



# *The Wondrous Story of Ivan Golik and the Serpents*

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Ukrainian

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*Intermediate*  
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Somewhere, nowhere, in another kingdom, in the Empire of Thrice-ten, lived—whether 'twas a Tsar and a Tsaritsa, or only a Prince and a Princess, I know not, but anyhow they had two sons. One day this prince said to his sons, “Let us go down to the seashore and listen to the songs of the sea-folk!” So they went. Now the prince wanted to test the wits of his two sons; he wanted to see which of the twain was fit for ruling his empire, and which should stand aside and make way for better men. So they went on together till they came to where three oaks stood all in a row. The prince looked at the trees, and said to his eldest son, “My dear son, what wouldst thou make of those trees?”

“What would I make of them, dear father? I would make me good barns and store-houses out of them. I would cut them down and plane the timber well, and goodly should be the planks I should make of them.”

“Good, my son!” replied the prince, “thou wilt make a careful householder.”

Then he asked his younger son, “And what wouldst thou make out of these oaks, my son?”

“Well, dear father,” said he, “had I only as much power as will, I would cut down the middle oak, lay it across

the other two, and hang up every prince and every noble in the wide world.”

Then the prince shook his head and was silent.

Presently they came to the sea, and all three stood still and looked at it, and watched the fishes play. Then, suddenly, the prince caught hold of his younger son, and pitched him right into the sea. “Perish!” cried he, “for ’tis but just that such a wretch as thou shouldst perish!”

Now, just as the father pitched his younger son into the sea, a great whale-fish was coming along and swallowed him, and into its maw he went. There he found wagons with horses and oxen harnessed to them, all of which the fish had also gobbled. So he went rummaging about these wagons to see what was in them, and he found that one of the wagons was full of tobacco-pipes and tobacco, and flints and steels. So he took up a pipe, filled it with tobacco, lit it, and began to smoke. He smoked out one pipe, filled another, and smoked that too; then he filled a third, and began smoking that. At last the smoke inside the whale made it feel so uncomfortable that it opened its mouth, swam ashore, and went asleep on the beach. Now some huntsmen happened to be going along the beach at that time, and one of them saw the whale, and said, “Look, my brethren! we have been hunting jays and crows and shot nothing, and lo! what a monstrous fish lies all about the shore! Let us shoot it!”

So they shot at it and shot at it, and then they fell upon it with their axes and began to cut it to pieces. They cut and hacked at it till suddenly they heard something calling to them from the middle of the fish, “Ho! my brothers! hack fish if you like, but hack not that flesh which is full of Christian blood!”

They fell down to the ground for fright, and were like dead men, but the prince’s younger son crept out of the hole in the fish that the huntsmen had made, went out upon the shore, and sat down. He sat down there quite naked, for all his clothes had rotted and dropped off inside the fish. Maybe he had been a whole year in the whale without knowing it, and he thought to himself, “How shall I now manage to live in the wide, wide world?”

Meanwhile the elder brother had become a great nobleman. His father had died, and he was lord over his whole inheritance. Then, as is the wont of princes, he called together his senators and his servants, and they counselled their young prince to marry; so out he went to seek a bride, and a great retinue followed after him. They went on and on till they came to where a naked man was sitting. Then the prince said to one of his servants, "Go and see what manner of man that is!"

So the servant went up to the man, and said, "Hail!"

"Hail to thee!"

"Who art thou, prythee?"

"I am Ivan Golik (Ivan Naked). Who art thou?"

"We are from such and such a land, and we are going with our prince to seek him a bride."

"Go, tell thy prince that he must take me with him, for he'll make no good match without me."

So the messenger returned to the prince and told him. Then the prince bade his servants open his trunk and take out a shirt and pantaloons and all manner of raiment, whereupon the naked man went into the water and washed, and after that he dressed himself. Then they brought him to the prince, and he said to him, "If you take me with you, you must all obey me. If you listen to me, you shall remain in the land of Russia; but if not, you shall all perish."

"Be it so!" said the prince, and he bade all his suite obey him.

They went on and on till they overtook the hosts of the mice. The prince wanted to go hunting after the mice, but Ivan Golik said, "Nay, step aside and give place to the mice, so that not a single one of them lose a single hair!"

So they turned aside, and the mice swept by in their hosts, but the hindmost mouse turned round and said, "Thanks to thee, Ivan Golik, thou hast saved my host from perishing; I will save thine also."

Then they went on farther, and lo! the gnat was marching with his host, and so vast was it that no eye could

take it all in. Then the lieutenant-general of the gnats came flying up and said, "Oh, Ivan Golik! let my host drink of thy blood. If thou dost consent, 'twill be to thy profit; but if thou dost not consent, thou shalt not remain in the land of Russia."

Then he stripped off his shirt and bade them tie him up so that he could not beat off a single gnat, and the gnats drank their fill of him and flew off again.

After that they went along by the seashore till they came to a man who had caught two pike. Then Ivan Golik said to the prince, "Buy those two pike of the man, and let them go into the sea again."

"But wherefore?"

"Ask not wherefore, but buy them!"

So they bought the pike, and let them go into the sea again. But as they swam away, the pike turned round and said, "We thank thee, Ivan Golik, that thou hast not let us perish, and it shall be to thy weal and welfare!"

Swiftly they moved on their way, but the story that tells thereof moves still swifter. They went on and on, for more than a month maybe, till they came to another land and to another tsardom, to the Empire of Thrice-ten. And the serpent was the Tsar of that tsardom. Vast were his palaces, iron railings surrounded his courtyards, and the railings were covered with the heads of various warriors; only on the twenty huge pillars in front of the gate were there no heads. As they drew nigh, deadly fear oppressed the heart of the prince, and he said to Ivan, "Mark me, Ivan! those pillars yonder are meant for our heads!"--"That remains to be seen," replied Ivan Golik.

When they arrived there, the serpent at first treated them hospitably as welcome guests. They were all to come in and make merry, he said, but the prince he took to his own house. So they ate and drank together, and the thoughts of their hearts were joyous. Now the serpent had twenty-one daughters, and he brought them to the prince, and told him which was the eldest, and which the next eldest, down to the very last one. But it was the youngest daughter of all that the prince's fancy fed upon more than on any of the others. Thus they diverted themselves till evening, and in the evening they made ready to go to sleep. But the serpent said to the prince, "Well, which of my daughters dost thou think the loveliest?"

“The youngest is the most beautiful,” said the prince, “and her will I wed.”

“Good!” said the serpent, “but I will not let thee have my daughter till thou hast done all my tasks. If thou doest my tasks, thou shalt have my daughter; but if thou doest them not, thou shalt lose thy head, and all thy suite shall perish with thee.”

Then he gave him his first task: “In my barn are three hundred ricks of corn; by the morning light thou shalt have threshed and sifted them so that stalk lies by stalk, chaff by chaff, and grain by grain.”

Then the prince went to his own place to pass the night there, and bitterly he wept. But Ivan Golik saw that he was weeping, and said to him, “Why dost thou weep, O prince?”

“Why should I not weep, seeing the task that the serpent has given me is impossible?”

“Nay, weep not, my prince, but lie down to sleep, and by the morning light it will all be done!”

No sooner had Ivan Golik left the prince than he went outside and whistled for the mice. Then the mice assembled round them in their hosts: “Why dost thou whistle, and what dost thou want of us, O Ivan Golik?” said they.

“Why should I not whistle, seeing that the serpent has bidden us thresh out his barn by the morning light, so that straw lies by straw, chaff by chaff, and grain by grain?”

No sooner did the mice hear this than they began scampering all about the barn! There were so many of them that there was not room to move. They set to work with a will, and long before dawn it was quite finished. Then they went and awoke Ivan Golik. He went and looked, and lo! all the chaff was by itself, and all the grain was by itself, and all the straw by itself! Then Ivan bade them be quite sure that there was not a single grain remaining in a single ear of corn. So they scampered all about, and there was not a mouse which did not look under every stalk of straw. Then they ran up to him, and said, “Fear not! there is not a single loose grain anywhere. And now we have requited thee thy service, Ivan Golik, farewell!”

Next morning the prince came to seek Ivan, and marvelled to find that everything had been done as the serpent had commanded. So he thanked Ivan Golik, and went off to the serpent. Then they both went together, and the

serpent himself was amazed. He called to his twenty-one daughters to search the ears of corn well to see whether one single grain might not be found therein, and his daughters searched and searched, but there was not a single loose grain to be found. Then said the serpent, "Tis well, let us go! We will eat and drink and make merry till evening, and in the evening I will give thee thy to-morrow's task." So they made merry till evening, and then the serpent said, "Early this morning, my youngest daughter went bathing in the sea and lost her ring in the water. She searched and searched for it, but could find it nowhere. If thou canst find it to-morrow, and bring it hither while we are sitting down to meat, thou shalt remain alive; if not, 'tis all over with thee!"

The prince returned to his own people and fell a-weeping. Ivan Golik perceived it, and said to him, "Wherefore dost thou weep?"

"For such and such a reason," said he; "dost thou not see that I am ruined?"

Then said Ivan Golik, "The serpent lies. He himself it was who took his daughter's ring and flew over the sea early this morning, and dropped it in the water. But lie down and sleep! I myself will go to the sea to-morrow, haply I may find the ring."

So, very early next morning, Ivan Golik went down to the sea. He shouted with an heroic voice, and whistled with an heroic whistle, till the whole sea was troubled by a storm. Then the two pike he had thrown back into the sea came swimming to the shore. "Why dost thou call us, O Ivan Golik?" said they.

"Why should I not call you? The serpent flew over the sea early yesterday morning and dropped in it his daughter's ring. Search for it everywhere. If you find it, I shall remain alive, but if you find it not, know that the serpent will remove me from the face of the earth!"

Then they swam off and searched, nor was there a single corner of the sea where they searched not. Yet they found nothing. At last they swam off to their mother, and told her what a great woe was about to befall. Their mother said to them, "The ring is with me. I am sorry for him, and still more sorry for you, so you may have it." And with that she drew off the ring, and they swam with it to Ivan Golik, and said, "Now we have requited thy service. We have found it, but 'twas a hard task."

Then Ivan Golik thanked the two pike and went on his way. He found the prince weeping, for the serpent had already sent for him twice, and there was no ring. The moment he saw Ivan Golik he sprang to his feet, and

said, "Hast thou the ring?"

"Yes, here it is! But look! the serpent himself is coming!"

"Let him come!"

The serpent was already on the threshold as the prince was going out. They ran against each other with their foreheads, and the serpent was very angry. "Where's the ring?" cried he.

"There it is! But I will not give it to thee, but to her from whom thou didst take it."

The serpent laughed. "Very good!" said he, "but now let us go to dinner, for my guests are many, and we have been waiting for thee this long time."

So they went. The prince arrived at the house, where eleven serpents were sitting down to dinner. He saluted them, and then went on to the daughters, and said, as he drew off the ring, "To which of you does this belong?"

Then the youngest daughter blushed and said, "To me!"

"If it be thine, take it, for I sounded all the depths of the sea in searching for it."

All the others laughed, but the youngest daughter thanked him.

Then they all went to dine. After dinner the serpent said to him, in the presence of all the guests, "Well, prince, now that thou hast dined and rested, to thy tasks again! I have a bow of one hundred poods (1 pood = 40 lbs.) weight. If thou canst bend this bow in the presence of these my guests, thou shalt have my daughter!"

When dinner was over they all lay down to rest, but the prince hastened off as quickly as he could to Ivan Golik, and said, "Now indeed it is all over with us, for he has given me such and such a task."

"Simpleton!" cried Ivan Golik, "when they bring forth this bow, look at it, and say to the serpent, 'I should be ashamed to bend a bow that the least of my servants can bend!' Then call me, and I'll bend the bow so that none other will be able to bend it again."

With that the prince went straight off to the serpent again, and the serpent commanded and they brought the bow, together with an arrow weighing fifty poods. When the prince saw it, he was like to have died of fright;

but they put the bow down in the middle of the courtyard, and all the guests came out to look at it. The prince walked all round the bow and looked at it. "Why," said he, "I would not deign to touch a bow like that. I'll call one of my servants, for any one of them can bend such a bow as that!"

Then the serpent looked at the prince's servants one after the other, and said, "Well, let them try!"

"Come forward thou, Ivan Golik!" cried the prince.

And the prince said to him, "Take me up that bow and bend it!"

Ivan Golik took up the bow, placed the arrow across it, and drew the bow so that the arrow split into twelve pieces and the bow burst. Then the prince said, "Did I not tell you? and was I to put myself to shame by touching a bow that one of my servants can draw?"

After that Ivan Golik returned to his fellow-servants, and put the pieces of the broken bow behind his shin-bone; but the prince returned with the serpents into the guest-chamber, and they all rejoiced because he had done his appointed task. But the serpent whispered something in the ear of his youngest daughter, and she went out, and he after her. They remained outside a long time, and then the serpent came in again, and said to the prince, "There is no time for anything more to-day, but we'll begin again early to-morrow morning. I have a horse behind twelve doors; if thou canst mount it, thou shalt have my daughter."

Then they made merry again till evening and lay down to sleep, but the prince went and told Golik. Golik listened to the prince, and said, "Now thou knowest, I suppose, why I took up those pieces of the broken bow, for I could see what was coming. When they lead forth this horse, look at it and say, 'I will not mount that horse lest I put myself to shame. 'Tis with the horse as with the bow, any one of my servants can mount it!' But that horse is no horse at all, but the serpent's youngest daughter! Thou must not sit upon her back, but I will trounce her finely."

Early in the morning they all arose, and the prince went to the serpent's house to greet them all, and there he saw twenty of the serpent's daughters, but where was the twenty-first? Then the serpent got up and said, "Well, prince, now let us come down into the courtyard; they'll soon bring out the horse, and we'll see what thou dost make of it."

So they all went out and saw two serpents bringing out the horse, and it was as much as the pair of them could do to hold its head, so fierce and strong it was. They led it out in front of the gallery, and the prince walked round it and looked at it. Then said he, "What! did you not say you would bring out a horse? Why, this is no horse, but a mare. I will not sit on this mare, for 'twould be to my shame. I will call one of my servants, and he shall mount her."

"Good!" said the serpent, "let him try!"

The prince called forth Ivan Golik. "Sit on that mare," said he, "and trot her about!"

Ivan mounted the mare, and the two serpents let go. She carried him right up among the clouds, and then down again upon the ground she came, with a ringing of hoofs that made the earth tremble. But Ivan Golik took out a fragment of the broken bow, fifty pounds in weight, and trounced her finely. She reared and bucked and carried him hither and thither, but he flogged her between the ears without ceasing. So when she saw that all her prancing and curveting was in vain, she fell to piteously beseeching him, and cried, "Ivan Golik! Ivan Golik! beat me not, and I'll do all thy behests!"

"I have nothing to do with thee at all," said he, "but when thou dost come up to the prince, fall down before him, and stretch out thy legs toward him!"

At this she bethought her for a long time. "Well," cried she at last, "it must be so, there is no doing anything with thee!" So she carried him all over the courtyard, fell down before the prince, and stretched out her legs toward him.

Then said the prince, "Thou seest what a sorry jade it is! And ye would have had me mount such a mare!"

At this the serpent was full of shame, but there was nothing to be said or done. So they went into the garden and sat them down to dinner. The youngest daughter met them there, and they greeted her. The prince could not refrain from looking at her, so fair was she, and now she seemed fairer than ever. Then they sat down and ate, and when the meal was over the serpent said, "Well, prince, after dinner I'll bring all my daughters into the courtyard, and if you can find out the youngest, you may be happy together."

So after dinner the serpent bade his daughters go and dress themselves, but the prince took counsel of Ivan

Golik. Ivan whistled, and immediately the gnat came flying up. He told the gnat all about it, and the gnat said, "Thou didst help me, so now I will help thee. When the serpent brings out his daughters, let the prince keep his eyes open, for I will fly on her head. Let him walk round them once, and I will fly round them too. Let him walk round them a second time, and I will fly round them twice also. Let him walk round them a third time, and then I'll settle on her nose, and she will not be able to endure my bite, but will strike at me with her right hand." And with these words the gnat flew off into the house.

Soon afterward the serpent sent for the prince. He went, and there in the courtyard stood the twenty-one daughters. They were as like as peas, their faces, their hair, and their raiment were exactly the same. He looked and looked, but could not tell one from the other. He walked round them the first time, but there was no sign of the gnat. He walked round them the second time, and the gnat came and lit upon her head. Henceforth he never took his eyes off the gnat, and when he had begun to walk round the twenty-one daughters for the third time, the gnat sat on the nose of the youngest, and began to bite her. She brushed it off with her right hand, whereupon the prince said, "She is mine!" and led her to the serpent.

The serpent was amazed, but said, "Since thou hast found out thy bride, we'll wed thee to-day, and all be merry together."

So they made them merry, and that very evening the young couple got their bridal crowns. And they feasted and fired guns, and what else did they not do? But at night, Ivan Golik took the prince aside, and said to him, "Now, prince, see that we go home to-morrow, for they mean us no good here. And now, listen to me! I beg thee tell not thy wife the truth of the matter for seven years. However caressing she may be, thou shalt not let her ears know the truth, for if thou dost tell her the truth, both thou and I shall perish!"

"Good!" said he. "I will not tell my wife the truth."

Next morning the young men arose and went to the serpent, and the prince took leave of his father-in-law, and said he must be going home.

"But why off so soon?" said the serpent.

"Nay, but I must go," said he.

Then the serpent gave the youth a banquet, and they sat down and ate and made merry, and after that he departed to his own tsardom. And the prince thanked Ivan Golik for all that he had done for him, and made him the first of his counsellors. Whatever Ivan Golik said was performed throughout the realm, while the Tsar had only to sit on his throne and do nothing.

So the young prince dwelt with his wife for a year or two, and in the third year a son was added to them, and the heart of the prince was glad. Now one day he took his little son in his arms, and said, "Is there anything in the wide world that I like better than this child?" When the princess saw that the heart of her spouse was tender, she fell a-kissing and caressing him, and began asking him all about the time when they were first married, and how he had been able to do her father's commands. And the prince said to her, "My head would long ago have been mouldering on the posts of thy father's palace had it not been for Ivan Golik. 'Twas he who did it all and not I."

Then she was very wrath. But she never changed countenance, and shortly afterward she went out.

Ivan Golik was sitting in his own house at his ease, when the princess came flying in to him. And immediately she drew out of the ground a handkerchief with gold borders, and no sooner had she waved this serpentine handkerchief, than Ivan fell asunder into two pieces. His legs remained where they were, but his trunk with his head disappeared through the roof, and fell seven miles away from the house. And as he fell he cried, "Oh, accursed one! did I not charge thee not to confess! Did I not implore thee not to tell thy wife the truth for seven years! And now I perish and thou also!"

He raised his head and found himself sitting in a wood, and there he saw an armless man pursuing a hare. He pursued and pursued it, but though he caught it up, he couldn't catch it, for he had no arms. Then Ivan Golik caught it and they fell out about it. The armless one said, "The hare is mine!"--"No," said Ivan Golik, "it is mine!" So they quarrelled over it, but as one had no legs and the other had no arms, they couldn't hurt one another. At last the armless one said, "What is the use of our quarrelling? Let us pull up that oak, and whichever of us pitches it farthest shall have the hare."

"Good!" said Legless.

Then Armless kicked Legless up to the oak, and Legless pulled it up and gave it to Armless. Then Armless lay

down on the ground and kicked the oak with his feet three miles off. But Legless threw it seven miles. Then Armless said, "Take the hare and be my elder brother!"

So they became brothers, and made a wagon between them, and fastened ropes to it, and while Armless dragged it along Legless drove it. On they went till they came to a town where a Tsar lived. There they went up to the church, and planted themselves with their wagon in the place of beggars, and waited till the Tsarivna came up. And the Tsarivna said to her court lady, "Take this money, and give it to those poor cripples."

The lady was about to go with it when Legless said, "Nay, but let the Tsarivna give it to us with her own hands."

Then the Tsarivna took the money from her court lady and gave it to Legless. But he said to her, "Be not angry, but tell me, now, wherefore art thou so yellow?"

"God made me so," answered she, and then she sighed.

"No," replied Legless. "I know why thou art so yellow. But I can make thee once more just as God made thee."

Now the Tsar had heard them speaking, and the words of the cripples moved him strangely. So he had the armless man and the legless man in the wagon brought to him, and said to them, "Do as you are able."

But Legless said, "O Tsar! let the Tsarivna speak the truth, and confess openly how she became so yellow!"

Then the father turned to his daughter, and she confessed and said, "The serpent flew to me, and drew my blood out of my breast."

"When did he fly to thee?" they asked.

"Just before dawn, when the guards were sleeping, he came flying down my chimney. In he came flying, and lay down beneath the cushions of my couch."

"Stop!" cried Legless; "we'll hide in the straw in thy room, and when the serpent comes flying in again, thou must cough and wake us."

So they hid them in the straw, and just as the guards had ceased knocking at the doors as they went their rounds, sparks began to flash beneath the straw roof, and the Tsarivna coughed. They rushed up to her, and

saw the serpent already nestling beneath the cushions. Then the Tsarivna leaped out of bed; but Armless lay down on the floor and kicked Legless on to the cushions, and Legless took the serpent in his arms and began to throttle it. "Let me go! let me go!" begged the serpent, "and I'll never fly here again, but will renounce my tithes."

But Legless said, "That is but a small thing. Thou must carry us to the place of healing waters, that I may get back my legs and my brother here his arms."

"Catch hold of me," said the serpent, "and I'll take you, only torture me no more."

So Legless clung on to him with his arms and Armless with his feet, and the serpent flew away with them till he came to a spring. "There's your healing water!" cried he.

Armless wanted to plunge in straightway, but Legless shrieked, "Wait, brother! Hold the serpent tight with your legs while I thrust a dry stick into the spring, and then we shall see whether it really is healing water."

So he thrust a stick in, and no sooner had it touched the water than it was consumed as though by fire. Then the pair of them, in their rage, fell upon that false serpent and almost killed him. They beat him and beat him till he cried for mercy. "Beat me no more!" cried he; "the spring of healing water is not very far off!" Then he took them to another spring. Into this they also dipped a dry stick, and immediately it burst into flower. Then Armless leaped into the spring and leaped out again with arms, whereupon he pitched in Legless, who immediately leaped out again with legs of his own. So they let the serpent go, first making him promise never to fly to the Tsarivna again, and then each thanked the other for his friendship, and so they parted.

But Ivan Golik went again to his brother the prince, to see what had become of him. "I wonder what the princess has done to him?" thought he. So he went toward that tsardom, and presently he saw not very far from the roadside, a swineherd tending swine; he was tending swine, but he himself sat upon a tomb. "I'll go and ask that swineherd what he's doing there," thought Ivan Golik.

So he went up to the swineherd, and, looking straight into his eyes, recognized his own brother. And the swineherd looked at him, and recognized Ivan Golik. There they stood for a long time looking into each other's eyes, but neither of them spoke a word. At last Ivan Golik found his voice: "What!" cried he. "Is it thou, O prince, who art feeding swine? Thou art rightly served! Did I not bid thee, 'Tell not thy wife the truth for seven

years'?"

At this the prince flung himself down at the other's feet, and cried, "O Ivan Golik! forgive me, and have mercy!"

Then Ivan Golik raised him up by the shoulders and said, "'Tis well for thee that thou art still in God's fair world! Yet wait a little while, and thou shalt be Tsar again!"

The prince thereupon asked Ivan Golik how he had got his legs back again, for the princess had told him how she had cut Ivan Golik in two. Then Ivan Golik confessed to him that he was his younger brother, and told him the whole story of his life. So they embraced and kissed each other, and then the prince said, "'Tis high time I drove these swine home, for the princess doesn't like being kept waiting for her tea."

"Well," said Ivan Golik, "we'll drive them back together."

"The worst of it, brother, is this," said the prince. "Dost thou see that accursed pig that leads the others? Well, he will go only up to the gate of the sty, and there he stands fast as if rooted to the ground, and until I kiss his bristles he will not move from the spot. And all the time the princess and the serpents are sitting in the gallery at tea, and they look on and laugh!"

But Ivan Golik said, "It needs must be so! Kiss it again to-day, and to-morrow thou shalt kiss it no more!"

Then they drove the swine up to the gates, and Ivan Golik looked to see what would happen. He saw the princess sitting in the gallery with six serpents drinking tea, and the accursed pig stuck fast in the gate, and stretched out its legs and wouldn't go in. The princess looked on and said, "Look at my fool driving the swine, and now he is going to kiss the big boar!"

So the poor fellow stooped down and kissed its bristles, and the pig ran grunting into the courtyard. Then the princess said, "Look! he has picked up from somewhere an under-herdsman to help him!"

The prince and Ivan Golik drove the pigs into their sty, and then Ivan Golik said, "Brother, get me twenty poods of hemp and twenty poods of pitch, and bring them to me in the garden." And he did so. Then Ivan Golik made him a huge whip of the twenty poods of hemp and the twenty poods of tar. First he twined tightly a pood of hemp, and tarred it well with a pood of pitch; round this he plaited another pood of hemp, and tarred that also with another pood of pitch, till he had used up the whole forty. By midnight his task was done, and then he laid

him down to sleep. But the prince had gone to sleep long before in the pig-sty.

Early in the morning they rose up again, and Ivan Golik said to him, "Up till to-day thou hast been a swineherd, and after to-day thou shalt be a prince again; but first let us drive the swine into the field."

"Nay, but," said the prince, "the princess has not yet come out upon the balcony to drink tea with the serpents, and see me kiss the pig before it goes out, as is her wont." Ivan Golik said to him, "We will drive the swine out this time too, but it will not be thou but I who shall kiss the big boar."

"Good!" said the prince.

And now the time came for the swine to be driven away, and the princess came out on the balcony to drink tea. They took the swine out of the sty, and the pair of them drove the beasts before them. When they reached the gate the leading pig stuck fast in the gateway, and wouldn't budge an inch. The princess and the serpents grinned and looked on, but Ivan Golik flicked his heroic whip, and struck the pig one blow that made it fly to pieces. Then all the serpents wriggled off as fast as they could. But she, the accursed one, was in no way frightened, but caught Ivan by the hair of his head. He, however, caught her also by her long locks, and flicked her with his whip till he had flicked all the serpent-blood out of her, and she walked the earth in human guise. So she cast off her serpent nature, and lived happily with her husband. And that's the end of the kazka.

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