



The Girl Who Wanted Wings



A long time ago, there was a beautiful girl, who fell in love with a handsome Cossack. Sadly, one day the Cossack had to go to war. News came home that he had been captured by the Tsar, who lived far, far away.

The girl began to cry and cry and cry. She begged God, "Please God, give me wings so I can fly to my lover and save him." She cried and prayed, but no wings appeared on her back.

She thought that God had not heard her prayer, and so, she started walking to the far away land to save her love.

She walked and walked until she came to the widest river she had ever seen. She knew that she could not swim across it. She began to cry and pray to God, "Please God, give me wings so I can fly across this river and save my lover!"

She cried and prayed, but no wings appeared on her back. She thought that God had not heard her prayer, and so, she started to plead with the river.

"Please River, part your waters so that I may cross?"

"Why should I?" answered the river.

The girl thought. Maybe if she sang about her troubles, the river would take pity. She began to sing the saddest song about her Cossack, how much she loved him, and much pain she had without him.

The song was so sad, that the river began to cry! Its banks swelled and it was deeper and wider than before! It would not stop and the girl knew she had to do the opposite to calm the river. She had to make it laugh!

She quickly started to sing about the times her Cossack played tricks on her to make her laugh. She sang about the time he put frogs in the buckets of water she was carrying, buckets meant to fill her grandmother's bath! Oh what a noise Baba made when she saw them!

It worked!

The river stopped crying and began to laugh so hard, the large rocks on its bed bubbled up to the surface. The girl was able to cross on the rocks. The river bubbled happily and wished her good luck.

She walked on and soon came to the largest field she had ever seen. It stretched and it stretched to the horizon in every direction. The girl thought that she could never reach the other side. She began to cry and pray to God again, "Please God, give me wings so I can fly across this field and save my love!"

She cried and prayed, but no wings appeared on her back. She thought that God had not heard her prayer, and so, she started to plead with the wind.

"Please Wind, carry me across this field?"

"Why should I?" answered the wind.

The girl thought. Maybe if she sang about her joys, the wind would help her like the river did. She began to sing the funny song about the frogs and her Baba's bathwater.

The wind began to chuckle and playfully tossed up her braids. It warmly swooshed around her. The wind was too calm, and the girl knew she had to do the opposite to get it to move her. She had to make him angry!

She quickly began to sing about how her Cossack was a good man, and that he helped so many people at home. He was supposed to marry her. How could the Tsar be so cruel and break apart true love? How could he lock away an honest man? What was her Cossack to him?

It worked!

The wind began to blow and howl about injustice. It picked her up and she flew across the endless field so fast, her eyes could not open until she was placed down gently in the middle of the courtyard in the Tsar's palace.

This time, she did not cry. This time, she said a different prayer.

"Thank you, God, for giving me strength."

When she looked up, the Tsar and his court were curiously looking at this girl who fell from the sky. The girl wasted no time and did not plead.

"Please Tsar, release my Cossack."

"Why should I?" answered the Tsar.

The girl began to sing the most beautiful song. It was about sadness, about pain. It was about laughter, about joy, about fairness, about goodness, and about the beauty of true love. She sang about the river, about the wind and about faith in oneself and in God.

When she had finished, the Tsar was laughing, crying, and sighing all at once. Her song had touched him deeply. He allowed the Cossack to go free.

Overjoyed, the pair walked home and got married. They lived a long happy life together, until one day, God gently gave them one final gift -- a beautiful pair of wings.