

## How King Musalen Became King

**‘Mur, let’s drink up our tea and go to bed’ suggested Musalenko.**

**‘I do not feel like sleeping yet,’ Mur puckered his whiskers, strongly determined to play with the ball of yarn for at least an hour more.**

**‘Come on, come on, tomorrow morning you’ll cry again because you feel sleepy. And don’t you want me to tell you how King Musalen became King?’**

**‘Hasn’t he always been King?’ Mur asked agitatedly out of curiosity.**

**‘Nooo, but you’ll only find out if you drink your tea on time and ...’**

**‘I’m ready!’ interrupted the tom-cat, who was already hurrying to the bathroom to brush his teeth.**

**Musalenko took the last sip of his favourite rosehip tea and went to brush his teeth and wash his face. Mur had already tucked himself in all up to his ears and was eagerly waiting to hear the story of “How King Musalen became King”.**

**‘And so ...’ Musalenko began. ‘Once upon a time there was a kingdom. This kingdom did not have ...’**

**‘How come a kingdom? asked Mur.**

**‘You are very impatient. Cover your whiskers and listen carefully,’ Musalenko scolded him jokingly, ‘This kingdom did not have a name because it was still not possible to find a worthy ruler. Anyone who dared to sit on the empty throne disappeared and never re-appeared.**

**‘Wait, wait, wait,’ Mur opened his eyes wide in incomprehension, ‘how come the kingdom didn’t have a king? Was the throne cursed? And people? Were there any people?!’**

**‘Of course there were people, and beautiful gates, and a beautiful castle. There were also wonderful fountains in the city, from which flowed fragrant raspberry syrup, and out of the half-closed little windows wafted the irresistible aroma of apple-and-cinnamon rolls.**

**In the kingdom were living the best and most smiling people, the most fragrant flowers, the sweetest animals; and within it was shining the sunniest sun.**

In fact, the kingdom was not exactly cursed. As it was situated in the best place on the planet and was inhabited by the best and most smiling people, who wouldn't like to sit on its throne. All sorts of sorcerers, witches, noble princes and princesses, known and unknown eccentric people tried to take over the throne. Yet, that place was not just any place.

It sheltered the good and chased away the evil. And, in order to protect the kingdom from falling into someone's bad hands, the sages of the kingdom - its oldest and most candid inhabitants - cast a special spell on it. Only the worthiest man could sit on the throne; any other creature, which was led by bad thoughts, instantly vanished into the ground even if it only laid its small finger on it.'

'Mur, I can see you're confused. I can tell from the tip of your tail, which sticks out on the other end from under the fluffy blanket,' Musalenko smiled and continued his story, 'The people in the kingdom were feeling very sad because they could not find a good pure-hearted candidate who would become their king. It was not easy to live like that. They had to fight against dragon attacks on their own, or to chase away with brooms bad witches, who kept trying to steal the delicious cinnamon rolls.'

One morning something terrible happened – the people woke up to see that the sun was gone.



**'How come the sun was gone? Was it cloudy,' the ginger tom-cat jumped to his paws excitedly.**

**'Nooo, it wasn't cloudy. It immediately became clear that it was an unusual phenomenon. When magic hung over the kingdom, peppery syrup began to flow from the raspberry fountains. Just as it happened that morning.**

**The sages of the kingdom reunited and decided it was time they sought a worthy king who was to save them from that calamity/misfortune.**

**And so, heralds wandered around the district and trumpeted that the most fabulous kingdom was looking for a ruler to sit on the throne and rid them from the calamity.**

**It was not easy to find candidates for the throne. Everyone knew the story - if you proved to be unworthy, you would disappear forever.**

**And yet, on the threshold of the palace appeared Musalen – a slightly distracted but good-natured and always smiling young man. Musalen had no appetite for the throne. He just wanted to help and bring back the sunniest sun.**

**'Musalen, young man, if you can break the evil spell and bring the sun back to our kingdom, we'll let you sit on the throne and try your luck. Now take this bag of cinnamon rolls and a bottle of raspberry syrup to carry on your way,' ordered the sages and sent our hero off to seek the sun.'**

## **In the Forest with the River**

**Musalen headed to the nearby forest, where he accidentally met a bear. That bear was no ordinary one - he was wearing glasses and muttering over some technical drawing with a pencil tucked behind his ear.**

**'Excuse me, have you met the sunniest sun anywhere here? It disappeared from the kingdom in which I live, and now everyone is very sad. I want to find it and bring back my fellows' smiles.'**

**The bear mumbled something under his nose and pored over the drawing even harder.**

**'I'm sorry!' Musalen shouted louder.**

**'Yes, yes, I heard you. Can't you see I'm busy? I haven't seen your sun.**

Other questions bother me, and you waste my time with some sun,' the bear rumbled impatiently.

Musalen came up closer to peek at the drawing. I don't know if I have mentioned it, but our friend was known for his love of inventions.

'Where are you poking your nose into? Can't you see there's barely room for my own nose,' the bear scolded Musalen.

'Sorry, I can see that you are drawing something and I am a person who finds these things very interesting, so I am wondering if I could help you with an idea or two.'

That time the bear looked up and peered intently at the smiling young man. That smile appealed to him very much, so he decided to tell Musalen what he was making. He told him that he had dear friends - the forget-me-not fairies who lived in the neighboring magical forest with their bee queen.

'Well, how come a bee? Musalen wondered.

'Well, so! She is a fairy bee. She comes from a noble family and is 300 years old,' explained the bear, 'and the forget-me-not fairies are very kind and talkative, but they are terrible forgetters. They visited me yesterday and unfortunately left their little wings on the hanger.

'What a trouble? Can't you give them their wings back?'

'Well, not exactly. As they left, a terrible storm broke out, sweeping away the bridge that connected my forest with theirs. And now neither I, nor they can cross the rough river. It will take a long time to build a new bridge, and my dear friends do not have time to wait. The forget-me-not fairies and their queen draw strength from the pollen of a single special flower, which grows on an inaccessible peak. Only they can reach it, but not without wings.



*Bear innovator*

Musalen scratched his head, thought deeply, grabbed a pencil and paper and drew up a peculiar invention. The bear looked at the architectural design carefully, said only 'Hmm!' and set to work. The two inventors gathered all the wings at one place, took a silk thread they had borrowed from the silkworms – the cheerful and responsive neighbours of the bear - and carefully sewed the wings together so as to obtain large wings.

The bear was very pleased and happy that he would be able to save his girl friends from trouble, but then an even better idea came to his mind.

'Dear Musalen, thank you. Such an idea would not have occurred to my mind at all if it were not for you. That's why I want to return your kindness. Take the wings and fly to the forest of the forget-me-not fairies. Ask them about your sun, they may have seen it.'



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How many trees there are in the woods?





*Finding the wings of the fairies*

## **The Bee Queen and the Passione Flower**

**Musalen thanked the bear and flew off to the forest on the opposite bank of the rough river.**

**There he was greeted by tiny fairies fragile and transparent like dandelions. As soon as they saw him carrying their wings, they excitedly gathered around him.**

**Musalen carefully unstitched the silk thread and returned the little wings to each fairy.**



*Queen bee*

**‘Thank you, you did a great good to us. But unfortunately you find us in an awful misfortune. Our queen has got a terrible cold and nothing can help her but the pollen of the Passione flower, which is on that high and steep peak. Unfortunately, because we didn’t have wings, we haven’t drunk pollen for a long time and we don’t have the strength to get to it.’**

**‘Forget-me-not fairies, don’t become sad. I will bring it,’ Musalen said boldly.**

**‘Oh, Musalen, it’s very nice of you that you want to help us again, but this flower is in a special place that is inaccessible to any creature other than a forget-me-not fairy. There is no way to reach it.’**

**'Let me try!' our hero did not give up and rolled up his sleeves to climb to the top. The peak turned out to be really unclimbable. Musalen fell a whole lot of 256 times, grazed his knee, thorns stuck into his palms, but he never gave up. And he did well, because at the 257th attempt he managed to climb to the top. Good job, but that was not enough. The Passione flower was growing in the middle of a thorny forest. Musalen, quite resolved not to give up, little by little began to go through the prickly net. Here a trouser leg got caught, there an ear, but the scent of the beautiful flower gave him strength to continue. After a few more hours of hard struggling, Musalen finally reached the Passione flower. It was the most beautiful and fragrant flower he had ever seen. It was bright red, but not like a rose or a poppy, not even like a tulip. It smelled as sweet and fresh as no other flower on earth. Musalen took a special little pouch out of his pocket and carefully tilted the chalice of the delicate flower. Glittery magic pollen shed into and filled the little pouch, and all the wounds and scratches of our hero disappeared immediately.**

**The forget-me-not fairies could not believe their eyes. As soon as their hero returned, they mixed a special potion, from which they and the bee queen sipped and instantly regained their strength. And immediately they began their clear-ringing chattering.**

Fairy



Draw the  
flower Passion



The queen ordered for the persevering hero to be brought to her.

‘Musalen, my forget-me-not fairies told me that I owe my recovery to you. I was told that although after many unsuccessful attempts to conquer the unclimbable peak, you still did not give up and reached the flower that only my fairies can reach. I will never forget your kindness and in return I want to repay you properly. Take this bag of magic pollen, it is miraculous and will save you from any trouble.

Unfortunately, I don’t know where your sunniest sun is, but I have a friend who knows a lot and has a great ear. He may have heard something about it. His name is Owl - he is a conductor. You will find him in the forest of honey bells. Just listen with your heart and you will find him.’

## **The Conductor Owl and the False Singing**

Musalen closed his eyes, pricked up his ears and opened his heart. At that very moment he heard a coppery-crystal sound. He decided to follow it. The closer he got, the more the melody faded and turned into false crocking.

When it became unbearable to listen, he opened his eyes and lo and behold - Owl was perched on a branch, plucking his feathers and waving his baton uncontrollably.

‘I do not understand! I do not understand!’ Mr Owl was angry, ‘Why are you singing so falsely? There are notes, each little bell is singing with a honey voice and yet it is an absolute chaos!’

At first Musalen did not understand who the angry owl was talking to, but then he looked more closely and saw some tiny copper bells that seemed to quarrel with one another.

‘Boy, who are you looking for?’ Mr Owl turned sharply to our hero. ‘Hello, Mr Owl. The queen of the forget-me-not fairies has sent me. I am looking for the sunniest sun that has disappeared from my kingdom. Have you heard of it, anything?’ Musalen asked.

‘I have not heard anything, how could I - those here do not stop arguing and I can hear only their terrifying screams. I don’t know how to reason with them. Look at them – how sullen they are.’

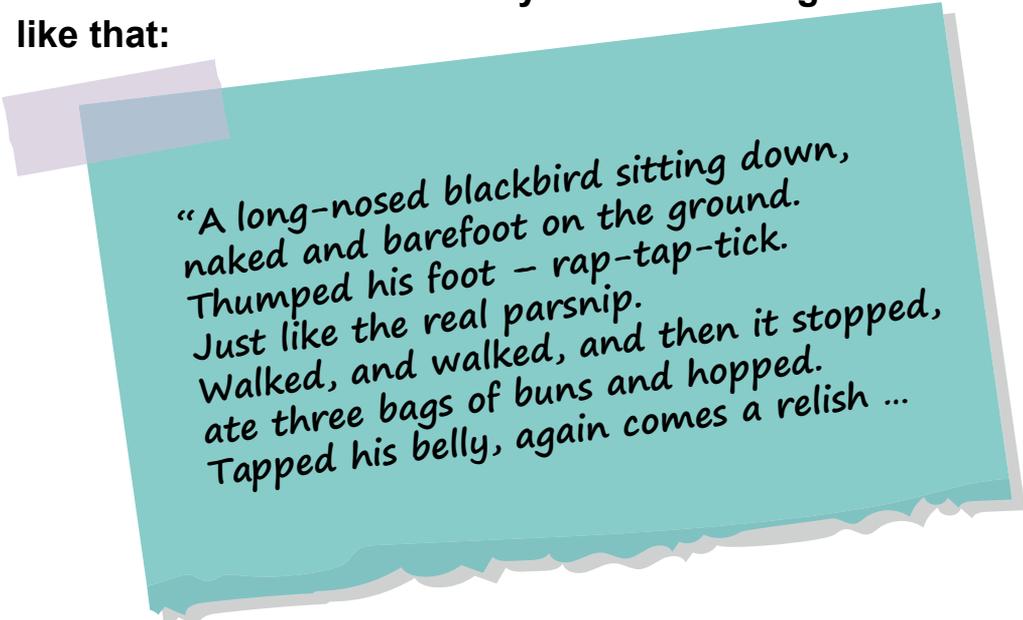
**‘Why are they so angry?’**

**‘Because each one of them wants to be a soloist, but this is impossible. Each bell clangs in its own unique way, but the clanging itself is neither loud enough, nor melodic enough. And only when they dong together, they will achieve such a harmony that is music to the ear and the soul.’**

**Musalen closed his eyes, pricked up his ears, opened his heart, took a deep breath and turned to the copper bells.**

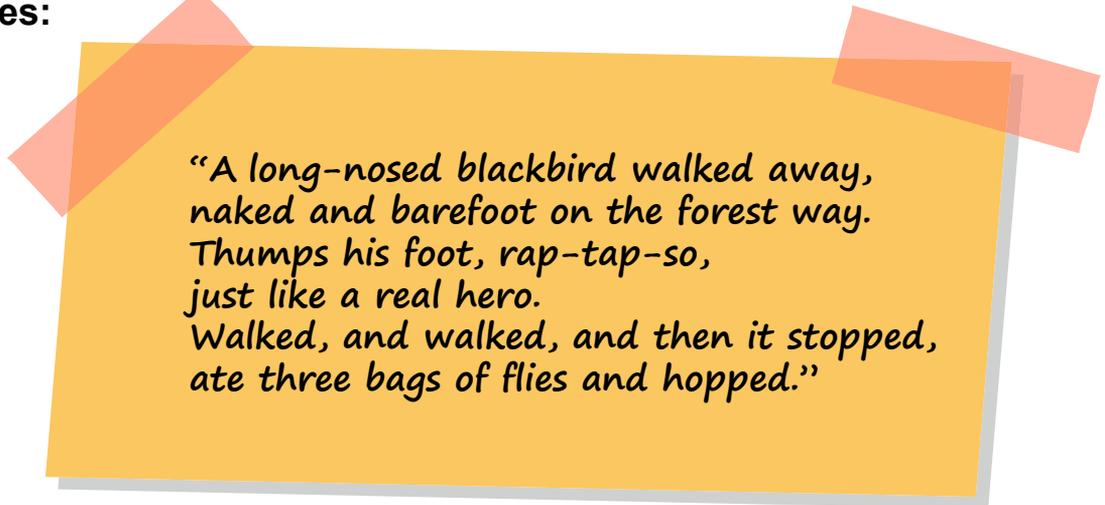
**‘Friends! Friends, tiny bells!’ he shouted, but not a single bell paid attention.**

**‘A long-nosed blackbird sitting down,’ Musalen started singing. Perhaps, here I should tell you, dear Mur, that Musalen may have had a beautiful smile, but he was not good at singing. Not only did he sing very falsely, but also he never knew the lyrics of the songs. And his song sounded like that:**



*“A long-nosed blackbird sitting down,  
naked and barefoot on the ground.  
Thumped his foot – rap-tap-tick.  
Just like the real parsnip.  
Walked, and walked, and then it stopped,  
ate three bags of buns and hopped.  
Tapped his belly, again comes a relish ...*

**‘No, no, no,’ the honey voices rang with laughter, ‘That’s not the song. There it goes:**



*“A long-nosed blackbird walked away,  
naked and barefoot on the forest way.  
Thumps his foot, rap-tap-so,  
just like a real hero.  
Walked, and walked, and then it stopped,  
ate three bags of flies and hopped.”*



# An Encounter with a Lion and the Misfortune of Being Tongue-tied

Musalen followed Mr Owl's instructions and before long arrived at the place.

To his surprise, he found Lion the First sad, lying in the shade of a tree and sighing desperately. Very strange, but this lion's tail and one of his whiskers were missing.

However, Musalen, who had seen a lot, was not impressed by that sight and approached the saddened lion.

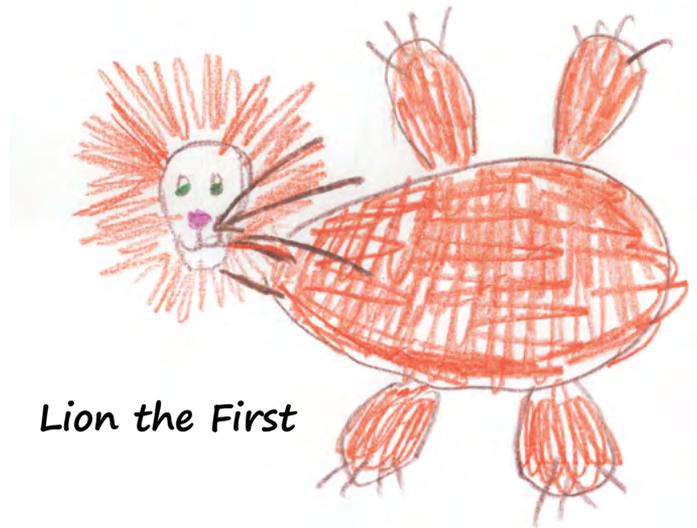
'Sorry to bother you, Lion the First. Mr Owl is sending me to you. I am looking for the sunniest sun that has disappeared from my kingdom. Have you seen it?

'I may have seen it, I may have not seen it, it's rather - I have not seen it. And now go and don't look at me, I'm not worth watching at all,' said the lion in desperation, 'It is humiliating to have your magnificent whisker and long tail missing.'

'I'm certain you miss them, and losing them definitely spoils your majestic grandeur, but I don't think you have anything to worry about. I find your other whisker exceptional. But truth is, your eyes are amazing! Your love of travel is impressive, and those eyes - who knows what amazing things they have seen.'

'Ha!' the lion smiled, 'You're funny, but what is better is your being honest. You made me think. These eyes have really seen a lot. Unfortunately, not only good, but also bad, you can't however appreciate the good without the bad...' Lion the First began to philosophise. 'But let's get back to your question - have I seen your sun? Hmmm. No, I haven't. I haven't been anywhere lately and I haven't seen anything interesting because I'm busy. I am trying to make my subjects be not angry with one another and start understanding one another again.

'Why are they angry?' Musalen asked.



*Lion the First*

**‘We woke up one morning and everyone had something missing. The elephant - the ears, the hyena – the laughter, the zebra - the stripes, the hippopotamus - the kilogrammes. A complete mess. And what is even stranger is that no one can understand the others. They talked and seemed to speak different languages. In panic, everyone thought that the other had stolen what they were missing and we cannot understand one other. That is why now everyone stays at home angry and ashamed. Nobody wants to show up without ears and stripes.**

**‘Very strange,’ Musalen thought. And while he was wondering how to help his new friend, he leaned against the nearest tree, took out a little bottle of raspberry syrup that he had brought from home, drank and ...**

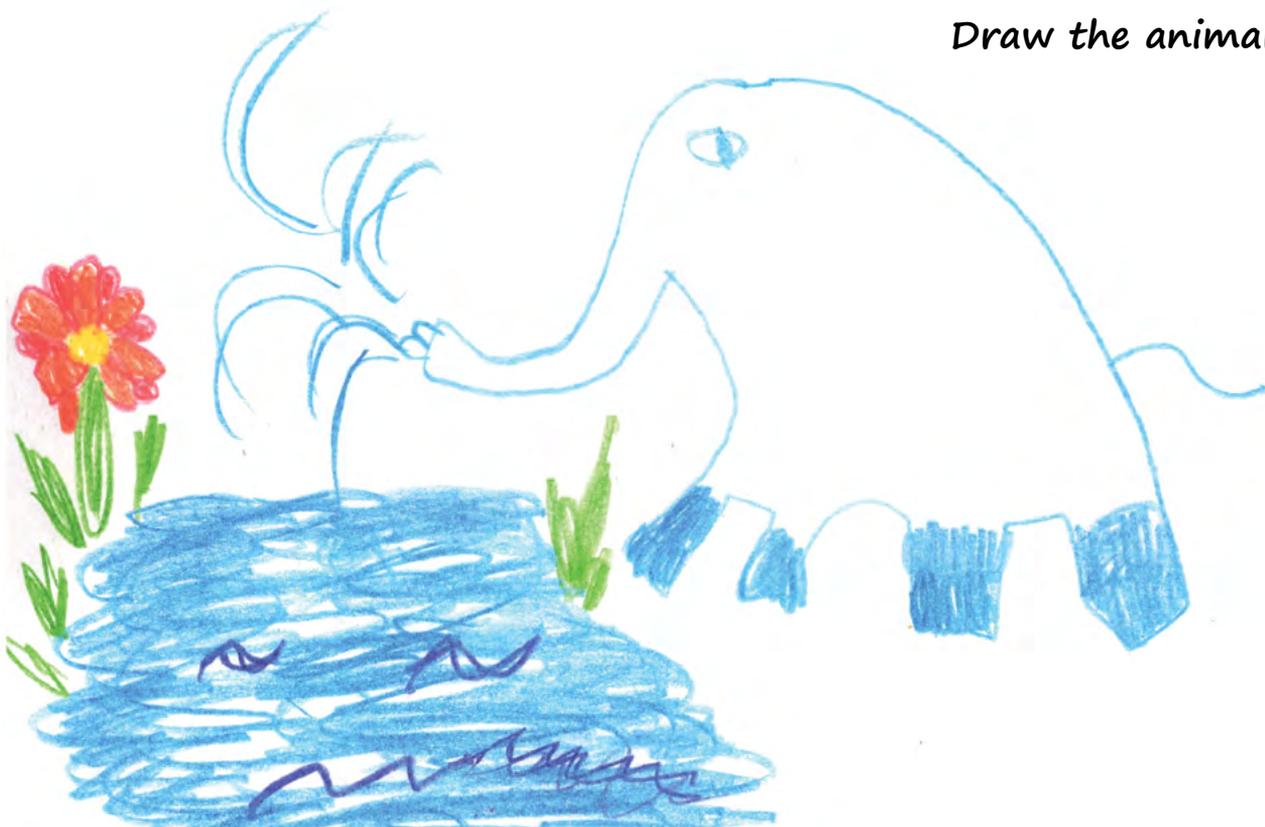
**‘Phew!,’ Musalen spat out the syrup in disgust; it turned out to have transformed from raspberry into peppery syrup, a sure sign that magic was lurking above the place.**

**‘So that’s what it was!,’ cried out Musalen, ‘Someone has bewitched you!’**

**‘Ah, what a misfortune, what am I going to do now?’ Leo the First wondered.**

**‘I’ll come up with something. I promise,’ said Musalen.**

*Draw the animals.*



He took out the magic pollen of the Passione flower - the gift from the bee queen, mixed it with a little water and took out some of the rolls he had brought from home. After all, those were not just any rolls, they were special ones - made by the most smiling and best people in the most fabulous kingdom.

Then he went from door to door to invite all the animals to a festive lunch on the royal meadow. It was not an easy task to talk them into coming, because everyone was very ashamed to show themselves in that form - without an ear, without a stripe ...

However, as we know well, Musalen did not give up easily, so he said to each animal:

'I do understand why you're worried, but we're all friends and we all have something missing. No one is perfect. Here, I have the sunniest sun missing, but I have an amazing, fragrant raspberry syrup. And half of Lion the First's majestic whisker and his whole tail are missing, but have you ever looked and seen what beautiful eyes he has. And only if you knew what amazing things these eyes of a traveller have seen.'

And so, one by one, each animal agreed to come to the festive lunch.

As soon as they gathered, there was complete silence and no one wanted to talk to anyone. Lion the First was right – it was as if each one of them spoke a different language.

Musalen did not despair and gave each animal some of the magic potion to drink and rolls to eat, and suddenly their tongues got untied. The animals began to talk to one another and thus finally reached understanding and reconciled.

*Draw the animals.*



The elephant told the zebra that he had met her stripes swinging on a branch. The zebra could finally tell her neighbour the hyena that her laughter was laughing in that log over there. The hyena cheerfully announced that the elephant's ears were basking in the sun on a nearby rock, along with the kilogrammes of the hippopotamus. And thus, gradually, each animal found its missing part, and the understanding settled again in the kingdom of Lion the First. And what happened to his magnificent whisker and tail? It turned out that they were preparing for the next journey, but the loyal subjects caught them in time and returned them to their proud owner. Lion the First regained his irresistible appearance and set off on another unforgettable journey.



Before leaving, however, he turned to Musalen:

‘My friend, you kept your promise and I will be eternally grateful to you! What you did for my subjects is amazing. Thank you for not laughing at us as all the other travellers did when seeing us. I am grateful to you for helping my subjects understand one another and reconcile. You have got a real friend in me. As I told you, I haven't seen your sunniest sun, but here - take a hair of my travelling whiskers. Maybe, that's how I'll be able to help you. Close your eyes and say the magic words: “Fluff, leek, little bucket of lard, at the appointed place, take me to the class start!” and it will take you to my friend - Pigeon the Scrutinous. I don't need to warn you that he is a little odd. But I'm sure it won't embarrass you and you'll find a way to get along with him. He may know something.

Musalen took the hair of the travelling whiskers, closed his eyes, and said loudly:

‘Fluff, leek, little bucket of lard, at the appointed place, take me to the class start!’ And, there, he found himself in a colourful square full of pigeons.



## 19:00 - it's dinner time!

'Hello, gentlemen! I'm looking for Pigeon the Scrutinous, have you seen him?'

The pigeons just looked at him and simultaneously pointed with their beaks to the nearby shop, where it was written in huge, red letters - **CLOCKMAKER.**

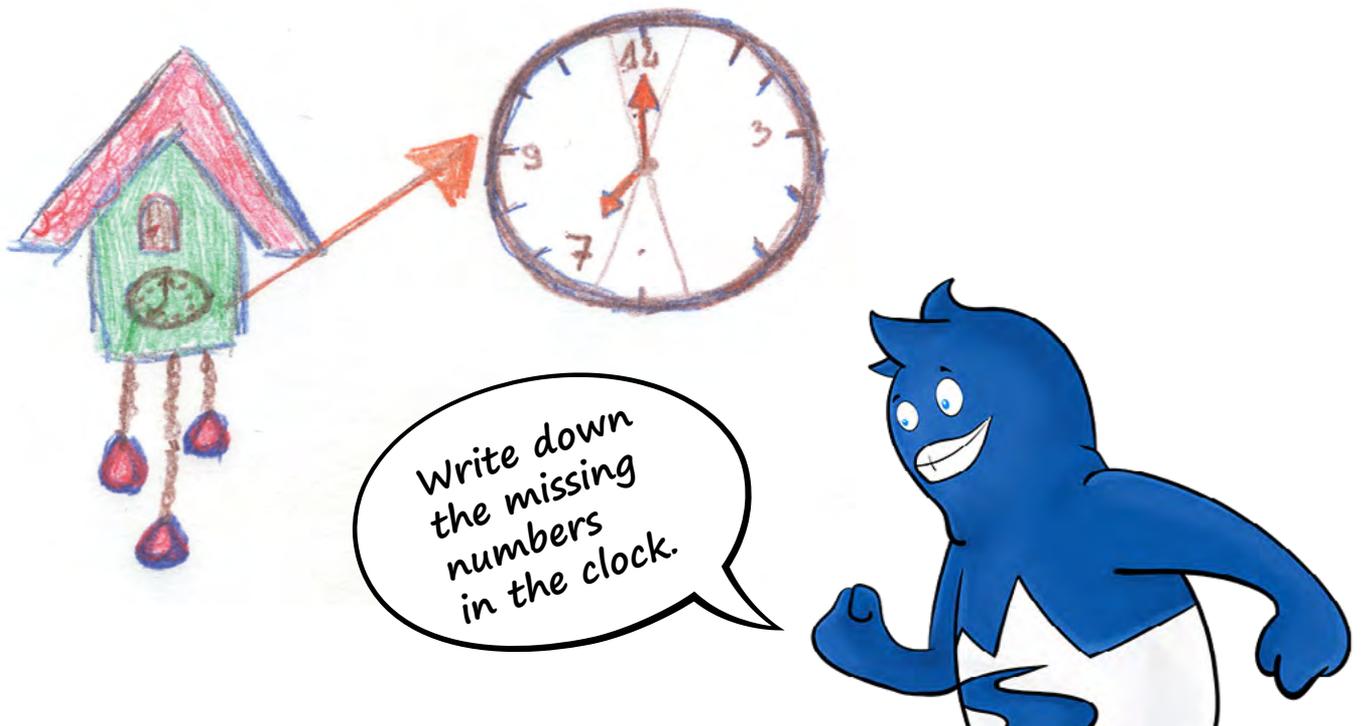
Musalen entered the workshop and found Pigeon the Scrutinous trying to unscrew, with a small screwdriver and looking through a magnifying glass, the microscopic lock of a wall clock. Unfortunately, the cuckoo from the clock had locked itself in its house unwillingly and could not be unlocked.

'Excuse me, Mr Pigeon the Scrutinous, I am Musalen. I am looking for the sunniest sun that has disappeared from the kingdom in which I live, and I was sent here by the majestic Lion the First,' Musalen began to explain.

'No, goodbye! Alas, it is unknown to me where your sunniest sun is,' said Pigeon the Scrutinous.

Musalenko was taken aback, but then he recalled the lion's warning and regained his composure.

'Mr Pigeon, what are you doing?' Musalen decided to start a conversation.



**'I don't think it's imperceptible what I'm doing,' said the pigeon indignantly. 'I'm trying to adjust the fine mechanism of the clock so that I can release Miss Cuckoo and she, in turn, can come out in full glory and solemnly announce to everyone that it's dinner time. We, the pigeons in this city, never sit down to dinner without Miss Cuckoo's announcing that it is time for dinner. We are not like other pigeons, which peck indiscriminately at any time at any crumbs. No, we are sophisticated and follow a regime. We won't sit down to dinner until we're sure it's time for dinner. And only the lovely Miss Cuckoo knows that. Oh, I don't have the time to explain everything to you, young man. The mechanism is really fine and I need to fully concentrate.'**

**And the pigeon continued to examine the city wall clock through the magnifying glass.**

**'Mr Pigeon the Scrutinous, can I have a look too? In my kingdom I am famous for my dexterity and ingenuity. Perhaps I might be able to help.**

**The pigeon looked sternly at that smiling young man, but yet stepped back and made room for Musalen, who really had incredible eyesight and a flair for detail. He screwed in this, loosened that, oiled this nut, replaced that nut. He repaired one small broken lever and wiped the dust out from each little gear with a special small cloth. Pigeon the Scrutinous carefully watched every action of our hero and shook his head approvingly. He had never met anyone who paid so much attention to every cog wheel and nut. The clock started to shine as it had never before.**

**The moment of truth had come. Pigeon the Scrutinous hung the clock up on the wall and gently tapped on the door of the clock tower.**

**'Just a moment, Mr Pigion,' Musalen said taking out of his pocket the remaining magic pollen from the Passione flower. He sprinkled some of it on the newly-come out Miss Cuckoo, who shone and with her happy crystal-like ringing voice announced that it was exactly 19:00 - time for dinner! Thousands of pigeon wings spread and everyone sat down to dinner.**

**In that very moment, Mr Pigeon the Scrutinous fell in love with Miss Cuckoo; but this is the beginning of another story which I will tell you some other time.**

**'My friend,' said Pigeon the Scrutinous, overwhelmed with joy, 'I was quite desperate and I did not believe I would see lovely Miss Cuckoo ever again. Thank you! With your watchful eye and this pollen, you performed a miracle with our favourite clock. You said you were**

looking for the sunniest sun. I've heard of it, but I haven't seen it. I have a very wise friend who really knows everything.

Here's this feather, it's no ordinary one. Go outside and let it guide you.

## On the Ocean Shore

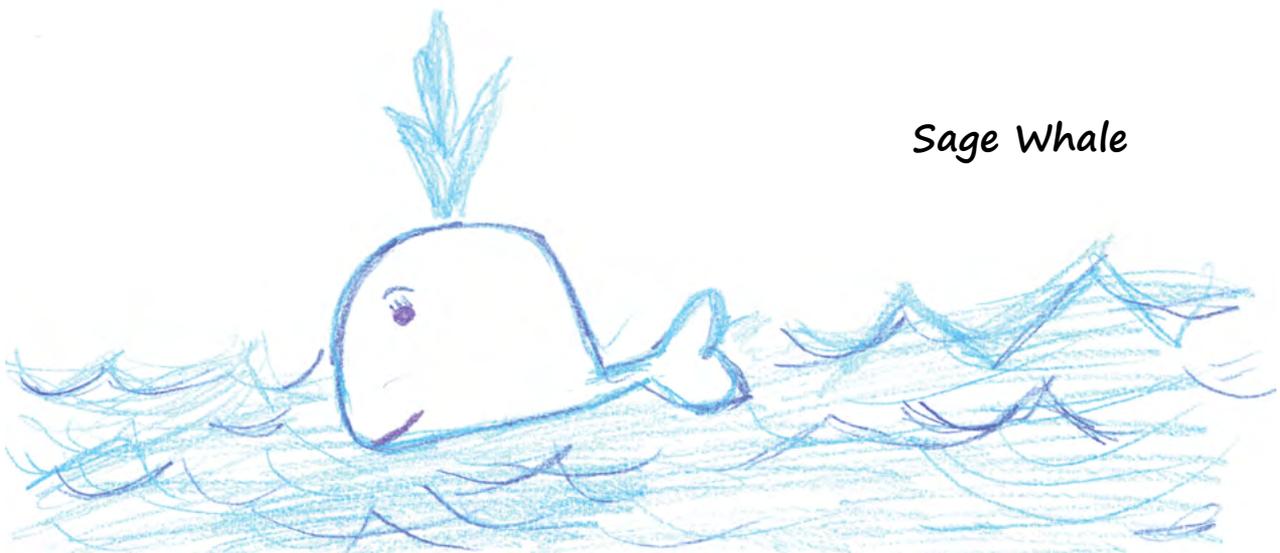
As soon as Musalen came out, a strong wind blew taking away his feather. Musalen bolted after it and thus reached the ocean shore, where he met the Sage Whale.

'Hello, Musalen,' the Whale said. 'You have come a long way, but owing to your imagination, good heart and unbending spirit, you finally came to me.'

Our hero did not understand anything. Hadn't he arrived quite by accident? He had simply followed the feather.

'You have done many good deeds along the way,' continued the Sage Whale. 'And your good deeds have not gone unnoticed. Each meeting left its mark on history and blazed a trail to a better future.'

The forget-me-not fairies and the bee queen were healed and now, together with the Inventor Bear, they are creating a magical bridge to cross over the river that separates them. The Conductor Owl and the tiny copper bells were so delighted to meet you that they created the most joyful and melodic symphony anyone had ever heard. Lion the First and his subjects do not stop talking to one another and it is unlikely that history will see any other friends as good as them. Owing to you Pigeon the Scrutinous discovered love, and I... I managed to prove to the great sages of your kingdom that your heart is truly good, that your smile is sincere and pure, that your devotion and ingenuity are inexhaustible and all this makes you worthy for the Musalenian throne.



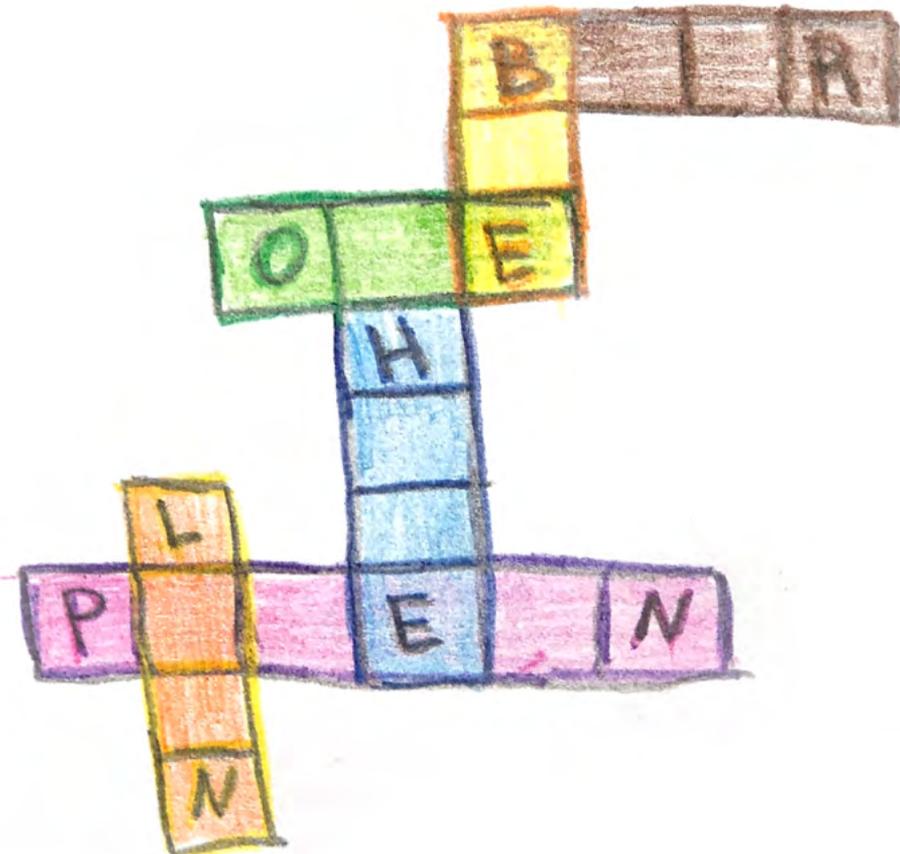
*Sage Whale*

I am happy to proclaim you the new King!

Musalen did not know what to say. He was so overwhelmed with excitement that he could only utter:

‘Dear Sage Whale, thank you for the honour. I promise to be a better king of my kingdom with every passing day. I’m really excited, but there’s something that overshadows my happiness. I still want to bring the sun back to my kingdom. And I don’t see it with you either,’ sadly spoke the new king.

‘I know you’re looking for the sunniest sun. You will not find it with me. Return to your kingdom. You are expected there,’ said the Sage Whale and in an instant sank under the water.



*Solve a crossword puzzle with the rescued animals by Musalen.*



# How King Musalen became King

Musalen left with a heavy heart as he did not want to go home empty-handed and disappoint his subjects.

When he reached the gates of the kingdom and while walking to the palace to tell the sages that he had failed to find the sunniest sun, Musalen noticed that people were looking at him in a different way. As soon as they saw him, light settled in their eyes.

‘Congratulations, King,’ the sages greeted him at the palace, ‘drink raspberry syrup, eat cinnamon rolls. You have come a long way.’

‘Dear friends, I am no king. I could not find our sun and that gives me no peace,’ Musalen sighed.

‘Come on, come on, help yourself. We believe that you have never tried better rolls and you have never drunk fresher raspberry syrup,’ the sages insisted. Musalen was so anxious and did not notice that the sages were leading him to the throne. Unbeknownst to him, he sat on the throne, sipped from the juice, ate some rolls, and a strange soft warmth suddenly swept over him. The room was illuminated by the warmest light and the sunniest sun rose in everyone’s eyes.

‘Dear King, your deeds have proven you worthy of the throne!’ announced the sages solemnly, ‘You brought hope and lit the sun in our souls. You managed to break the spell that hung over our kingdom and now not only do we have the sunniest sun again, but also the best king!’

Joyful fanfares announced to the whole kingdom that a worthy king had finally ascended the throne. The copper bells led by the excited Conductor Owl started singing the happiest melody in the world. Magic pollen from the Passione flower floated over the kingdom, dispersed by forget-me-not fairies who danced the most magical dance together with their faithful friend the Inventor Bear. A proud lion roared loudly to announce the good news to everyone in the world. A pigeon in love joyfully fluttered its white wings in the company of an elegant cuckoo. And so King Musalen became King, and the kingdom without a name began to be called the Musalenian Kingdom.

**'Hurr, murr,' Mur had just drifted to the land of dreams, happy and content with the incredible story and the happy ending.**

**Musalenko smiled and turned off the light.**

**'Good night, Mur!' I wish you to dream about the sunniest sun!**

