughter. They had disappeared as though the earth had swallowed them up. In fact Zurab didn't take his daughter to Vashlovani. He knew that they would be pursued along the way. He made for the northern road which led to the villages in upper Kartli. He chose the longer but the safer way home, but it was a hard-won safety!

### KETO'S SUFFERINGS

Zurab knew that at first Keto wouldn't recognize her father and would be sad, but at the same time he was sure that she would soon become her former self and recognize first her father, then her mother, and then she would remember her childhood and be happy. But he was greatly mistaken. All the way Keto's grief knew no bounds: she wept bitterly, she sighed deeply as if her





heart would break. The father was greatly upset to see his daughter grieve so. In vain did he try to comfort her. With every word her sorrow increased. She looked upon Zurab as her mortal enemy who had wrested her from her beloved parents, from her home, and had taken her away into captivity. And so every kind word he uttered pierced her heart. Zurab could only comfort himself with the thought that she would recognize her mother, her home, her native land, and become their daughter once again.

Still nourishing this hope, Zurab opened the door of his house, took Keto in and said to his wife gaily: - Look, Magdani! I've brought your Keto home again.

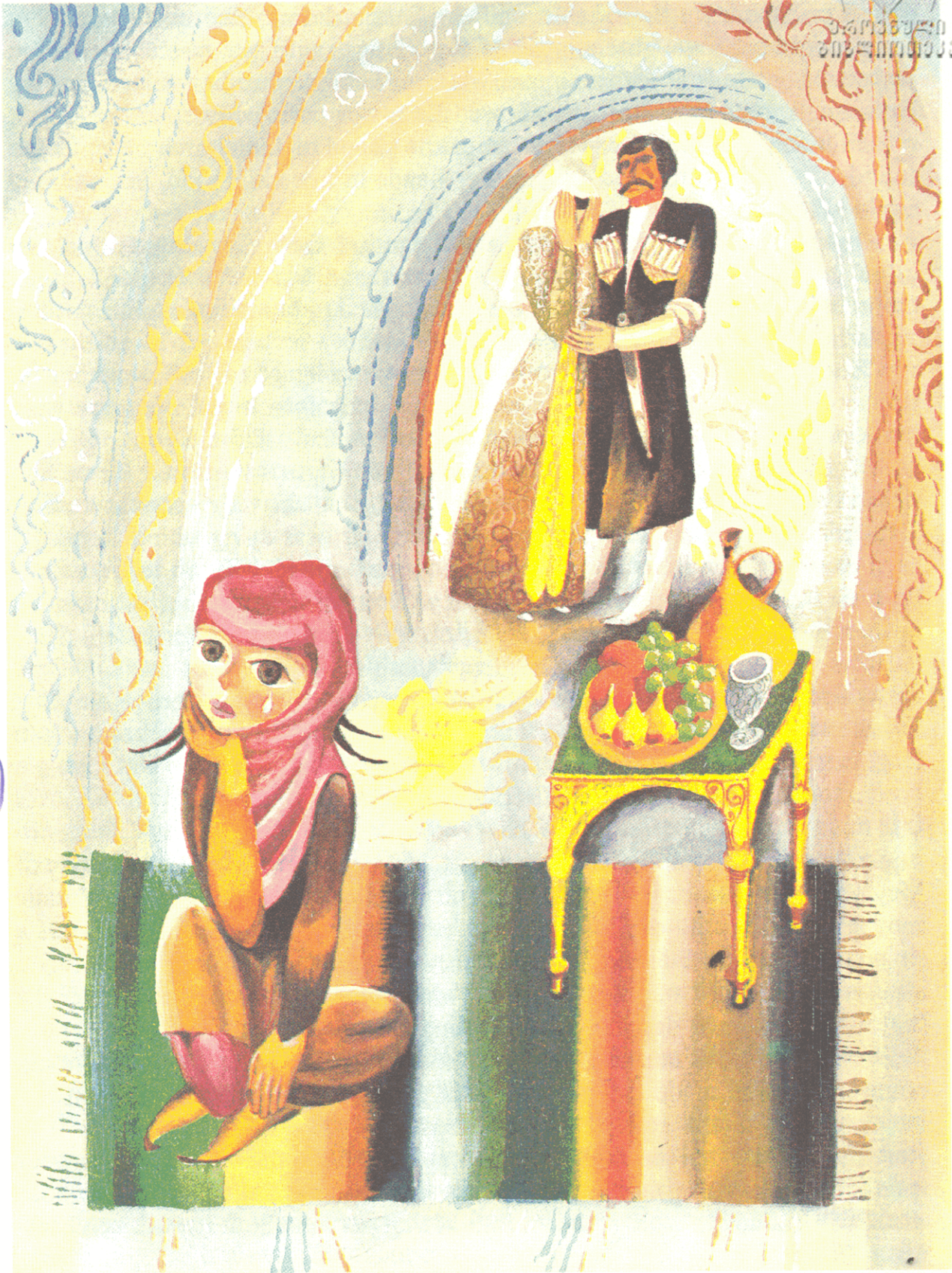
Overjoyed, Magdani ran up to her daughter, but her happiness turned into sorrow when she gazed at Keto's face and saw on it an expression of unutterable grief. Magdani embraced her. She wanted to dispel the child's sadness but she couldn't. Keto was as cold as ice, as unmoving as stone to her mother's welcome and to the affection her mother lavished on her. Magdani's tenderness indeed affected her, but not in the way the mother had expected. Before Keto rose the vivid picture of her foster-mother's face, the memory of her caresses. Her grief increased and tears coursed down her cheeks.

-I'm your own mother, my darling, and this is your father, - said Magdani to Keto. - This is the house where you were born, where you made your first steps, where you toddled around in your childhood. This is the little cradle in which you slept and that is your favourite orchard where you used to sit from morning till night.

But the girl was blind and deaf to everything around her. Deep sorrow overwhelmed her. Still Magdani hoped that some day Keto would remember her childhood, then she would recognize her parents and would become theirs again.

Some weeks went by but the mother's prayer remained unanswered. Keto ate almost nothing and drank little; she sighed deeply and often wept. At night sleep would not come, and she tossed restlessly in her bed. She grew thin and pale; she was fading away before their eyes. She would sit silent on the couch, her eyes closed, and in her thoughts she was in Daghestan with the Naib and his wife, with her friends in that other village, in a distant land. Everything around her seemed alien to her. She saw herself surrounded by enemies and she hated them. The parents did their best to help her remember her childhood: several times her mother took her to the forest, to the very place where she had been kidnapped. She took her there just at the very time of the evening when it had happened; she took her to the spring where Keto had often gone with her nurse and watched the womenfolk fill their jugs with





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water, put them on their backs and carry them home. She made her meet their neighbours' daughters, girls of Keto's age, with whom she had often played. Magdani sent for the nurse, who was living in another village, hoping Keto might recognize her; she showed Keto her dolls which had been kept safe in a box; she drew her attention to the chime of the church bells, to the sound of which Keto used to clap her hands in her childhood, but nothing could help them.

Her parents had made for her such beautiful Georgian clothes that any other girl would have been proud to wear them, but Keto wouldn't touch them. Indeed she became more and more attached to her own Lezghin clothes.

At last a neighbour of theirs said to Magdani:

- Keto resembles you very much, she is the very image of you! stand before your mirror with the girl beside you, let her look into it and compare your faces, and she will see the resemblance. Perhaps that will help you.

Magdani tried this too, but her unusual behaviour astonished Keto. She wouldn't even look at the faces in the mirror and so she didn't see the resemblance. Although perfectly healthy, the young girl was dying with every day.

-I cannot watch her suffer and pine any longer, - said Zurab to his wife. - I'll wait a few days more, and if she doesn't recognize us as her parents, I'll put her on a horse and take her back to the Naib and his wife myself. They must be worthy people if our Keto loves them so dearly.

As for Magdani, she couldn't bear the thought of losing Keto again. She felt she would prefer to bury her only daughter, rather than send her back to Daghestan forever.

### THE LULLABY

So April went by and the lovely month of May came in. On the first day of May the sky was heavy with clouds and it thundered as if it were already summer. It rained all day long, but in the evening the sky cleared and not a single cloud was to be seen; the heavens were studded with bright stars. The air was fresh, and it was that, perhaps, which made Keto sleep so peacefully that night. The next day she got up feeling a bit stronger.

It was a glorious morning. The sun poured its light over the surrounding countryside and made the morning dew glisten like precious stones on the leaves of the plants and trees. The forest was alive with birdsong. In the Kartveladzes' garden the rose-buds bloomed and filled the air with their sweet fragrance. A nightingale sang sweetly in a tree near the roses. The whole world was brimming with gladness, as if at that very moment it were celebrating a thousand joyful weddings.





Nature is an incomparable healer of human sorrows and sadness. Keto's melancholy heart, too, was solaced by it and in her face was seen an easing of the pain which had weighed down on her heart, a fading of the nightmare that had blotted out the world around her. She had also begun to wonder why so much love was lavished on her by strangers, and why they suffered with her in her sorrows.

The mother immediately noticed these hopeful signs of change. Now she had hope once again. That hope, and the fine morning, lightened Magdani's mood. Unconsciously she began to hum a lullaby. Since she had lost Keto, nobody had heard her sing. It was her first song after ten years of silence. She was sitting at the window and Keto took a seat on a little couch in the corner of the room. At first Magdani sang in an undertone, but then delighted at her own voice, she began to sing more loudly, as she used to do.

After a little while she happened to glance in Keto's direction and was amazed at what she saw. The girl's face clearly betrayed her agitation. It was evident something was stirring in her memory but she couldn't yet recall it clearly. Memories that had been buried deep in her heart were stirring, but were not awake yet. From the depth of her mind some dear memory was rising but other images hindered it. Magdani saw this and her voice became more and more expressive. It was with such songs, sung in such a voice, that she had sweetened the days of her daughter's childhood.

Magdani's voice stole deep into Keto's heart awakening there cherished memories of childhood that had long been buried. Magdani, her voice sounding ever more sweet, looked at the girl with eyes full of a mother's boundless love. Keto, too, gazed at her mother's face and, thrilling with excitement, read the great mystery written there. Little by little her excited face grew calm and the clouds disappeared from it. Some hidden ray shed its light over her face, a beam of joy began to brighten it.

Suddenly she sprang up from the couch and cried out, her voice full of joy: - Mother! - She ran up to her, flung her arms around her neck and began to kiss her passionately. The mother and daughter burst into tears, but this time, the tears were tears of joy, promise and peace.

A little later Zurab opened the door. Keto left her mother, rushed towards him, embraced him and cried: - Father!

Then she turned to her mother, seized her hand and took her to the other room. There she stood before the mirror with her mother beside her and looked at their reflections, but something interrupted her thoughts. Quickly she turned away from the mirror, rushed into another room, opened a box and, taking out her new Georgian clothes, put them on instead of the Lezghin.



dress. Then she took her astonished mother to the mirror again, stood beside her and compared her own face with her mother's. Now she saw clearly how much she resembled her. She turned to her, threw her arms round her neck and showered her with kisses. Before, she had been astonished at such behaviour by her mother, but now she herself was doing the same. Then she made her mother open the dolls' box, took out her old "friends" and began to caress them.

One memory brought back another, then another, and the days of her childhood rose before her as though in a looking-glass. Till that day Magdani had taken Keto here and there against her will, but this time it was Keto who gave her mother no peace but took her now to the orchard, now to the spring, now to the forest. She visited all the places in and around the village. Her native Georgian returned to her, too, though she had forgotten many words. When speaking she often used to hesitate or use Lezghin words, but then her mother would come to her aid. It appeared that the impressions and memories of her early childhood had not disappeared completely, had not been obliterated from her mind; they had simply been buried there like seeds in the earth, buried under a layer of sights and impressions which had gathered over them during those ten years in Daghestan. The old images and impressions could be brought back to life only by some deep and powerful sensation, just like the seeds of some plant that come out of the earth under the bright light and heat of the sun. For Keto, her mother's voice and the lullaby, so much a part of her childhood years, were the sun which warmed the memories in her mind.

All the villagers, old and young, men and women, were glad that Keto was theirs again. They came to congratulate the parents and rejoice at seeing Keto. Merry-making began in the Kartveladzes' house. Magdani's singing matched the festivities and gave tune to them.

Like a thirsty doe that drinks fresh water and is unable to slake its thirst, Keto, delighted at her mother's singing which she had missed during those ten years wouldn't give her any rest. As soon as her mother had finished one melody, she would make her sing another, then a third, then a fourth...Magdani often said to her: - Let me rest a little, dear child, I'm tired. - But the girl knew the most potent remedy for her mother's tiredness - warm kisses and embraces. Keto was overjoyed at her mother's songs and learned them herself as she listened.







## KETO AND HER FOSTER-PARENTS



Once, when Keto's heart was overflowing with happiness about her new life, she said to her mother: - Mother dear, may I send a message to Daghestan to my foster-parents?

Magdani didn't like the idea. She was even alarmed.

-Don't worry, Mother, - said Keto tenderly. - I love you and Father as my own parents, but I respect my foster-parents who took care of me, who brought me up. If they had not adopted me, who knows what would have become of me, who would have taken me.

They sent their regards to the Naib and his wife by a special messenger and they also sent some Kakhetian wine which the Lezghins liked no less than the Kakhetians themselves.

Summer was passing. Magdani noticed that Keto longed to see her foster-parents very much, though she said nothing. Once the mother said to her daughter: - Do you know, dear, what a thought has come to my mind? The time of the grape-harvest is coming. There are no vineyards in Daghestan and the Lezghins do not know what a grape-harvest is. Let's invite the Naib and his wife to our Georgian grape-harvest. Any kindness should be repaid. - Keto gratefully embraced her mother.

The Naib and his wife accepted the invitation with great pleasure, as they were eager to see Keto again. At the appointed time they came to Kakheti to visit the Kartveladzes. Her parents let Keto meet them in Lezghin dress. The girl's happiness was boundless as she saw the four people whom she loved most in the world come together.

Thus Zurab and the Naib became great friends, and so did Magdani and the Naib's wife. It became a custom with them to invite Keto's foster-parents to Kakheti every autumn. This custom was kept up even after Keto's marriage to a worthy young Georgian from her mother's native village. Every September the Kartveladzes were visited by their daughter and son-in-law from Kartli and by the Naib and his wife from Daghestan together with their attendants. No one could ever have such a pleasant and happy grape-harvest as Keto used to have.

## KETO'S HAPPINESS

Keto was gay and merry not only during the vintage, but at other times as well. Wise men say that the surest source of people's happiness is a loving heart. Friendship makes life sweet. You may lose your wealth and beauty, you







may face injustice, but a loving heart warms and brightens a man's life till his last day.

Keto had inherited her mother's tender heart and her singular adventure had put it to the test. That adventure had stirred it to its very depths, had made it grow and develop with experience. It learned what it was to feel deeply first through love for her parents, then through the bitterness of her kidnapping by the Lezghins, then again through love for her foster-parents. She remembered the grief and anguish she had felt when her father carried her off. Then love for her own parents and her foster-parents had mingled together in her heart and now to all this was added her love for her dear husband and children. And so Keto's heart became an inexhaustible source of love for her fellow men, an unfailing beacon of affection for her dear ones.

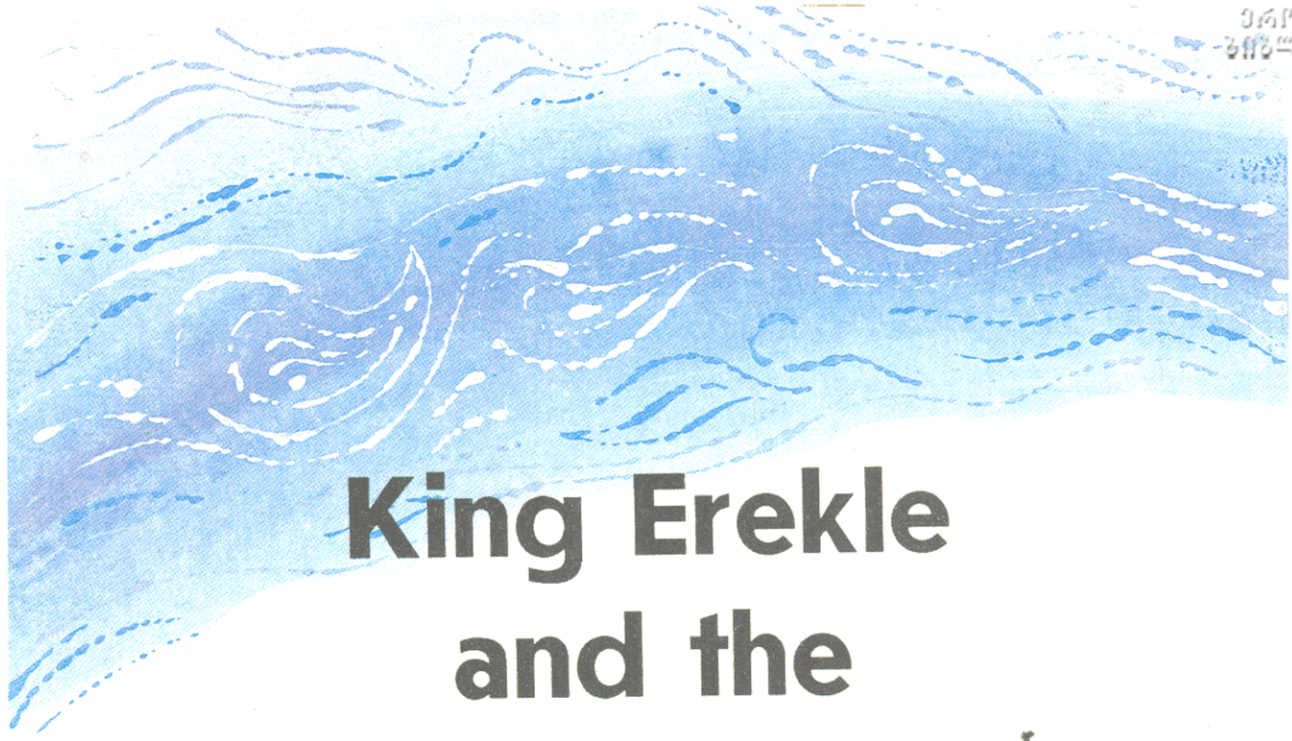
Having experienced such deep sorrow, such great joy, Keto always had a sweet caress for every child, a tear for the unfortunate, a word of comfort for the unhappy, kind assistance for the needy and charity for the wretched. She regarded both Lezghins and Georgians as her own people, both Georgia and Daghestan as her own countries. And, as love gives birth to love, both Georgians and Lezghins competed in proving their respect, esteem and love for Keto. With her affectionate heart, Keto spread joy and peace around her, as the blossoming rose-tree spreads its sweet fragrance. And just as everyone is delighted by the rose-bush, so was Keto everyone's delight. So did everyone love her, who found joy in loving everyone and in everyone's love for her. Can there be a greater happiness in this world?

I wish you too, dear children, a heart as warm and loving as Keto's.

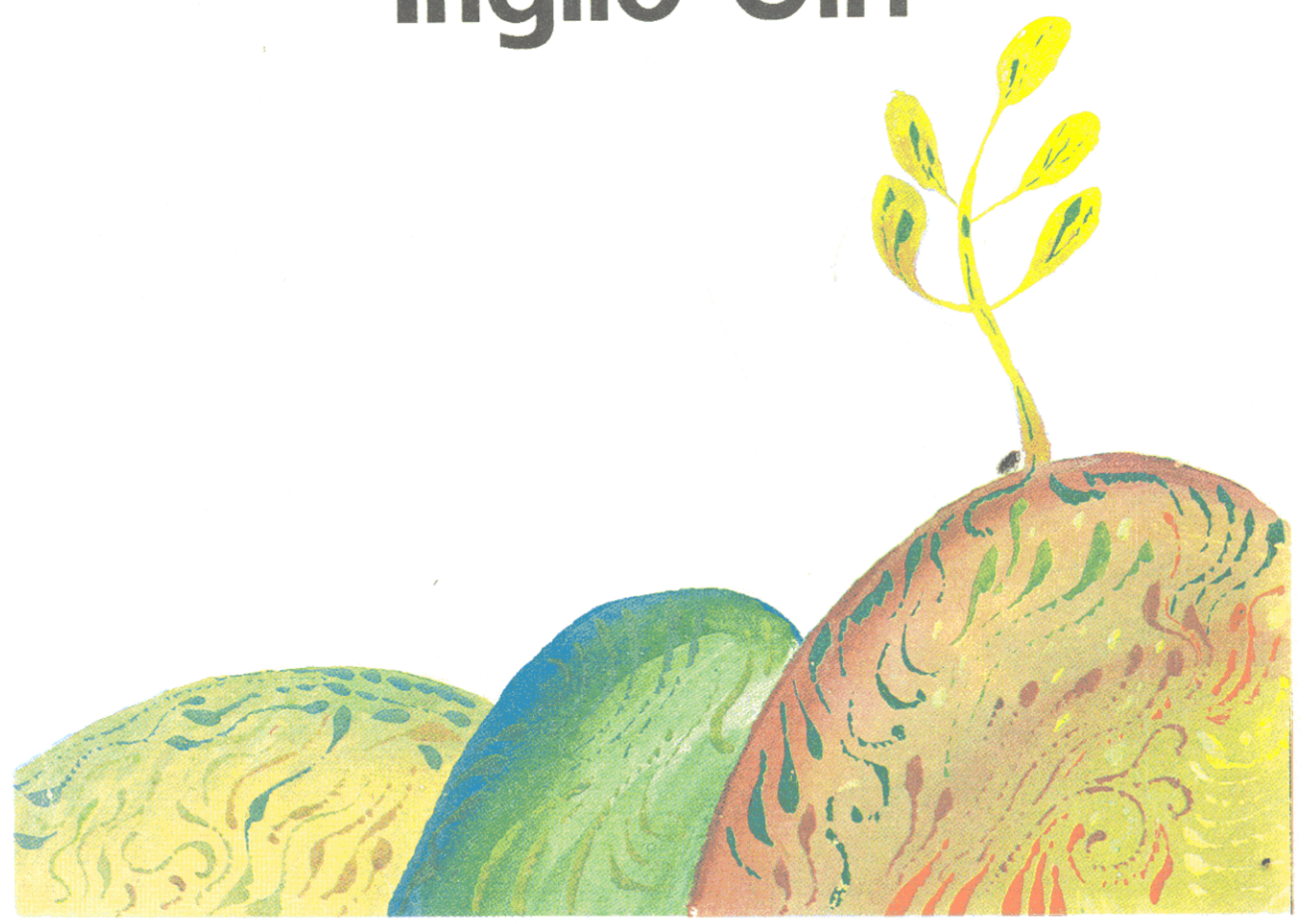




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სამსახური



# King Erekle and the Ingilo Girl









## KING EREKLE AND THE INGILO GIRL



### I

After his victory over the Lezghins of Chari, King Erekle was returning home with his army. The King, a fine-looking man of about fifty, rode at the head of his army on a splendid charger. The warriors followed the King. The way lay through the land of the Ingilo. The army rode into a wide lane bordered by spreading vineyards and orchards, where the trees were heavy with ripe fruit.

Suddenly somebody threw a handful of plums straight at the king's head. The King, very much astonished, pulled up his charger. The army stopped too. They looked round and saw an Ingilo girl of about twelve in a plum-tree near a hedge. It was she who had thrown the plums at the King.

The King's attendants dismounted immediately, came up to the hedge and shouted at her:

- You naughty girl, what are you doing there? How dare you throw plums at your King? Get down from that tree at once and beg the king's pardon, or you'll suffer for it!

- What? King Erekle, indeed! - the girl cried in surprise. - He can't be our King, he is wearing a Persian turban. I threw plums at a Persian, our deadly enemy, and not at the King whom we love as our God. You needn't threaten me for nothing. I won't come down and beg that man's pardon. - And she climbed higher up the tree.

The king heard her answer and laughed heartily. He took off his Persian turban which he had got accustomed to wear in his boyhood while living in Persia, showed the girl his shapely Georgian head and said to her:

- That's a good girl! You are quite right. I shouldn't wear a Persian turban. A Georgian king should be Georgian in appearance and in dress. You have given me a good hint by throwing those plums. Well done, you are a real Georgian girl!

Saying this, the King took a handful of silver coins from his pocket, gave them to an attendant and ordered him to give the money to the little girl as a present from him.

Now the girl understood her error. She was very sorry. She refused to accept the gift. But the attendant said to her:

- Do you want to offend the King again? No one has ever refused a royal gift. If you want to please the King, take this money.





The girl obeyed. She climbed down to a lower branch, took the money and put it into her pocket. Then she climbed up to the very top of the tree, looked out from among the branches, bowed to the King and cried in a ringing voice:

- Long live King Erekle!

- Long live this Georgian girl too! - cried the King warmly. Then, still bare-headed, he led the army on. The men followed him, singing a melodious Georgian song. The girl stood in the treetop and followed them with her eyes. When the song ended, her voice rang out again:- Long live King Erekle! Long live the Georgian army! - She stood there for a long time feeling such delight she had never dreamed of. She was overjoyed to have seen the King, to have had a talk with him and to have got a present from him. She got down only when the King and his army had disappeared far away in the mist.

But the girl wouldn't leave the orchard. She gazed with love at the spot where the King had stood when he spoke to her, and at the plum-tree which had now become so dear to her. She would never forget that happy moment. An hour before, it was just an ordinary tree and now it was her dear friend forever.

At last the Ingilo girl awoke from her happy dreams. She remembered her parents and hurried off to tell them about her wonderful adventure.

## II

Some years went by. An Ingilo peasant was getting married. The wedding-feast was prepared in his house. The bride was our acquaintance, the Ingilo girl. She and her bridegroom sat side by side, their faces bright and happy. Looking at them, everybody said: "What a fine couple!"

As soon as the guests were seated round the table, the toast-master called for a moment's silence and proposed a toast to the King: - Long live our hero, King Erekle. God grant him victory over the Lezghins, the Persians, the Turks, over South and North!

- Long live King Erekle! - shouted the guests so loud that the cheer almost brought the house down.

Suddenly the door opened and a well-dressed stranger came in. He greeted the company and said:

- It seems I've come just in time. The King sent me here to bring his gifts to the Ingilo girl who threw a handful of plums at his Persian turban some years ago. Then he handed the bride a heavy purse full of gold. - I have also brought your dowry, - he added.









At that moment some carts loaded with all kinds of beautiful things drove up to the gate. The people praised the King's bounty, and such merry-making began that neither tongue nor pen can describe it. The people sang songs in praise of the King. Men and women, old and young were delighted. The bride was overjoyed. It was not the dowry that made her so happy, but the kindness of the King.

Soon all the villagers heard about the dowry. They considered it to be an honour to all of them. Their hearts were full of gratitude and loyalty to the King.

### III

Twenty-five years passed. A terrible battle was raging in the valley of Krtsanissi near Tbilisi. Five thousand Georgians were fighting for their country's freedom against seventy thousand Persians. The King, a man of eighty, still brave and bold, fought like a lion, forgetful of self. His life was in danger every minute.

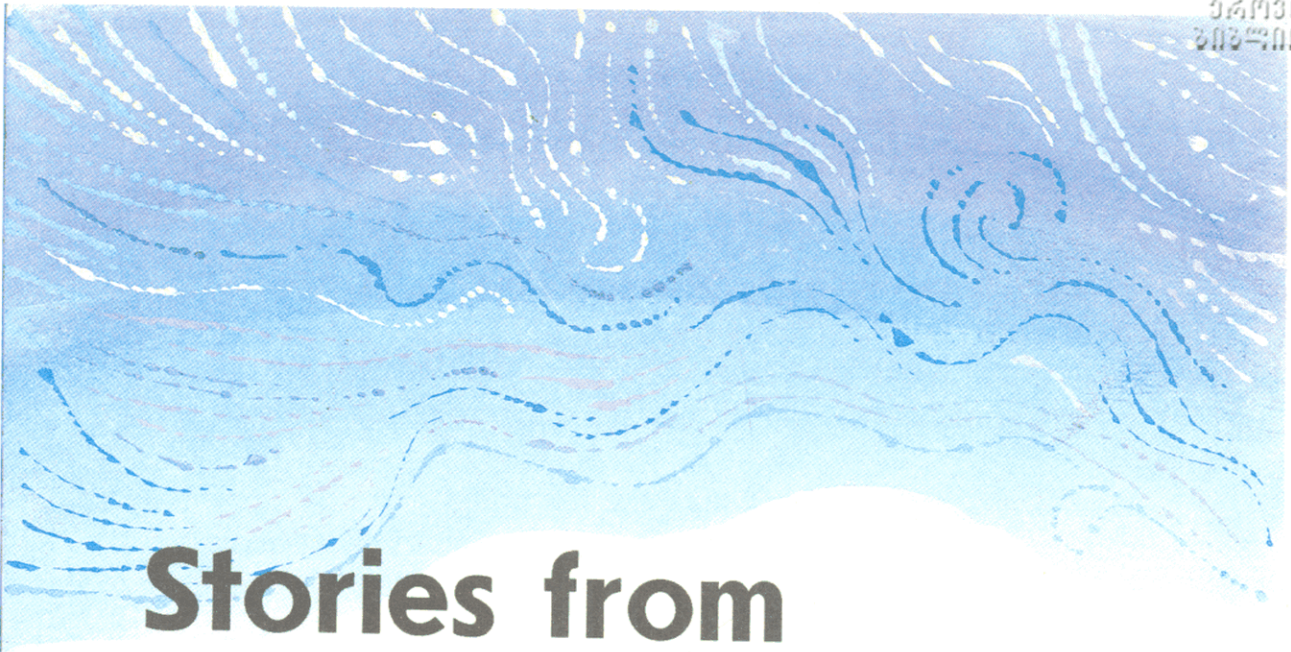
Two young men were fighting side by side with the King. Their bravery and devotion attracted everybody's attention. Several times they threw the enemy back, several times they shielded the King with their own bodies. They killed a great many Persians before they gave up their own lives for Georgia and their King. They both died the death of heroes in the valley of Krtsanissi, before the eyes of King Erekle.

Who were those two youths? They were the elder sons of our old acquaintance, the Ingilo woman, and they were both the King's godsons.

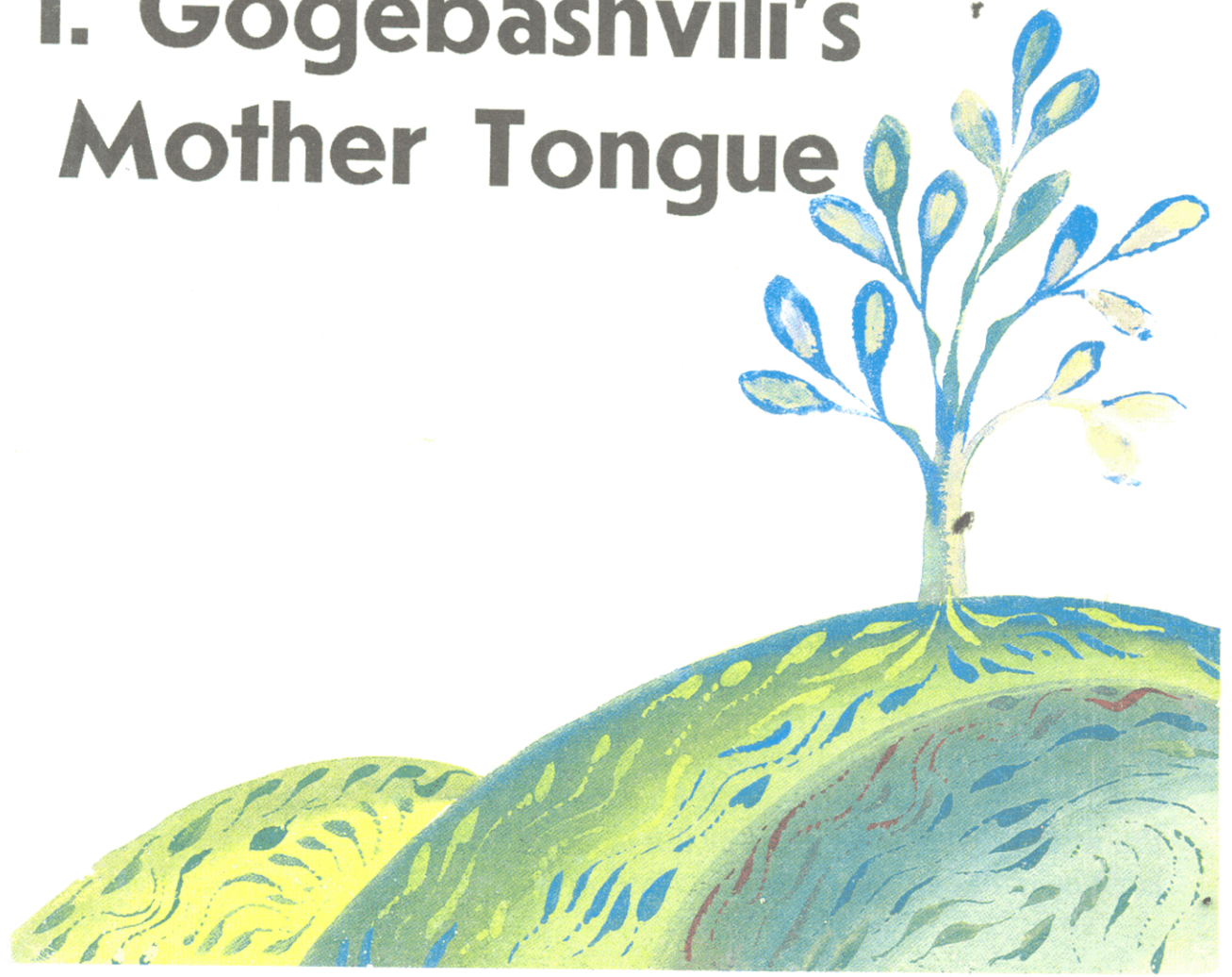
Soon the sad news reached the Ingilo land. The mother was told about her sons' heroic death.

- Thank God for granting my sons a glorious death! - said the mother. - Not in vain have I hated the Persians so bitterly since my childhood. My heart must have told me that those tyrants would bring sorrow to me and danger to my country. Now I see that my heart's forebodings have come true, - went on that exemplary mother. "Thank God, I have still got four sons and two daughters! I shall bring them up still better patriots, and, together with other sons of our country, they will take revenge on the enemy, they will fight for Georgia's happiness!





# Stories from I. Gogebashvili's Mother Tongue





## THE CLEVER GROUSE

A black grouse was sitting in a tree.

A fox came up to the tree and said to her:

- Hullo, my friend! How are you? I heard your voice and hurried to see you.

- Thank you for your kindness, - replied the black grouse.

Then the fox cried:

- I can't hear anything. Come down here and let's have a talk.

- I can't come down, I'm afraid. It's dangerous for birds to walk on the ground.

- Maybe you are afraid of me? - the fox asked.

- Why of you? Of others, maybe. There are all kinds of beasts.

- Don't be afraid, my dear, - replied the fox. "There is a new law. There must be peace all over the world. Now beasts cannot eat one another.

- It's a splendid law, - the black grouse cried from the tree. - This law will save you from the dogs I see running this way.

Hearing these words, the fox pricked up his ears and was about to run away.

- Why are you running away? - the black grouse asked.

- There is a new law and no beast will eat you.

- It's true, but maybe these do not know anything about the new law, - the fox said and hurried off.

## THE WOLF AND THE LAMB

Some sheep were grazing near a forest. A lamb wandered away from the flock.

The mother sheep said to her lamb: - Don't go far, my child. I'm afraid you'll get into trouble.

A wolf was hiding behind a bush.

- Don't listen to your mother! She is already old. She is too lazy to walk and doesn't let you run about. Go to the field and run about as much as you like, - the wolf said to the lamb.

The lamb followed the wolf's advice and ran to the field. That was what the wolf wanted. He rushed at the lamb and carried it off to the forest. The lamb began to cry, but it was too late.





## GIGO AND THE GOAT

There was a very lazy boy whose name was Gigo. Once he said:

- I'll show everybody what a diligent boy I am.

So he took his book and went to the centre of the village. He sat down on a stump, put the book on his knee and began to look into it, as if to say, "Look at me, what a diligent boy I am."

He hold the book upside down and looked into it without reading it, of course.

Soon Gigo got sleepy and began to nod. Just then his neighbour's goat came up. When he saw Gigo nodding, he thought Gigo wanted to butt him. He ran at him, hit him with his horns, butted his forehead and sent him rolling head over heels.

Gigo began to cry.



## THE HAWK AND THE DUCK

One day a hawk caught a duck and wanted to eat it.  
Suddenly a partridge, frightened by a hunter, darted by. The hawk tried to catch the partridge.  
Just then the duck slipped from the claws of the hawk and flew away.  
The hawk couldn't catch the partridge and lost the duck too.

## THE TURTLE-DOVE AND THE PIGEON

A turtle-dove fell into a net and tried to get free. She darted to and fro, trying to get free.  
A young pigeon saw her but didn't help her. She began to laugh at her: - Are you not ashamed to fall into a net in the day-time? Nobody shall deceive me so easily.  
Nearby there was a net made of horse-hair.  
The mocking pigeon didn't see it and fell into it.

## THE DOG AND THE COW

A dog was lying on the hay in the manger.  
A hungry cow came up to the manger and began to eat the hay.  
The dog snapped at the cow and turned it away.  
The cow said: - You nasty creature, why are you so greedy? You can't eat it yourself, and you won't let me eat it.

## THE LIAR

A boy was grazing his sheep in the field.  
Some peasants were mowing in the corn-field nearby. The boy decided to frighten them and began to shout:  
- Wolf, Wolf!  
The peasants ran up to him and saw that it was not true.  
The boy did the same thing again and again.  
One day a wolf really came out of the forest. The boy began to shout for help, but the peasants wouldn't listen to him. They thought it was not true.  
The wolf attacked the sheep and killed many of them.





## THE FOX

It was a wintry night. The village was asleep. A long — tailed fox was stealing across a field covered with snow. He was hungry.

- Cock-a-doodle-do! - the fox heard the crowing of a cock.

- Wait a moment! - the fox cried out. - I'll come and stop your noise!

There was a hen-house nearby. The fox dug through the bottom of the hen-house and got in. The hens got frightened.

The fox ate up some of the hens. He took the fattest hen and carried it away.

The next day the fox came to the hen-house again.

The owner of the house laid a trap and the fox fell into it.



## THE TWO YOUNG COCKS

Two young cocks were fighting in the yard. One of them was stronger than the other. He overcame the other and drove him away.

The hens gathered round the victor and praised him.

The young cock wanted his neighbours to know how strong he was. He flew onto a fence, waved his wings and crowed loudly:

- Look at me, how brave I am! I overcame the young cock who fought me! I'm the strongest of all the cocks!

Just then a hawk came flying, seized him with his claws and carried him off to his nest.

## UNITY IS STRENGTH

A very old oak-tree grew in a forest. There was a hollow in it. Some bees lived in the hollow. The bees worked and made sweet honey.

One day a bear came up to the oak-tree. He heard the bees humming in the hollow. A bee flew out. It saw the bear and stopped.

- Hey, you, go away or we'll show you! - threatened the bee.

The bear began to laugh at its threat.

Soon a swarm of bees flew at the bear.

- How dare you come near us! - the bees buzzed and began to sting him.

The bear waved his paws, scratched his face, but he could do nothing.

Just then he heard a blackbird's voice from a tree:

- You'd better get away from here. True, bees are weak, but unity is strength. The strongest lion can do nothing against them.

The bear ran away to his den. And the swarm of bees returned home.

## A MEWING CAT

There was a house in which there were many mice.

The owner of the house got a cat, but the cat was a strange creature. It didn't move without mewling loudly, as if to say: - Look at me, how busy I am.

So the mice always heard the cat coming and hid.

The cat couldn't catch a single mouse.

The owner of the house turned the mewling cat out.



## THE CRANE AND THE GOOSE

A goose was swimming in the river and speaking loudly to himself:

- What a wonderful bird I am! I'm good at everything. I can walk and swim and fly. No other bird can do it! I'm the best bird of all!

A crane heard the goose's words and said to him:

- What a fool you are, goose! Tell me: - Can you swim like a fish? can you run like a deer? can you fly like an eagle? It's better to know one thing well than to know many things badly.

## THE ANT AND THE BEE

An ant was carrying a load four times heavier than itself. It began to complain: - No one works so much as I do, but nobody ever praises me. Just look at the bee. It never works, it only hums and flutters about over the flowers. It does nothing, but everybody praises it. That's not fair.

The bee heard it and answered:

- Brother, you work only for yourself, but I work not only for myself, but for men. That's why everybody praises me and nobody praises you.

## THE TWO PLOUGHSHARES

There were two ploughshares. They were exactly alike. One of them ploughed all the time, the other lay idly in a corner.

After a long time they met again. The first one was bright, the other was rusty.

The rusty one asked:

- My friend, what makes you look so bright?

- Work,- replied the other.

## THE TWO DEER

Two deer were grazing in a field of grass.

One of them plucked a bunch of fresh grass and gave it to the other.

- Thank you, brother, - the other said, - I've got plenty of grass, you see."

- I know that you don't need it, but I wanted to please you, - replied the first one.



## THE LITTLE MOUSE

A little mouse crept out of its hole and began to walk in the yard. It wanted to know what the world looked like. But in a few minutes it ran back trembling with fright and crept into the hole again.

- Where have you been? What's happened to you? - asked the mother mouse.

- I've been out taking a walk.

- What frightened you?

- I saw two beasts in the yard. One of them had a saw on his head and spurs on his feet, and he had a hooked beak. When he saw me, he bent one leg, opened his beak and began to crow so loud that I was frightened.

- It was a cock, dear child. You must not be afraid of cocks, they are not dangerous, not at all, they don't eat mice, - said the mother.

- The other was so pretty, - said the little mouse. - It had a pretty round head and big eyes; it had a beautifully brushed moustache, soft fur and a long fluffy tail; it had soft paws with little claws, just like us! When I went out into the yard, it was lying in the sun turning over and over. Now it closed its eyes, now it opened them and licked its paws. When it saw me, it turned towards me. I was frightened and ran home.

- Oh, dear, it was a cat! The cat is our enemy, it eats mice. When you see a cat, you must run away.



# CONTENTS

The Lullaby -----	5
King Erekle and the Ingilo Girl -----	26
Stories from I. Gogebashvili's Mother Tongue -----	31
The Clever Grouse -----	32
The Wolf and the Lamb -----	32
Gigo and the Goat -----	33
The Hawk and the Duck -----	34
The Turtle-Dove and the Pigeon -----	34
The Dog and the Cow -----	34
The Liar -----	34
The Fox -----	35
The Two Young Cocks -----	36
Unity is Strength -----	36
A Mewing Cat -----	36
The Crane and the Goose -----	37
The Ant and the Bee -----	37
The Two Ploughshares -----	37
The Two Deer -----	37
The Little Mouse -----	38



ЯКОБ ГОГЕБАШВИЛИ  
Колыбельная и другие рассказы  
(на английском языке)

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