**TALES WRITTEN IN A DRAWING ALBUM**

**What we look like from the Moon**

"Mum, what do we look like from the moon?" asked Gio one evening. He was wearing pyjamas with stars on them and looking at the sky through the window in his bedroom.

"Won't the people who live on the moon think that all of us down here on earth are weird? They'll only be able to see our heads, shoulders, and shoes from up there, won't they?"

Gio's mum, Diana, was busy putting a clean sheet on Gio's bed, and so she brushed him off with a short, unsatisfactory answer.

"We look exactly how we are."

"Well how do we look, then? What about me, for example? Do I look the same to you and Dad?"

"You're always the same Gio, but when I look at you, I see my Gio, and when Dad looks at you, he sees his Gio. When we look at people we love, we see our love in them."

"I don't get it. So, if you stop loving me, does that mean I'll look different?"

"Maybe a little bit different, but I'll never stop loving you, so you don't have to worry about that."

"Good."

"Now get into bed and go to sleep. Do you want me to read to you, or shall I put out the light?"

"Put it out."

"Right. Night night, my little lamb. Give me a kiss."

"Mum, so does that mean the people who live on the moon can only see us if they love us?"

"I suppose it does."

"So does that mean if you see someone, you have to love them?"

"Night night, Giorgi. I'm putting out the light now!"

"Mum, I can't see you, but I still love you very much."

"I love you too. Now go to sleep."

Gio's mum switched off the light and carefully closed the door behind her.

Giorgi pressed his nose into the pillow and fell asleep. The moon was shining so brightly it shone right through into his dreams. And maybe a little boy who lived on the moon was watching Gio as he dreamed. Who knows?

**A Ship in a Glass of Water**

One day, Giorgi's mum made him angry. You all know how it happens, I'm sure! There are so many things grownups don't understand. One moment they're forcing food on you, the next they're making you put on your pyjamas. One moment they're giving you medicine, the next they're telling you off because your toys are all over the floor. Sometimes they don't keep their promises, and sometimes they bring you a different toy to the one you really wanted.

You all know how it happens.

So why did Gio get angry?

"He never talks, you know" said his mum Diana to a neighbour who had asked Gio a rather silly question and was waiting stubbornly for a reply.

"I never talk?" thought Gio angrily. "I always, always talk. I talk whenever I need to talk. It's just you lot don't listen!"

And that's why Gio got angry.

Because he was a very good and polite little boy, he didn't let his anger show, but in his heart, he was really, truly, angry!

"I'm so angry," he thought to himself with all his heart and soul, but he didn't show it. Instead, when they got home, he made sure not to jump on his mum's knee as he usually did, and not to kiss her cheek. He played with his toys for a while, then put them away, then went in the bath, then ate his supper, and then, without saying a word to anyone, he went to bed. His mum asked him what he wanted her to read to him before he fell asleep, but he told her to put out the light because he was tired and wanted to sleep.

His mum was surprised, but she didn't say anything. She wished him good night, kissed him, and left the room. Giorgi didn't say anything. He lay in bed on his back, in his pyjamas with stars on them, staring at the neon stars on the ceiling. He remembered how angry he was, and felt hurt that nobody had even noticed.

"Mum!" he called out to his mum.

His mum came to him straight away, as she always did.

"What is it, sweetheart?"

"Can I have a drink of water?"

His mum brought him a glass of water, gave him a cuddle, and just like that, his hurt flowed away along with the water, like a little ship, as if it had never been there in the first place. He realized that you should never keep hold of your anger for a long time. You should either talk about it or forget it, especially if you are angry with someone you love. If you don't, it will stay inside you for a long, long time, bobbing around but not going anywhere, like a ship in a glass of water.

"Night night, mum!" he said. He gave his mum a kiss, and went to sleep.

And the next morning, he drew a picture of his anger.

You all know how it happens.

**The Case of the Escaped Thoughts**

Gio and his mum Diana were doing schoolwork together. Everything you could think of was scattered all over the table: picture books, crayons in all different colours, sheets of coloured paper, felt-tip pins… They were reading about this and that, tracing the beautiful letters of the Georgian alphabet, adding one apple to three pears, laughing, having fun…

And then, all of a sudden, Diana lost Gio. The little boy sat and stared, entranced, at the twinkling rays of sunlight on the wall and the shadows made by the curtains, behind which a little, fat fly was buzzing as it tried to find a way out of the house.

"Gio, where have you gone?" asked Gio's mum. "Giorgi! Look at me."

Gio heard his mum's voice coming from somewhere in the distance, as if she were calling to him from the garden, or the street, or maybe just from the balcony of the house. Then, as her voice slowly came closer and closer, Giorgi gathered together his scattered thoughts like a brood of lost chicks, and smiled at his mum.

"My thoughts ran away from me."

"Where did they run to?"

"I don't know. They said, "We've run away!""

"I wonder where they went!"

"Well, first they ran out into the street, then they ran into a park with some swings, then they got on a yellow bus, and then they bought some chocolate."

"What then?"

"Then they came back and added one apple to three apples."

"What then?"

"Mum, can we play now?"

Gio's mum realised that Gio was tired of doing schoolwork.

"OK, let's play," she said.

After pushing the books to one side, first they did a puzzle, then they played with some coloured dominoes, and finally they drew pictures in blue and pink chalk all over the asphalt in front of their house.

It was a warm, sunny day.


**A Fairy-tale about Traffic Lights**

This is not actually a *real* fairy-tale. At that time, Gio was still very small, and he didn't know that you should only cross the road when the traffic lights are red for the cars and green for the people.

They were in a bookshop. A girl was reading poems out loud, while people wandered to and fro. Gio was standing in front of one of the bookshelves and counting the books, from left to right first, and then in the opposite direction.

When he got bored of doing that, he went over to the glass door and looked outside. The streetlights were sparkling, cars were flying past at great speeds, and people were hurrying along the pavement. Gio decided to take a closer look at the noisy street and the colourful traffic lights.

Almost as soon as he stepped outside, before he even knew it, he came to the edge of the pavement.

This whole story might have had a very different ending if it had not been for the kind-hearted traffic lights, who straight away realised that the little boy was either confused, or didn't yet understand how important were the three coloured lights going on and off on their iron stomachs.

All of a sudden, the red light switched on, the cars stopped, and the little boy returned safely to his very worried mum.

So, let's all remember:

Green means "Go!"

And red means "Stop!"