



# Darynka

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Kids

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It is a chilly December evening. White snowflakes are dancing a waltz with the wind. Everything is white, white around. Silence. Pretty houses have been hidden under the magnificent white blanket. Nobody is seen outdoors .

Darynka's mother, having left her at home, had run to the shop to buy a carton of milk. Darynka was a first grader at one of Lviv's schools. She has attended a year of preparation for school in a kindergarten school «Nut» so she absolutely didn't want to read or write anything . Not knowing what to do during the winter holidays, she was mindlessly going from one corner of a room to the other.

Suddenly her eyes stopped on her father's socks which for some reason had always laid in the hall left untidily upon one another. There was a bad smell from them. Darynka started to kick them like a football.

Suddenly she heard a strange squeak from the socks.

"I don't have pets, parents don't want to buy them; the mice have hidden in holes long time ago, what could that sound be?"

"Oh! Oh! Don't kick! Don't!"

Darynka started to look around.

The doors were locked, her mom had not returned yet , this must be what my mom means when she talks about my rich imagination. She had lifted a leg to kick the socks once more but they said while moving.

"I ask you: don't kick!"

"What is it?" Darynka kept the conversation, Mom read me many fairy tales but in none of them was there anything about a talking sock. I better throw them into a rubbish bin.

Darynka bent over to take the socks into her arms but they jumped from her to the side.

“I ask you : don’t throw me away. I once did the same too but now... Listen to me. I was a very naughty boy. Having come inside from the street, I always threw my dirty socks wherever, and my mom would quarrel with me for that. Then, I started to hide them but mom continued finding them and quarreled at me even more than when they were left somewhere she could see them. Then I had started throwing them away into a rubbish bin. It was up until the time when I hadn’t had any clean socks left that my friend Urko came to take me to play football. Without thinking for very long I decided to take dad’s socks. It was not a problem that they were a bit bigger when suddenly they jumped off of the shelf and started to transform into a person. It was a grandmother of a medium height, with very kind eyes but an angry face. Her gray hair was in a tight ponytail. And her clothes! She wore a wonderful dress sewn from socks, lace stockings with stones that were shining to all the different corners of the room.

“I am the queen of Socksland. For your bad attitude towards my wards I will transform you into socks and you will be them until a princess finds you and releases you from this magic.”

The grandma disappeared. And the friend Urko fell onto the floor from fright.

Later he took these socks and started crying “I will save you! I...” But unfortunately, everything would not be so easy. The queen’s advice was to not wash the socks in the washing machine. Then my power will disappear and I will never be able to become a child again. So having taken me in his arms, Jurko quickly ran to a clothing store where he had left me, putting on the shop-front to give me some more time. Later your mother brought me and took home. My story is like this. Darynka was listening and couldn’t believe her own ears. Having thought for a minute she had decided to ask her mom for help but the boy-sock shook his head.

“If an adult should find out everything will be lost!” the sock said. The girl wanted to ask him a lot of questions about it but she knew her mom had to come back soon . She could hear only his name in her head until that time: Petryk.

The doorbell rang and Darynka ran to open the doors.

“How are you? You didn’t get bored without me I hope?” – her mom asked.

“No mom, everything is fine” she said hurriedly and quickly ran to her room.

There she had started to hide the socks and whispered that she will imagine something to help him.

The day passed like that and night covered the whole city with a black blanket. The next morning Darynka got up to the sound of Petryk whispering to her.

“Wake up, I’m asking you. Your mom there is going to throw all dirty clothes into the washing machine!” Having tidied her room, the girl had asked her mom to let her go outdoors. Having put the socks into her pocket, she quickly ran into a children library; maybe there she would find the information she sought. The librarians only shrugged their shoulders and were left wondering where the little girl came up with such fantasy. Leaving the library, the girl and Petryk ran into an old grandmother, who was calling them to come up to her. She looked exactly like Petryk described her and in her hands she held a lot of beads . Having seen a girl running around the village with socks in her hands she smiled must just for a minute and said:

“The answers you seek lie within a very old book. I will give you these 100 beads.”

And she disappeared just like she never was there. Holding the socks in her hands, Darynka carefully placed the beads into her mitten. The girl had remembered that on Pidvalna Street, near the Ivan Fedorov monument, there is a market where people sold old books. Her mother’s acquaintance, Mr. Vasyl worked in this market. She quickly moved up to him.

“Good afternoon, Mr. Vasyl”

“Good afternoon, Darynka! What can I do for you today?”

“I need your help. I am looking for a very, very old book but I don’t know yet what is it about.”

Thinking the man replied that the selection of books now is very small because people read little. They say now that they have a lot of “unneeded things” so people who sell books don’t get much of them for selling. However he did advise her to go to the Museum of Old Books. Maybe there she will find what she is looking for.

But by that time it was late already and Darynka decided to return home.

All evening different thoughts were flying in Darynka’s head. The next day she headed to the museum of a book. There the girl had seen many different ancient books. One of them was before a mirror and into her eyes fell onto the words “ruo ssecnirp”. She read a words from end to the beginning and murmured “our princess”. On top of the pile there were some water damaged books that had to be removed to the rubbish bin .The ceiling of the room had been leaking, and the museum lacked the money to fix it. Darynka asked to take one of the books with herself.

Fortunately, it was Thursday and her mom was at work. Having opened a book the girl turned into it.

Everything turned out to be far more difficult than she could have imagined.

To save the boy from the magic she had to travel to the Valley of Secrets. Only after having gone through all the tasks could she reach the Socksland. The only thing that Darynka could take comfort in is the fact that during

this journey the time in her world had stopped. So nobody will look for her or worry. To make this journey she can travel anytime. She needs only touch the book with a cloth and it will show her the road to travel. In the evening the girl prepared a bag, and packed away the book, beads, a bit of bread, some sausage and a bottle with tea to have with lunch during her journey. She then took the pair of socks in her hands and when her parents were asleep, left the flat. It was dark around her, yet the book was lightning her way and giving her warmth. Her path took her through a kindergarten which then lead into a big forest. Darynka knew that even during the day children were afraid to walk in the forest alone. It was hard for her to go through the snow. Most girls would be scared but she bravely made her way through the snow. Suddenly she heard a cry of pain. Moving closer, she laid her eyes upon a very beautiful white dog, its collar stuck to some metal. The dog looked at Darynka with very sad eyes and was shivering. The girl quickly freed the dog and fed it with the food she brought. The dog wagged its tail with excitement and surprisingly, began to speak.

-Thank you, girl, for saving me. Your heart has shown you the right way and you have passed the first task. If you were mistaken, I wouldn't survive and you would be trapped here forever.

Petted the dog Darynka cried out «I will name you Rami»

Traveling now with the dog, Darynka discovered that it wasn't that scary anymore. Having put arms into the socks she no longer felt cold. Suddenly they happened upon a big grey cat. The cat was, in fact, a cruel magician who considered himself the king of the factory. He promised a lot to naive children and these who served him brought him not only old things but even new ones. The magician held no love for the queen of Sockland and destroyed all her stockings products the quickest. Following the queen, which led him to Darynka, he disliked the little girl for this, that she wanted to save a boy-sock and he decided that he could not allow this. But the dog Rami started barking and chased away the cat, leaving the feline thinking about a plan in his head.

Having run close to the doors of Petryk's friend Urko's door Vaska began to talk loudly. He turned into a man with sly eyes and an angry face and quickly rang the doorbell. Introducing himself as an administrator of a large company he suggested to Jurko cooperation: to both gather all old clothes. The most he emphasized on socks. And for this he will give a boy a phone and will pay money for the socks as well. The thought of a new phone drove Jurko to accept the suggestion.

And at this time a little building appeared before Darynka. Having entered inside she spied a little working room where on some machine a cute woman was working.

-You should pass your second task here. See, the socks are lying on the table, you have to sew the holes in them. Eight must be finished before evening- if you do this you will enter Socksland, but if not we will have to say goodbye. By having taken to the machine the woman hadn't noticed how she lost a needle. "What is a needle?!" Darynka thought. Rami leaned over and instructed her to brush him and to take the hairs which fall from him. By this method she will be able to patch up the holes. And on her hair she can put beads and to stick them to socks.

"Thank you Rami for your help. I would never have imagined this without you."

Come evening the socks were ready

"You have succeeded with the task now welcome to our country!"- the woman said to the girl.

Socksland was really wonderful. All trees had some form of socks, stockings or leggings. From socks were made toys, clothes and souvenirs which decorated the windows of the houses. They were of many different colors .

The streets were narrow but on the roads were driving cars shaped like socks and almost fifteen people fitted in one car. All the people were singing songs about socks, told poems and respected them as much as people from Ukraine respect bread, embroidered clothes and pysanka. They even made doll theaters with these products. Having come into one shop Darynka was even more surprised to see drawn portraits of socks, countries and also toys made of women's leggings. Having seen a working place of socks and stockings, Darynka decided to visit it. There she had seen the workers made a toy bear. He was little, had ears, a mouth, a nose, but somebody forgot to make eyes for it. That teddy bear said that he knows a way to the next task but can't show anything because sees nothing. Then Darynka took two of the beads from the counter and sewn them as eyes onto the teddy bear. Gratefully it told her to follow him further but on the road he added: "I can't follow you to the magical circle because there I don't have a way. But I will gladly bring you to it. And then you'll go on your own." Other travelers have agreed. In a magic circle they hadn't seen anyone but had heard a loud voice: "Girl! You have to make socks of seven colors, decorating them with beads. You have five hours for that. They will be on time – will go out of the magical circle, and if not, unfortunately you will have to stay here"

Darynka started to do work and was hurrying quite a bit. An hour passed and she had only gotten started.

Rami with Petryk-socks was quietly sitting near her and watching how she works. She was working skillfully so soon the work was done. The dog was giving her beads. Exactly in five hours the socks were ready. Suddenly a rainbow appeared and went through the window, taking them all in its embrace. Suddenly they passed tens of

meters and stopped before a house where it was written "A house of living socks". By coming inside Darynka has listened to a story of a man who was telling about same boys and girls as Petryk. Later he gave the names of children who managed to transform from socks into people. There were only four of them. He later named the children who couldn't become children again. There were a lot of them and Darynka felt sorry for them. After that the girl gathered the socks, there were 80 of them and brought them to the working place. There she had started to save the little boys. She started to work with wool. Her fingers were aching from all the time working and Rami's hairs stopped falling down. And then from nowhere appeared the grandmother queen. She was beautifully dressed and was smiling kindly to Darynka.

"Good morning"- Darynka told her and lowered her body in a bow

"Darynka you can return home with Petryk even now but for this you should give away the socks to an old magician who will transform them into something different and they will never become children again"

"No, no"- Darynka has cried. Better I will stay here but I want them all to be alive. They are someone's sons and I won't do like that even if I had to stay here. "

And after these words all 80 socks turned into children. They were very happy because they have been missed for a long time by their parents and relatives, the same as Petryk's. When Darynka was traveling the time stopped because her kind heart wanted to help the boy.

Then the queen has said:

"Darynka you have succeeded with the next task. You are really a princess but you thought not only of yourself but also about others. All the children that were transformed will come back to their homes with you. You can visit us when you wish and we will be able waiting for you. You need only touch a book and you will appear here, as our princess. And as for the last 100th bead, take it for yourself for memory."

After those queen's words Petryk also became a boy again. He was tall with nice dark hair and brown eyes, he was smiling to the girl and telling her thank you for saving him. And then came his friend Urko with the old magician. He has got nothing because the socks became children again. And suddenly the queen turned him into a sock which was picked up by another angry magician.

Petryk, Rami and princess of Socksland with 80 children made a step and fell down. They hadn't seen anything. Only the darkness was in front of them.

The next morning. Darynka's parents had woken up and Darynka's mom decided to have a look if her daughter is sleeping still. It was 8 in the morning. Not seeing her daughter in bed she had started worrying. But then

through the window she saw the girl walking with the dog. Her parents met her new four pawed friend and decided to keep Rami at home but the girl will have to take care of him.

It was Saturday, a day off. Father turned on the TV and listened to the news that this night a lot of children returned home from nowhere. Darynka was only smiling and went into a room to play with Rami. Suddenly the phone rang

“Hi, princess. Wouldn’t you like to go sledding with me?” It was Petryk’s voice.

In a few minutes the girl and the dog were outdoors again. Having come up closer she had seen that the boy is holding a little teddy bear in hands.

“Thank you for saving me”

Later outdoors it was heard around the neighborhood a children’s laugh and barking of the dog and it seemed that even the clouds were dancing in the sky and snowflakes were singing a funny winter song.

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