



# The Multilingual Library for Children in Europe

**RussianTraditional Story**  
English language version



Co-funded by the  
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“Fairy tales are more than true:  
not because they tell us that dragons exist,  
but because they tell us that dragons can be beaten.”

Neil Gaiman



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# The Crane and the Egret

Russian Traditional Story  
English language version

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*Author:* Unknown

*Illustrator:* Barbara Dorušincová



Once upon a time a Crane and an Egret lived on the opposite sides of a muddy pond.  
Each in their own little house.

The Crane got sad one day, living alone all the time, and he decided to get married.

He told himself:

“I’ll ask Egret to marry me!”



So the Crane journeyed across the pond, tippy-tappy his legs went in the mud.  
He came to Egret's house and said:  
"Egret! Are you home?"  
And the Egret replied:  
"I'm home."



“You’re going to marry me!” The Crane ordered.

“No, Crane! I will not! Your legs are too long, your feathers are too short, you can’t fly well and I don’t have enough food for the both of us! Get lost, Long-legs!”

So the Crane went home. The Egret, however, started thinking:

“Better to marry the Crane than living alone...”

So the Egret went to see the Crane and said:

“Crane, marry me!”



“No, Egret! I don’t need you and I won’t marry you! Go away!”

The Egret started crying out of shame and went back home. As soon as Egret left, the Crane started thinking:

“Why didn’t I marry Egret when I’m sad alone!?”

So he ran back to her and said:

“Egret! I changed my mind! I want to marry you! Marry me!”



So the Crane went home and the Egret started thinking:  
“Why did I say no to Crane? Why should I live alone? I’d better marry him.”  
She came to ask him to marry her but he didn’t want.



And it's like this, day by day, week by week, month by month, year by year.  
They ask each other all the time but will never get married.





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