

야기 보따리

lagi Boddari

[The Story Bundle]

By Peter Wynne-Willson

Characters

Pom [Lizzie] The Storyteller

Hak [Hye Jung] The apprentice/puppeteer

Umak [Mira] The musician

Before the play begins, Hak, the apprentice, is busy finishing off assembling the set. Preparing for the beginning. She is laughing with the audience, but then realises the play is supposed to start. She rushes off.

[A procession enters. Pom, the storyteller, Hak and Umak the musician. They have drums. Hak has much more of a load than the others. They stop. Something is not right.]

POM: Hak!

[Hak has to sort it out. They finish their entrance. Umak takes up position by all her instruments on one side]

[Pom is ready to begin]

POM: Anyong haseyo [bows]

All: Anyong haseyo.

She motions to check that Umak is in position.

POM: The story you are about to see and hear comes from 6000 miles away in the distant land of Korea. I am Pom.

[She bows. Hak laughs at her name]

POM: Pom. Pom.

[Hak is waving her arms]

No, Pom. The storyteller.

This is Umak, the musician. [she bows]

Now....

[Hak is waiting to be introduced]

[reluctantly] ...and this is my apprentice.

Hak. [she bows]

Korea is an ancient land, shaped like a tiger, hanging from the belly of China. It is a land of trees, and mountains, rivers and islands. A land of foxes and snakes, tigers and dragons. It is a land of stories.

HAK: Green frog, green frog.

POM: Hak. No, I told you. We are not going to tell the green frog story. We are telling the story of Onuri. Get everything ready.

[Hak reluctantly withdraws to her puppets]

In England, you say once upon a time. In Korea, we say.. Iagi Bodari-rul buroyo' Let's unwrap the story bundle.

Our story starts in Korea, the land of the morning calm, or to be more exact, in a lonely island in the East Sea, to the east of Korea..

On the lonely island there lived an old man and an old woman. They worked hard, to keep the island full of corn and fruit and vegetables and rice. One day, on this beautiful island full of growing things, they had a baby daughter.

They helped her to grow like the fruit and the trees.

[Onuri grows up]

She played in the island, she skipped and sang, and she was maybe the happiest little girl in the world.

[skipping and singing]

But when she was five years old, one day, at ten o'clock, the old man and the old woman died, and the little girl was left all alone on the island.

ONURI: How can a girl look after herself alone on an island?

[Onuri eats fruit from the tree]

[Onuri drinks water from the well]

I can eat, and I can drink, and when I am bigger and stronger, I will grow corn and rice, like my mother and father.

But I am alone. How can I sleep at night?

[She is sleepless. A swan arrives, and looks after her. She sings a song to help her sleep]

[Onuri sleeps]

Every night the swan came, to help her sleep. Every day she looked after herself, and she looked after the island.

After a few years, for the first and only time, a boat arrived at the island.

[A boat arrives, with an old woman aboard]

HALMONI: Aigu, aigu. What a long voyage. So much diving. So few fish. Oh yes I don't expect you believe an old lady like me can dive for fish. Oh yes I do. Watch me. But no fish today. Nothing, so I thought I may rest on this beautiful island. No-one has been here for many years. Wait a minute. A catch at last..

Got you. Oi. A girl?

ONURI: Who are you. Why have you got lines on your face. Why are you bent over. Who are you?

HALMONI: A girl. You must be..I don't believe it. Who looks after you. Nobody. Except for the swan.

I will take you home

ONURI: This is home.

HALMONI: This is no place for a little girl on her own.

Come with me.

POM: So the old woman took the little girl away from her island, to the village on the mainland, and for the first time in her memory, she saw other children, and grown-ups, and shops and houses.

HALMONI: What's your name?

ONURI: I haven't got a name.

HALMONI: When is your birthday?

ONURI: I don't know.

HALMONI: Hmm. I shall call you Onuri. It means 'today', and I shall say your birthday is today. Happy birthday.

ONURI: Onuri. 'Today'

HALMONI: Where are your parents?

ONURI: What are parents?

HALMONI: Look. You see there, those people. Those little ones are children like yourself. Those big ones, they are parents.

ONURI: Oh yes. What's the point of them?

HALMONI: What is the point of parents? Good question. They tell you what to do.

ONURI: Why?

HALMONI: They hug you if you are crying.

ONURI: What for?

HALMONI: Everybody needs parents.

ONURI: I don't.

[Onuri explores the village]

Look, so many people. Different shapes and sizes. Look at them all. Hey. Leave those trees alone. Don't tread on the beautiful flowers. Oi. Don't stamp on the ants. Look. There is a big ant and a little ant. The big ant is ahead. The little ant carries a big bundle. Now the big one is coming back to help. Look, he is taking her bundle off her back and carrying it for her. He must be a 'parent'.

[Onuri cries. The old woman comes along]

I want a mother and father, like all these other children. What happened to my parents?

HALMONI: Your mother and father lived here. They were lovely people. They were in love, but their fathers hated each other, and they could not marry, so they ran away to the lonely island. I had a dream about them. They are in WonChunGang - Far Away Across the River Land. They are happy there.

ONURI: I'll go there and find them

HALMONI: Onuri. Don't be silly. Nobody can go to Far Away Across the Water Land. It is far away. Across the river. Not even grown-ups can go there.

ONURI: I will go there. Wonchungang. When can I go there?

HALMONI: Onuri.!

ONURI: Onuri. Today. Good. How do I get there.?

HALMONI: I did not mean You could go to ask the wisest man in the village of white sand, Jang Sang. He reads books all day and all night. may know a way. But it is dangerous, Onuri. Aigu aigu. She is like her mother.

[She goes to ask Jang-Sang. It is dark. He is reciting]

POM: Onuri journeys to the edge of the village, to the house of Jang Sang.

Jang Sang, Jang Sang,. I need your help.

JANG SANG: Go away. Go away. I am far too busy reading books. So many books to read.

ONURI: Jang Sang, you are the wisest man in the village I need your help.

JANG SANG: Well, what is it?

ONURI: I am going to WonChunGang.

JANG SANG: Far Away Across the Water Land.

ONURI: Yes

JANG SANG: Indeed.

ONURI: Can you take me there?

JANG SANG: Oh no. No no no. I have to stay here and read books all the time. I cannot leave. But, let me see. I am sure I read something about the way to Wonchungang. Where is that book. Ah yes. 'Impossible and dangerous journeys' this is it. If you go to the lotus pond and ask the lotus flower, it will tell you the way

ONURI: The lotus pond, really? Thank you.

JANG SANG: Onuri. If you get to Far Away Across the River Land, will you ask something?

ONURI: Of course.

JANG SANG: Will you ask why it is I have to read books all day?

ONURI: You don't like reading books?

JANG SANG: Well I do, in a way. Just ask why. All these books tell me how to do this and that, but no book tells me why.

ONURI: Of course I will. I will come back and tell you why.

[Onuri goes to the Lotus pond]

ONURI: Hello, hello.

LOTUS: What? A girl. Please do not speak so loud. People come here to relax and sleep and dream. This is a peaceful pond.

ONURI: Sorry. I am Onuri. It's just, I am going to Wonchungang, and the wise man said you know the way.

LOTUS: I see. You have not come to pick me then? Well, I expect I can help. WonChunGang? Hmm. Onuri. If you get to Far Away Across the Water Land, will you ask something?

ONURI: Yes.

LOTUS: In winter lotuses have buds. Then in spring flowers come out. Most lotuses have many bright flowers, and butterflies come to visit. But I have only one flower although I drink so much water and have plenty of green leaves. I want butterflies, but...[he cries] I want to know why I have only one flower..

ONURI: Don't cry, Lotus, I will find out for you.

LOTUS: Thank you thank you...

ONURI: But... the way?

LOTUS: Of course. When you go further this way you will see a deep sea. This is the problem with getting to Wonchungang. On the shore of the sea there will be a snake. That snake is a python which tries very hard to be a dragon but still remains a snake. Ask the snake the way to WonChunGang.

ONURI: A snake?

LOTUS: On the way to WonChunGang there are many problems bigger than a little snake. Perhaps you should turn back?

ONURI: No no..tell me the way to the snake.

[SONG – the sea]

[Onuri goes to the blue sea. She sees how big and hard to cross it looks. Then the snake arrives.]

Python, I am Onuri. I am on the way to WonChunGang to see my parents. The Lotus in the lotus pond told me that you know how to get across this sea..

It's not difficult to tell you the way across. But you must do me a favour as well.

ONURI: If I can. What is it?

SNAKE: Other snakes become dragons when they only have one pearl. But I wasn't transformed though I have three pearls. Please find the answer for me when you get there.

ONURI: I promise to ask someone about it. So. How do I cross this sea?

SNAKE: Please climb on my back. I'll take you to the other side of the sea.

ONURI: On your back?

SNAKE: Yessssss

[They cross the sea, through a great storm]

This is it. Get down now. I hope you understand. You have now crossed the water. You are in the land of the Dead now. Onuri, this is the world beyond death, not a mortal world. Only the dead can enter here. When you keep going that way you will meet a young lady called Maeil (Everyday). Ask her the way.

ONURI: Thank you very much, snake.

POM: So Onuri has crossed the great sea, and the longest part of her journey is over. But the hardest part is still to come.

HAK: Pom. Pom.

POM: What? I am in the middle of the story.

HAK: Can I do the green frog now?

POM: No you can't. Get back there. We need Maeil.

HAK: Please.

POM: Maeil. Now.

[Hak withdraws. Maeil appears.]

ONURI: I am Onuri. Are you Maeil?

MAEIL: A girl? What? Humans cannot come here.

ONURI: I came to see my parents who live in WonChunGang. The python I met told me that you can teach me how to go to WonChunGang.

MAEIL: A girl here?

ONURI: Well you are human. How did you get here?

MAEIL: It's a long story. Well, in another life I must have been lazy, and it is my punishment to be here, and to read books all day.

ONURI: Punishment. I love stories.

MAEIL: But these books are not stories, Onuri. Books of facts. I must be the only person in the world that does this.

ONURI: Well..

MAEIL: Anyway I can tell you the way. But if by some miracle you get there safely, please find out the reasons why I have to read books here forever. Otherwise I can't get out of this punishment.

ONURI: Of course.

MAEIL: Follow this road for a while, climb the hill, pass through the valley and under the cliffs. Then you will see the gates, and the stairs up the mountain to WonChunGang. Goodbye, brave girl. Good luck. Oh and watch out for the horrible...oh she's gone. I was going to warn her about the gatekeeper.

POM: Onuri prepared the last and most dangerous stages of her journey. Hak..prepare the arrival at WonchunGang. I have to go to the toilet. Get it ready.

HAK: What? Has she gone?

[Hak takes the opportunity to tell the green frog story. She has no puppets, so has to use other materials to do so. She has just finished when Pom returns]

POM: What are you doing?

HAK: Green frog.

POM: There is no time for that,. Onuri has nearly reached WonChunGang.

HAK: They liked it. You liked it, didn't you.

POM: Hak!

[Pom is Onuri during the final stages of the voyage, and the arrival at the gates of wonchungang].

ONURI: WonChunGang. Open up, open up. It's me...Onuri. I have arrived.

GATEKEEPER: How dare you to ask me to open the gate? Do you know where you are?

ONURI: I am Onuri from the mortal world. I came a long way, for I heard my parents are here.

GATEKEEPER: This is not a place where mortal beings can enter. I am, afraid your journey has been pointless. I cannot let you in.

ONURI: I came a long long way. I came over mountains, and waters. I was determined, even prepared to die to see my parents. Please let me see my parents' faces just once.

GATEKEEPER: No. No No. [babbles on in Korean] this is ridiculous.

FATHER: What is going on out there?.

GATEKEEPER: Sonsaengnim. Many apologies. Nothing. A girl.

FATHER: A what?

GATEKEEPER: From the mortal world. She is crying, because came to see her parents but of course I didn't let her in.

FATHER: How could she come to this place from the mortal world? That's very strange. Let her in. Idiot.

GATEKEEPER: But..

FATHER: Let her in!

[The gatekeeper reluctantly opens the gate for Onuri. Onuri goes in]

POM: Onuri passed several tall gates. When she went pass the last gate there was a lofty floored room and in the middle of the room was a handsome man and a beautiful woman, looking noble and magical..

FATHER: Now. Girl. Who are you and how did you come here?"

ONURI: [Bowing] I am Onuri. I don't know from when but I grew up in a lonely Island by myself. A swan looked after me. Then, an old villager found me in the Island one day and gave me the name Onuri. She told me that she saw my parents in her dream. She said my parents are in WonChunGang. So I left the village and found the way.

FATHER: All the way here. My daughter, I am your father.

MAEIL: I am your mother. Onuri. Onuri. Look at you..

FATHER: When you were four years old there was a year with only winter. No summer no spring, no autumn. We had to make the same long journey you made, so that we could come up here and look after the seasons. This is our job, Onuri. In the end we had to leave you alone.

MAEIL: It was the most difficult thing to leave you on that island. The only thing we could do was to send a swan to look after you.

FATHER: We will show you round tomorrow, but first you must be so tired. You must sleep.

[Music – swan music reprise. They snuggle her down]

POM: The next day was like a dream for Onuri. Her mother and father showed her round the far away land.

MAEIL: The four seasons. This is the place which sends four different seasons to the world. If we did not work here, there would be great chaos in the world.

POM: For three days, Onuri and her parents talked and explored. She would have liked to stay longer, but no-one can stay in WonChunGang for long, so after three days the time had come for her to leave. Just in time, she remembered something

ONURI: I have some questions for you...everybody has something they wanted me to ask...

POM: Onuri asked her questions and listened to all the answers her father gave carefully. She was happy that she could help. Onuri then bid farewell to her parents. Her parents saw her off at the gate of WonChunGang.

MAEIL: Bye bye, and have a good and fruitful life, Onuri. Anyonghi kaseyo

ONURI: Anyonghi kyeseoyo

Onuri left WonCun Gang to begin her long voyage back, feeling different.

[She goes back out of the gates, and meets Maeil.]

MAEIL: Dear Onuri, it's good to see that you are safe. You have given up on getting to WonchunGang?

ONURI: No, I have been there.

MAEIL: YOU HAVE?. Does that mean you have the answer to my question?

ONURI: Yes.

MAEIL: Well, what should I do to stop reading books only?

ONURI: Maeil. You were a heavenly maiden in your previous life. But you were lazy, as you guessed, and had the punishment of reading books always. To untie the fate you have to marry a man who reads books always just like you.

MAEIL: Oh Onuri. That's a great answer, but where am I going to find a man who reads as many books as me?

ONURI: I think I know. You will have to come with me.

POM: So Maeil followed Onuri carrying books on her head. Not long after the journey began, they came to the edge of the sea.

[The snake appears]

SNAKE: Onuri, Onuri. Did you see your parents? Did you ask them about me?

ONURI: Of course, I did. Take us to the other side of the sea. Then I will tell you what you want to know.

[The snake carries Onuri and Maeil across the sea].

SNAKE: Here we are. Now, how will I be a dragon?

ONURI: You cannot be a dragon because you have too many pearls. You must take two of the pearls out and give it to the person you first meet.

SNAKE: Is that all? You mean all this time, if I had spat out two pearls I could have been a dragon.

ONURI: Spit them out then. Let's see if it works.

[The python spits out two of the pearls. Thunder and effects and a transformation. The python becomes a dragon. The dragon soars high, dances and sings.]

[Onuri and Maeil come to the lotus in the pond. The lotus greets Onuri gladly.]

LOTUS: Onuri, I have waited for you for a long time. It's been three years since you left me. I thought you wouldn't come back again.

ONURI: I only spent three days in WonChunGang. It must be one day in WonChunGang is one year in the mortal world.

LOTUS: So

ONURI: So what

LOTUS: So what is the answer to my burning question Onuri? Oh no you forgot to ask, didn't you.

[He cries]

ONURI: Sad lotus, I didn't forget. If you sing the sweetest song to me, you will find that you will grow many many flowers.

LOTUS: Is that all? Of course I can

[He sings. All of a sudden every branch of the lotus opens up with flowers]

Thank you, Onuri

ONURI: We are nearly at our village. This is the house on the edge of the village, where Jang Sang lives.

MAEIL: Jang Sang?

ONURI: It's him that I was wanting you to meet. I think you will be surprised. Go on in.

[Jang sang and Maeil meet. They mirror each other, with reading books, etc. They realise they are soul mates, and kiss.]

[Onuri arrives, and coughs.]

JANG SANG: Onuri. You are back. Oh I am sorry. Did you look for the answer for me? When will I stop reading books?

ONURI: If you marry this lady, you don't have to read books any more. You will live happily forever.

JANG SANG: Marry?

ONURI: Everyone will find someone. When two people with similar problems work together they can overcome anything....

[While Onuri is speaking JangSang and Maeil. Maeil go off together in love]

Oh..well I think they will be happy. Now where is Halmoni?

Halmoni, Halmoni. I have so much to tell you. So much. Here. I have a pearl for you..

POM: The old lady took the pearl, and she listened to all of Onuri's stories. For many years Onuri stayed in the village. She helped the poor visiting village to village. She comforted people who were sick, and poor with the pearl and the flower. She healed their minds and body.

Then one year the winter never stopped, and Onuri knew that she was needed to look after the seasons. In WonChunGang Onuri is now in charge of sending four seasons to the world. Every year four seasons come to the earth. So now, when the spring comes, the summer, the autumn and the winter, now you will know who sent them.