

**THE DINGO; TRANSLATED
FROM THE RUSSIAN BY
IRINA ZHELEZNOVA**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649149407

The Dingo; Translated from the Russian by Irina Zheleznova by R. Fraerman

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

R. FRAERMAN

**THE DINGO; TRANSLATED
FROM THE RUSSIAN BY
IRINA ZHELEZNOVA**

R. F R E I E R M A N

THE DINGO



FOREIGN LANGUAGES
PUBLISHING HOUSE
MOSCOW

TRANSLATED FROM THE RUSSIAN
BY IRINA ZHELEZNOVA
EDITED BY PHYLL GRIFFITH
DESIGNED BY B. MARKEVICH

Handwritten notes:
P...
- 11
T. 11/12

856709

Р. Фраерман
ДИКЛАЯ СОБАКА ДИНГО
ИЛИ
НОВЕСТЬ О ПЕРВОЙ ЛЮБВИ



I

A line fishing-line dipped in the water under a thick tree-root which stirred with every movement of the waves.

A young girl was fishing for trout.

She sat motionless on a large rock, the noises of the river rolling over her. The shimmering light over the water tired her eyes, and she looked down absently, glancing away sometimes to the distant mountains, whose curving shapes, overshadowed by forest, dominated the river.

The air was luminous, and the sky, imprisoned by the mountains, was like a valley lit by the gentle beams of sunset.

But it was not the sky, familiar to her from

childhood, that held her gaze. Wide-eyed, she followed the eternally flowing water, trying to imagine the unknown parts that the river had come from, the strange lands where it was going. She yearned to see new countries, a different world, inhabited by such creatures as the dingo, the wild dog of Australia. She longed to become a pilot and a singer too.

She began to sing, quietly at first, then louder.

She had a pleasant voice. But there was no one to hear her: she was quite alone. Startled by her song, a water-rat, hiding near the root, splashed into the water and swam towards a clump of rushes, dragging a green reed after it to its hole. The reed was long, and the rat struggled vainly to pull it through the thick weeds.

The girl looked pityingly at the rat and stopped singing. Then, rising, she brought in her line.

The rat nosed nervously into the rushes, and a dark, speckled trout, poised motionless in the limpid stream, leaped up and plunged into the depths.

The girl looked at the slowly sinking sun, dipping down to the spruces on the top of the mountain. It was late, but she did not hurry.

Drawing herself up lazily from the rock, she swung off at an easy pace up the path, the towering forest coming to meet her down the mountain's gently sloping side.

Boldly she entered the forest.

The murmur of the water, rushing over the river's rocky bed, died away behind her. She was swallowed up in the silence of ages.

Suddenly the silence was broken by a Pioneer bugle. Ringing shrilly over the cutting where ancient firs stood without stirring, it warned her that she must hurry.

But the girl did not quicken her steps. Rounding a small swamp bright with yellow marsh lilies, she bent down and carefully dug up some of the flowers with the roots.

She had gathered a whole armful when soft footsteps sounded behind her and someone called loudly:

"Tanya!"

She turned to see Filka, the Nanai boy, standing in the cutting by a high ant-hill, beckoning to her. She obeyed, a friendly smile lighting up her face.

On a large tree-stump at Filka's side she saw a pot filled with cowberries. Filka was whittling a fresh birch twig with a narrow hunting-knife of Yakut steel.

"Didn't you hear the bugle?" he asked her. "Not in much of a hurry, are you?"

"It's visiting day, today," she said, "but my mother couldn't come, she's at the hospital, working, so no one in camp is expecting me." And she added, smiling: "But you don't seem to be in much of a hurry yourself?"

"It's visiting day, today," he mimicked. "My father came from the pastures to see me, and I thought I'd go as far as the fir copse on the knoll to see him off."

"And did you go all that way to see him off?"

"No," Filka replied with dignity, "why should I! He's going to spend the night by the river near our camp. I bathed behind the Big Rocks and went to look for you. I heard you singing."

The girl looked at him and laughed. Filka's brown face darkened.

"Since you're in no hurry to get back," he said, "let's stay here for a bit. I've got a treat for you—ant juice."

"Another treat? I had some of your raw fish this morning."

"Fish isn't ant juice. Here, try some!" And Filka plunged his twig into the centre of the ant-hill.

Bending over it together, they waited till

the slender twig, stripped of bark, was covered with ants. Then, striking the twig lightly against a tree-trunk, Filka shook them off. Drops of formic acid stood out on the glossy wood. Filka licked the twig and held it out to Tanya.

"It's awfully good," said Tanya, catching the drops with her tongue. "I always did like ant juice."

She moved on along the path, Filka walking close beside her.

They were silent, Tanya because she was in a pensive mood and because the hushed forest invited silence, and Filka because he could think of nothing else to talk about except ant juice and that seemed hardly worth mentioning.

Without exchanging a word, they crossed the cutting and came out on the further slope of the mountain. Not far away under a cliff overhanging the river, that tirelessly bore its waters to the sea, they saw their camp, a row of large tents set up in a clearing.

They could hear a noise coming from the camp, the ringing sound of the children's voices, that to Tanya, standing far above the camp, amid the silence of the grey crags, seemed like the murmur of a distant forest.