

Merguen and his friends

A long time ago, on the banks of the Gorin river in the Siberian mountains, there lived a very brave and generous boy named Merguen. He was an excellent fisherman and hunter, but he only killed what he needed in order to survive. If you ever visit these lands and want to hear a wonderful story, just ask the villagers to tell you about the adventures of "Merguen and His Friends".

One day, Merguen ventured out into the forest, into the dangerous territory of a great tigress. He came across a deer who asked him for help because his antlers were entwined in the trees' branches and he couldn't move-he was trapped. The hunter felt sorry for him and saved him. Then the deer told him that if he ever needed help, he should just call out for him.

The hunter continued cautiously on his way and after a while came across a crow who was on the ground with an injured wing. When the crow saw Merguen, he begged for his help. The hunter felt very sorry for him so he picked him up and fixed his wing. Then the crow told him that if he ever needed help he should just call out for him.

The hunter continued walking along the river bank and as he was about to sit down to rest, he heard a hoarse voice crying out for help. It was a huge sturgeon, who had been left on the river bank to die. The hunter felt sorry for him and helped him back into the water. After a short while, the fish surfaced and said to him that if he ever needed help, he should just call out for him.

Soon after, the hunter set out again on his way and reached a village he had never seen before. Since he was hungry, he decided to have lunch at an inn. The innkeeper had a very beautiful daughter: her face shone like bronze, she had bright eyes and a long black braid, dark as night, flowed down her back. The girl and the hunter fell madly in love. Then the desperate innkeeper told Merguen a horrifying story: his daughter was under a terrible spell that forced her to flee into the forest and turn into a great tigress every night. The spell could only be broken by a suitor who had passed three very difficult trials, but if he didn't succeed, he would be devoured by the beast.

"Other suitors had failed in the attempt," he told him, "and had died a ghastly death." But the young hunter was so deeply in love with the girl that he accepted the challenge without hesitation.

The innkeeper then gave him a pair of steel boots and told him that he had to wear out the soles in one night; then he could pass on to the second trial. Merguen grew very sad because he knew that even if he wore them for the rest of his life, he would never wear them down, but then he remembered the deer. He called out for him and told him of his troubles. The deer put the boots on his front legs and spent the night running up and down the mountain rocks. The sparks flying off from the rocks glittered like stars lighting the way in the darkness of the night . And the next morning when he got back, he had worn out the soles completely.

When the innkeeper saw this, he presented the second trial. He had five sacks of wheat strewn all around the village streets and told the hunter that he had one morning to put all the wheat--right

down to the last grain--back into the sacks. Then Merguen went to the forest and called out for the crow and asked for his help. The crow immediately called together all the crows in Siberia and darkness suddenly fell over the village as a huge cloud of crows gathered together to collect all the grains of wheat and deposit them in the sacks. In a short time, not a single grain was left.

Then the innkeeper set out the conditions for the third and final trial: before dusk he had to find a gold ring that had been lying on the bottom of the river for some time. Merguen had lost all hope because it was impossible to search such a long river bed. But then he remembered what the sturgeon had said to him.

He called out for him three times. The river waters seemed to bubble and boil with foam gathering on the surface and then the fish's head popped up. When the sturgeon heard what the problem was, he summoned all of his fish friends, big and small, and together they searched every nook and cranny along the river bed until they found the ring.

Then Merguen raced to get it to the innkeeper in time because it was starting to get dark. The innkeeper, happy that Merguen had succeeded in the three trials and had broken the spell, invited him into his house. Then the two lovers gave each other a long, sweet kiss, which is the end of this story and the start of another one.

Script: Manel Riera-Eures

- 
- 
- Amb el suport de 

© CCRTV Interactiva, S.A. | Televisió de Catalunya, S.A.

- [Avís legal](#) |
- [Segell de qualitat](#) |
- [Contacta](#) **54€0** |
- - [Idiomes](#)
 - [Català](#)
 - [Castellano](#)
 - [English](#)