

# **MUSALENKO AND THE STOLEN TREASURE**





Peace and harmony reigned among the people in the Musalenian Kingdom. Everyone was happy and smiling. Fruit trees and fresh vegetables grew on those sunny lands, rivers raced noisily, countless sunflowers smiled at passers-by, dogs and cats stretched in the sun on the town's pavements. The sweet aroma of apple-and-cinnamon rolls wafted from the cozy windows and wide-open doors of the patisseries, and the kingdom's famous raspberry syrup flushed coquettishly into beautiful glass bottles, waiting to quench the thirst of yet another connoisseur. Children played carefree outside all day, adults devised new ways to help each other every day to make life easier and happier, and grandparents enjoyed the children's playing as they walked through the parks and gardens.

There was no end to the carefree-ness of the Musalenians... until disaster struck.

Like any other kingdom, the Musalenian Kingdom also had its own treasury, in which the royal treasures were kept - jewellery, diamonds, gold coins, pearls and precious stones. But this treasury was extraordinary. It kept something more, something much more precious than all the treasures of all the kingdoms - there was stored the greatest wealth - the Musalenian flame torch.

The great task of preserving this wealth was entrusted to the great and fearless dragon Mercon.

One day something terrible happened. All the guards of the treasury were brought down and fell into a deep, sound sleep.







The dragon Mercon also found himself in the grip of that unusual nap. When he awoke, he found himself chained all over, and the treasures and the Musala flame were gone!

King Musalen stared worriedly at the empty treasury, where the royal treasure had shone until yesterday. He was wondering who might have stolen it. At that moment he thought of someone who could help him and quickly gave an order:

'Bring me some cinnamon rolls and a bottle of the best raspberry syrup! I have an idea.'











## SUNDAY PICNIC

On that sunny Sunday afternoon, Musalenko and the cat Mur were in the yard. They were making a wooden bench all morning. 'Come on, Mur, catch hold of the bench by this side and let's take it under that tree. The shade there seems to me the best and the place will be great for our picnic!' said Musalenko.

After moving the bench, they sat down for a rest.

'We will feel quite well under this shade in the summer heat,' Mur fell into a reverie.

'I'll read books, and you'll doze in the cool shade,' Musalenko added contentedly.

Mur brought a tablecloth and utensils, Musalenko fetched a bowl of bananas, oranges, apples and strawberries. The two of them were very hungry after the hard work and quickly set the picnic table.

'Hey, Musalenko, see what I've found in the kitchen!' Mur shouted happily.

'Hum, it's odd, I don't remember buying cinnamon buns and raspberry syrup. Haha, I must have been very hungry again and not noticed at all.'

'The important thing is that our afternoon picnic turned into a real feast.'


The happy famished mates sat on the new wooden bench, poured themselves a glass of fresh syrup, ate some strawberries with cinnamon rolls and decided to lie down on a blanket to read their favourite booklet.

'Musalenko, you were quite right. It's wonderful! Come on, read to me, and I'll take a nap here next to you,' said Mur yawning and dozed off sweetly.









Musalenko was also tired, so he fell imperceptibly into deep sleep before he could even turn the first page...

Suddenly someone shook them and interrupted their nap.

'King Musalen calls for you to report to his kingdom immediately. It's very important!' Three royal heralds had magically appeared in the yard.

Musalenko and Mur looked at each other and hurried to the palace.

At the royal gates stood King Musalen and the dragon Mercon.

'Dear friends, I'm glad to see you! A big misfortune has happened to us and only you can help us. The whole royal treasure along with all the jewellery, pearls, precious stones - disappeared. But this is not the biggest misfortune, the most precious thing has disappeared - the Musala flame torch!'

'My King, we will be honored to help. But please tell me how the torch flame can be so much more valuable than all the diamonds and golds hidden in the treasury?' Musalenko wondered.

'This is no ordinary torch. The burning flame is magical. It has the ability to ignite the desire for good among people, to warm our souls, to illuminate our path. It always shines bright because it is fostered by the goodness of the Musalenian people, but if it goes beyond the borders of the kingdom, it will slowly begin to fade and this will doom us to misery and sorrow.'

'So we don't have much time to waste! We need to find the robbers as soon as possible!' Musalenko said decisively...

He pulled out a compass, a map, and a large sheet of paper out of his rucksack.

'Mur, give me a pencil please. Dear King, tell me exactly what









happened?' Musalenko began to enquire.

'This morning we found all the sentries who guard the royal treasury asleep, and this is unheard of - they never sleep. The dragon Mercon was also asleep, and you know him well - he is always on duty and does not allow anyone to venture near the treasure. He was chained and unable to move, which means he must have been tied up by a very large and powerful villain. It smelled of rotten eggs everywhere,' the King said.

Musalenko immediately guessed who might have had a hand in this strange affair.

'Mur, find our friend - the monster Sharptooth - and together find out if the witch Evilla knows anything about this,' Musalenko implored as he was scratching his chin thoughtfully. 'I'll go to Uncle Baddy and ask him where he was last night.'

Half an hour later, Musalenko and Mur returned.

'I was at witch Evilla's home,' Mur began telling, 'the door was open and there was an unbearable stench of rotten eggs. She wasn't there, but that smell is really suspicious.'

'Baddy was not at home either,' Musalenko continued. 'Ah, I knew these criminals had stolen the treasure!' cried Musalenko angrily.

'The question now is where have they hidden it?'

'I've heard that Baddy often goes to a deserted, mysterious island. It has a dense forest and endless caves. He must have hidden everything stolen there,' Musalen said. 'We call it the Island of Baddy and I have heard that it can only be reached by water. I will give you my fastest ship to get there as soon as possible. And while you are seeking the thieves, Mercon and I will stay behind to protect the kingdom.'







## **A VOYAGE BY SHIP**

Musalenko placed the map on the table, then placed Mur's compass in position and measured how far it was to the secret island.

'It will take us about two days to get there. We have no time to waste. Mur, Sharptooth, let's go immediately!'

The three boarded the ship and sailed for the island. However, the closer they were getting to the destination, the more turbulent the water was becoming, the stronger the wind was blowing. Storm clouds obscured the sun and five-metre waves tried to overturn the ship. They struggled with the rough sea for several hours. Suddenly a powerful wave swept over the ship and capsized it.

'Mur, Sharptooth, put on your life jackets and hold on tight,' Musalenko shouted.

'Friends, I can't make it anymore,' cried Sharptooth. 'The waves will carry me away.'


'Sharptooth, don't give up! We will always find a way out. Come on, gather strength and let's cry out for help together. Three, two, one: HELP! HELP!!!' our heroes began to shout in one voice.

At that moment, powerful whirlpools formed in the water, which engulfed the three friends. We do not know for sure how long Musalenko, Mur and Sharptooth were sinking, but we do know that during that whirlpool adventure they managed to meet a whale, 10 dolphins, an octopus, which waved to them eight times with its eight tentacles. A whole team of shrimp passed by them at a run. They saw several embarrassed little pearls hiding in their mussel shells. Sharptooth managed to adorn himself with red algae, just for decoration. Mur jumped over a sea urchin that suddenly stood in his way, and met a sting ray that certainly couldn't meow like him. The three heroes twirled in the depths of the sea endlessly,









but that didn't bother them, it was so nice to let the water carry you. All of a sudden, the adventurers came out of the whirlpools and found themselves in some dreamlike place.

'Where are we?' Mur asked nervously. He didn't like not knowing where he was, which is why he always carried a compass with him. But in the water whirlwind it had fallen overboard just like Mur.

'Welcome to the mermaid kingdom,' an incredibly beautiful creature with a pearly glistening tail, an unearthly smile and long honey-golden hair adorned with a coral crown unexpectedly answered his question.


'How did we get here?' Musalenko asked. 'We are going to the Island of Baddy, where probably the Musalenian flame is hidden, without which our beloved kingdom cannot exist. To our misfortune, we were unexpectedly caught up in this storm.'

'You are going to the Island of Baddy, but it is enchanted. The closer you get to it, the more terrible the storm will become, so that you get lost and never find it. Only a magical mermaid compass can remove the magic spell and lead you to the destination. Take this beautiful clam. It is magical. You have to think about the place you want to get to, turn it in all directions and when the pearl in the shell begins to glow, then this is the right direction. The brighter it shines, the closer you are to the destination.'

Mur took the clam, thought of the Island of Baddy, and began to turn in all directions until the pearl began to glow.

'Thank you, mermaid, for your kindness! We will never forget it!' said Musalenko.

'As the good leads you, I gladly help you. I wish you success in finding the Musala flame and I hope that the evil-doers will soon









repent for their bad act.'

The mermaid waved goodbye to the heroes and they set off to where the clam-compass led them.

After a while, Musalenko, Mur and Sharptooth found themselves on a fabulous beach. The pearl glowed with all its might, so our adventurers had no doubt about having reached the island they were looking for.

'Where did the witch Evilla and Uncle Baddy hide?' Mur jumped impatiently.

'Look, there!!! There is smoke in the forest,' Musalenko pointed.

'It smells of rotten eggs,' Sharptooth wrinkled his nose.

Slowly, on tiptoe, they approached the place where the smoke was swirling. And what did they see – the witch Evilla was jumping around the burning Musala flame, and she was adorned all over with necklaces and rings with diamonds and rubies; at the same time Baddy was looking at his reflection in the gold coins and was carefully counting them one by one.

'AHA! We have caught you, you fraudsters!' Musalenko jumped, finger-pointing to the stolen treasure.

'Shame on you for stealing! Now you will suffer punishment,' the cat Mur shouted triumphantly.

'There's nowhere to run away!' Sharptooth threatened.

'It was my idea,' the frightened Baddy confessed. 'I talked Evilla into making a magic decoction from rotten eggs to put the treasury guards to sleep. Then we put to sleep the dragon Mercon, too, and tied him with chains,' Baddy finished the confession about his crime.

'Ah, but I haven't done anything wrong,' muttered the witch







Evilla. 'I just wanted to adorn myself with jewelry, so I cast a tiiiiny, microscopic magic spell.'

'And why did you need to steal the Musalenian flame? Aren't all the treasures enough for you?' Sharptooth was even angrier.

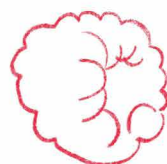
'All these treasures shine even better and brighter when illuminated by the kindness and warmth of the Musalenian flame. That's why we stole it, too.' Baddy added, staring dreamily at the reflections of the flame on the treasure.

'Immediately return everything to the treasury, where it belongs - to the kingdom!' Musalenko ordered them. 'And you will answer to King Musalen.'

'Make sure they don't run away,' our hero turned to Sharptooth. They all boarded Baddy's ship and sailed for the port of Musala. There they were greeted by the King, who was happy that the greatest wealth - the Musalenian flame torch was already in place. 'Musalenko, Mur, Sharptooth, you are our heroes and as such I reward you with special medals for bravery, in which sparkles of our flame shine. It will always warm you and show you the way to the good!' solemnly announced the King and then addressed the thieves:

'Evilla and Baddy, I will not send you to the dungeon, but I will entrust you to assist my royal adviser on good deeds. With him you will travel around the kingdom, meet people, help them when they fall into misfortune, and thus you will learn how to do good and how much better it is.'

Gleam and joy returned into everyone's eyes. The people reverted to their carefree life and the sunniest sun continued to shine joyfully as before.



'Friends, you must be tired from the long journey,' said King Musalen to the heroes. 'Come and have some rest. We have prepared for you the freshest raspberry syrup in the kingdom and the most flavourful cinnamon rolls.'

After being treated, Mur and Musalenko lay down to rest. It is not clear how long they slept and whether they dreamed of this whole adventure or not, but as soon as they opened their eyes, they found themselves in the yard, in the beautiful shadow of the tree with the new wooden bench.

'Mur, I dreamed that you and I were in the Musalenian Kingdom!' shouted Musalenko.

'How strange, so did I! We must have got very tired in the morning from making the bench...' the cat opened his eyes wide.

The two contented friends sat on the new bench under the tree and enjoyed the beauty of the setting sun.







Musalenko and The Stolen Treasure

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