

GUY SEBEUS

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# Quirky tales for noon and midnight

10 NEW SCYTHIAN TALES



**Guy Sebeus**  
**Quirky tales for noon and  
midnight. 10 new Scythian tales**

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**Аннотация**

Once upon a time, by the warm sea, in the most extensive steppes, there were the bravest, the freest and the most mysterious people – Scythians. They are mysterious because no one knows where they have come from and where they have eventually disappeared. Only Storytellers know about it. And that's what they tell...

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# How Scythian Tumbler learned to ride a horse

## 1

Long ago, there were father and mother.

They were Scythians – people living in southern steppes, on the warm sea shore. And they spent a good half of their life in the saddle. Horse riding, they hunted wild animals, fought for their native land, made long journeys for horse herds.

Once, they've given birth to a son.

According to Scythian tradition, the father put the baby into the saddle immediately after his birth. But failed to hold him. The baby tumbled down, falling.

The father was distressed:

“It's a bad sign!” Well, I'll call him Tumbler and wait for a year.

A year later, he put his son into the saddle again.

And again – head over heels! He rolled down under the horse.

The Scythian was distressed, but did not show it so far. He waited until his son was three. Again, he put him into the saddle.

And again – flip-flop under the horse's hooves.

The Scythian was angry:

“Such a shame has never happened among the Scythians – a three-year-old boy cannot sit in the saddle! My son cannot be so disgraceful!”

So, he ordered his wife to make a terrible thing: to leave the boy in the camp. Without him, they went with the herds to look for succulent grass to graze them.

The Scythian mother cried and begged her husband to take pity, but he was adamant:

“I renounce such a son, and that’s it!”

He agreed to do the only thing – to leave a mare for the child to let the boy drink her milk. And he added:

“He is no son of mine until he comes to me riding a horse! My ancestors, same as me, flew across the steppe like birds! We don’t know whether the horses carried us or we carried them! And this one has no wings behind, only fluff and feathers from falling!”

## 2

The baby stayed alone.

The steppe is cold at night, wolves howl. He has tried to climb on the mare. However, he couldn't do it tumbling head over heels, hurting his sides.

Still, not crying. The time to feel sorry for himself passed, it is necessary to survive somehow!

Meanwhile, his mother cannot find a place for herself. She turned with a plea to mother eagle:

“Eagle-bird, help my little son, you are a mother too!”

But the eagle is a proud bird. She refused not even turning her head.

The Scythian mother started begging a fat bustard-bird:

“Help my little son, home-bird, you are a mother too!”

But the bustard has no time, her brood is big! Busy with her cackling, she does not hear and does not want to see anyone!

Helpless mother's heart is crying. Suddenly, she hears someone's high-pitched squeak:

“Do not cry, poor mother's heart, I'll help you!”

The Scythian mother sees a tiny bat in the night sky.

“Thank you for your compassion, dear. But how can you, small bat, help my boy? You are afraid of everyone yourself!”

“But our older sisters, strixes, are afraid of nobody.”

“Who are the strixes? Do you mean those fibbed about in the

fairy-tales told by old men at nocturnal campfires?”

“Maybe, old men fib,” the bat responds fluttering her thin wings. “But the strixes are talked about, not forgotten! You know better than me – invisible matters exist! Otherwise, why does your heart hurt and ache so much? So accept the strixes’ help while I’m offering despite you do not believe in them. This is no time to take care of the external image when the internal feelings overflow!”

### 3

Meanwhile, Tumbler-baby is sad and sorry for being left, but is still trying to climb on the horse. Still, cannot cope with it. Clings to the mare's udder, drinks some milk, gains some strength and tries again, stubborn! Covered with dust and blood, tired, but just for a moment he leans to the ground and tries to jump back on the horse again doing everything as his father taught. And recalls his mother feeling pity for her.

Suddenly, someone grabbed his coat with claws and seated him right into the saddle.

"It seemed to me!" Tumbler thinks. He is so glad: not only for the first time he sits in the saddle, but stays there without tumbling!

"Let me, he thinks, make at least a small step forward. I know, I'll tumble down, hurt myself. Still, this is no time to take care of the external image when the internal feelings overflow! I'll not care of myself, but I'll prove to my father that I am his son!"

It seems to Tumbler that he rides the mare across the steppe himself. In fact, chimera-strix following his mother's prayers carries him with her vast wings!

Strixes are terrible: goat snout, paws with fingers and enormous bat wings. One thing is good: they are invisible to people because of the origin from another world. Otherwise, they can scare someone to death!

The mare gallops across the steppe. Tumbler has forgotten about his falling as if he has wings on his back. The invisible winged strix supports him, not leaving!

The boy is glad, but he isn't hurrying to come back to the parents trying to learn even better. To let it really seem that it is not the horse that carries him, but he carries the horse with his wings.

# 4

Once, the Scythian father was grazing his herd. Suddenly, out of nowhere, wild steppe horses raced across his path. Their exuberant leader struck the Scythian's horse with his powerful breast so that the rider tumbled over the head from the saddle.

“This is deadly,” the Scythian had only time to think. But suddenly another rider racing across the steppe as if having wings caught him.

“In the entire steppe, there are no winged riders,” the Scythian father tells him, “Such ones exist only in my family. But the Creators deprived me of the winged offspring.”

Tumbler did not answer. He looked into his eyes and smiled through tears. Only when the mother rushed to hug and kiss him, the Scythian father recognized his son, who became a real rider.

# Why do the Scythians wear such hats?

## 1

Once upon a time, there were wise Evening and rosy Morning. They had two daughters: Midnight and Midday.

The daughters were special. They usually walked barefoot with their eyes closed. Because of their looks had extraordinary magical powers. This magic was not to be wasted.

Midnight was black-haired with violet-colored eyes. She looked very much like her father Evening, but quick and clever. One had only to call her – she instantly came, opened her eyes, and people fell deeply asleep.

If Midnight smiles – people enjoy good dreams about meeting good people in elegant clothes on beautiful horses. If Midnight is sad or bored, she sends sad dreams to people.

But Midnight was a good girl, she always tried not to scare people falling asleep. Especially, she cared of children. She always sent the most tender and fluffy dreams to them.

Father and mother were very proud of their clever daughter Midnight.

And her sister Midday felt like a loser.

She was blonde with bright black eyes, looking like her tender bright mother Morning.

Like her sister, she usually walked with her eyes closed too.

It was quite easy for her, because she saw everything perfectly with the inner vision, which people usually call understanding. And like a sister, she willingly opened her eyes for people at first.

However, the result was disappointing.

After it, people fell as if struck. Some even died. Because of this, the poor beauty Midday cried for a long time. And then she decided to live without opening her eyes.

What's the problem? She has no harm from this. She can see everything. And there would be no harm for people as well. Nobody would argue and curse her.

## 2

So everything could be as usually.

But once the Scythian lands were attacked by enemies.

Hordes of cruel warriors swooped down from the north. The northerners liked fertile southern steppes full of wild horses; they liked the generous sea full of tasty fish; they liked warm gentle sun – everything absent in the north.

So, they decided to move the Scythians out of these fertile lands to settle themselves there.

The Scythians stiffly fought against them for their homeland. But the forces were unequal. Too many northerners flooded the warm Scythian region.

The Scythians started appealing to their gods begging to teach them how to defend the homeland, how to defeat the cruel enemies?

Many times Morning and Evening changed each other, and the Scythians still retreated and retreated, leaving their fields, meadows and coastline for enemies.

One day, when everyone was already in despair, the Scythians appealed to their last hope – Midnight and Midday.

The sisters conferred.

Midnight came to the Scythians with a prophetic dream, telling them to sew very strange deep hats with wide fields over shoulders.

The next morning all the Scythians woke up with a strange feeling, as if they took a lesson at night teaching them how to sew the hat. They could ignore the strange dream if there were one or several of them. But it was too strange that all the Scythians had the same dream about the strange hats: soldiers, their wives, even children.

What to do – if they asked a question to Midnight and got the answer, they could not ignore it. They were to sew the strange hats. But it turned out to be hard to sew so many of them fast! So, the Scythians simplified the style: they put two pieces of leather together joining them with one seam from the nose to the shoulder blades. Only this way they coped with it.

In the following dream before the decisive battle against the northerners, Midnight ordered all the Scythians to put those weird hats on and go out to fight the enemy without any fear. Only if there would be a dancer in white – not to look at her in any case, put the hat deeper and cover themselves with the fields.

### 3

The northerners inspired by a number of victories were eager to fight from the early morning. Their leaders had iron helmets on, and ordinary soldiers were bareheaded.

When they saw the Scythian army wearing the strange hats, they burst out laughing, jeering and mocking. Going to the decisive battle, they already considered themselves as winners.

...Meanwhile, a beautiful barefoot girl in white flying dress appeared in the clearing between the two armies. Her eyes were closed. But she danced so beautifully that it was impossible not to look at her. Skirts of light flowed around the slender legs, flexible hands splashed like flames above her head, the hair shining in the sun blinded everyone with unearthly beauty. The enemy soldiers admired her until feeling dizzy, forgetting about everything: attack, booties and the very time.

It was Midday.

Sharply at noon, she opened her black eyes. Everyone admiring her was struck.

The Scythian army was only to expel the enemies who had completely lost their ability to fight.

The northerners' leaders, groaning, took their red-hot iron helmets off, ordinary soldiers fell like sheaves clipped by sickles.

This way, the Scythian lands were liberated from the invaders. Since then, the Scythians have been used to crest hats with wide

fields over shoulders.

And Midday stopped considering herself a loser.

# Why Midday's eyes are sewn up

## 1

This was back in the days when Midday was big-eyed like all pretty girls.

Her dress was light-colored, she had a wreath of ears on her head, bare feet, dancing gait. She was incredibly beautiful like hot flavor of solar noon.

Still, she was not all like this.

Her eyes were totally black. The look of those eyes was deadly to anyone who dared to admire her midday beauty.

It made Midday upset very much. She wanted to find a fiancé! Merry and beautiful!

Midday was responsible for a narrow passage between the worlds, which was like a bottleneck. Only once a day it was possible go from that world to our one and back – at noon sharp.

Midday performed her duties conscientiously, but there was a problem: she was curious. Once, she looked at the other side of the transition, at another world for a moment. There, she saw handsome young men who were not going to fall after her black looks.

“How nice!” She was delighted. “How wonderful! Finally, I’ll find a fiancé who will not die of loving me!”

She started posing in front of them and even lured several ones to our world through the transition that was strictly forbidden.

They danced together on the wheat field in the sun, reeled and boasted of the young prowess. Midday was a great dancer. Oh, how the skirts twined around her – like flames! How her sunny hair shone – like a beacon in the darkness! How her black eyes sparkled – like lightning!

And the handsome visitors, of course, did not die due to lethal Midday's looks, but still behaved very strangely. From time to time... they turned out through the navel and went to dance again!

Midday got scared:

“These are famous immortal Turncoats! What have I done! Why have I brought these evil schemers to the human world?!”

But it was too late: the sun went behind a cloud and then completely passed over the noon.

Turncoats left Midday and went easily through Scythian settlements.

And that's what they have done.

## 2

One of them met a Scythian girl.

Merry and beautiful – she could not avoid falling in love with him. With all of her heart, she believed his words about love and faithfulness bringing him to her parents' house. The family began dissuading her:

“Do not trust the stranger. He does not appreciate bread in our house; he does not break it, but cuts. He demeans the akinak dagger, plays with it like a toy. He does not respect seniors, interrupts them with words. He will break your heart, turn out and leave!”

It happened this way.

Other Turncoats rolled up to the Scythian guys, hunters. They described easy, sweet and carefree life overseas. They called them to the ship beautifully rocking on blue waves. The relatives could not dissuade them:

“Do not trust the strangers. They do not appreciate bread in our house; they do not break it, but cut. They demean the akinak dagger; play with it like a toy. They do not respect seniors, interrupt them with words. Such ones are friends only during happiness, and if misfortune happens – they are windblown!”

It happened this way. The travelers were caught by storm in the sea. The Scythians relied on the friends since each pair of hands is not excess in the storm. But those ones fled to cracks

shaking with fear. Besides, why should they strain themselves, they are immortal! When the ship was sinking, Turncoats turned out and jumped alive to the shore.

In the third settlement they came to the council of elders. With their odious speeches, they inspired the wise Scythians to quarrel with neighboring tribes. To occupy their lands then. The oldest man persuaded the elders:

“Do not trust the strangers. They do not appreciate bread in our house; they do not break it, but cut. They demean the akinak dagger, play with it like a toy. They do not respect seniors, interrupt them with words. For centuries, we lived with the neighbors in peace, many times helped one another. The betrayal cannot bring benefit for us. We will destroy the past and will not build the future. Our people will be gone, we will not survive!”

# Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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