



# Григорий Федосеев **В тисках Джугдыра**

ИЗДАТЕЛЬСТВО ЛИТЕРАТУРЫ  
НА ИНОСТРАННЫХ ЯЗЫКАХ

Москва

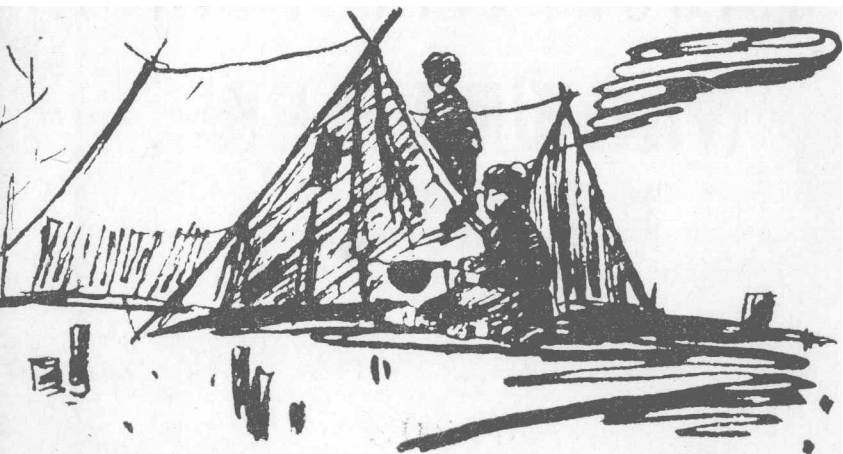




# Григорий Федосеев **В тисках Джугдыра**

ИЗДАТЕЛЬСТВО ЛИТЕРАТУРЫ  
НА ИНОСТРАННЫХ ЯЗЫКАХ

Москва





GRIGORY FEDOSEYEV  
**MOUNTAIN  
TRAILS**

FOREIGN LANGUAGES PUBLISHING HOUSE  
Moscow



TRANSLATED FROM THE RUSSIAN BY GEORGE H. HANNA

DESIGNED BY D. BISTI



**LIBRARY OF SOVIET LITERATURE**



## CONTENTS

*Page*

### PART ONE

I. The expedition leaves for the Far East. Meeting with four-footed friends. The birth of Kuchum. . . . .	11
II. Korolyov leaves. Unfinished conversation. Preparing for a long journey. By air to the coast. Alarming message. . . . .	27
III. The incident at the tent. A prisoner in the camp. Flight. At the Shaitan Bazaar in Baku. Return. The last encounter with the militia. Meeting on the Black Sea beach. . . . .	40
IV. To the shores of the Sea of Okhotsk. Joogjoor is angry. The joy of a fire. An Evenk legend. At the foot of Mount Algychan. . . . .	74
V. The search for the lost party. The guides guess right. A meeting with the doomed. Together again. The return to the bay. Parting with Korolyov. . . . .	99

### PART TWO

I. Collective-farm pitch-boiler. We meet Pashka. "Blue Ribbon." The cabin at the forest edge. Pashka the fan. . . . .	121
II. We meet the guides. A long sledge journey. Ulukitkan's past. Ambushing wolves. . . . .	146
III. Kupuri Canyon. Prisoners on the ice. A bad spot. Joogdyr Pass. . . . .	171
IV. Blizzard in the mountains. Stray deer in camp. In search of unknown people. Down the Kupuri. The search for the dogs. The writing of the forest nomads. . . . .	198

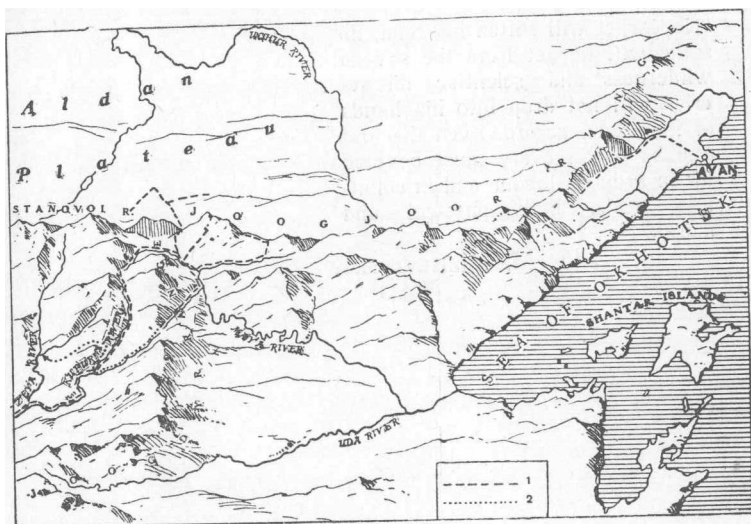


### PART THREE

I. Bath-house in the taiga. Grouse courtship at dawn. Bear's strange behaviour. Ulukitkan's "map." Off again. Squirrel courtship. . . . .	231
II. The Joogjoor Pass at last. A view of the Aldan Highlands. Inglorious end of Bighorn. The peaks of the Stanovoi. . . . .	253
III. The way back. An unexpected meeting. On the trail of the wild reindeer. A forest mystery. . . . .	279
IV. Evenk legend. Another sledge journey. "The strains of a lone accordion." Dance in Lebedev's camp. . . . .	300
V. The summit of a stony mountain. Blizzard on Joogjoor. Early visitor. Bear tracks. Keep your head or die! . . .	323
VI. The howling of wolves. Unexpected visitors. How the old men guessed who had shot the moose. You can't fool Ulukitkan! Glad tidings, Maika is born. . . . .	360

### PART FOUR

I. Battle of the sea eagles. I go south with Ulukitkan. The secret of the old stumps. Ulukitkan loses his sight. . . .	385
II. The blind man leads the sighted. The vagabond bear. Down the Inogli. Kupuril . . . . .	408
III. The roar of Kupuri's mad rapids. Water carries off the caravan. The search for Ulukitkan. The camp under the old fir. The trap. . . . .	422
IV. Ulukitkan goes by litter. We fool the evil spirit. The blind man rummages in my <i>potka</i> . Which way? The Jegorma is near! . . . . .	441
V. Don't go straight through unknown forest. Search for Ulukitkan. Two shots. The fool hen. On the brink of life. Meeting with bear. Sun over the Jegorma . . . . .	463

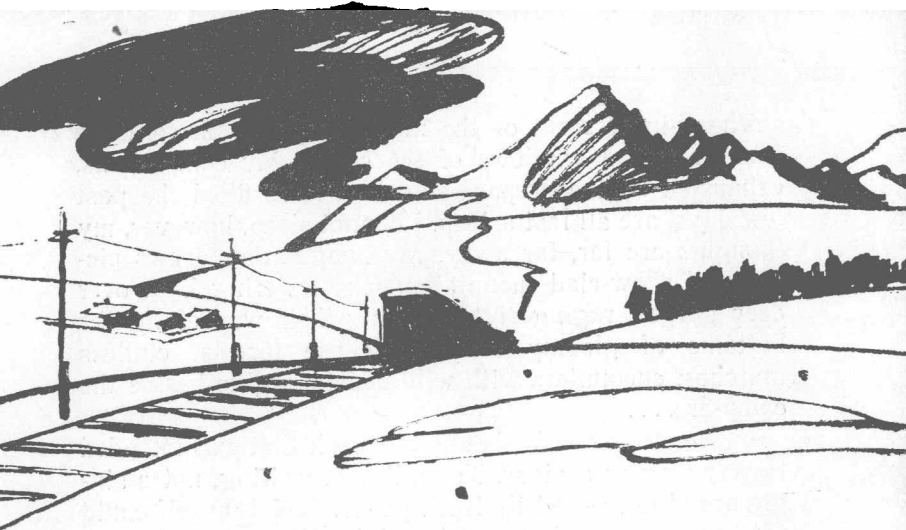


# PART ONE



"No carpet will soften his road, no smile will he get from the savage wilderness and scientific discoveries will not drop into his hands of their own accord. Even the first crumbs of discovery must be paid for in arduous labour and in countless trials, both physical and moral."

N. M. PRZHEVALSKI



## I

*The expedition leaves for the Far East. Meeting with four-footed friends. The birth of Kuchum.*

**T**o the monotonous hammering of wheels on rails the train races farther and farther eastwards, past Siberian villages, past the white blanket of snow-covered tillage and grazing land, past groves of birch-trees. After deep gullies the hummocky steppe appears suddenly with its pattern of hare and goat tracks, then the mighty taiga, the forest primeval, adorned with garlands of snow, reaches down to the railway line; the engine of our train, scattering puffs of smoke right and left, races on with its merry whistle answered by a noisy echo.

The thin crescent of the moon peeps in through the frost-patterned windows of the coach. My companions, exhausted by the preparations that have filled the past few days, are all fast asleep. I cannot sleep, however, my thoughts are far, far away. My imagination draws pictures of snow-clad mountain peaks towering high over deep gorges, raging rivers forcing their way along the bottoms of gloomy canyons, dense forests, endless marches, encounters with wild beasts, nights beside the camp-fire. . . .

I got out the canvas-bound notebook that was intended to serve me as a diary. Not a line of writing, not a single drawing marred its fresh pages. And I myself could not even guess what events might fill up the diary. I opened the book and wrote in the middle of the first page:

*"My dream has come true, I am on my way  
to the shores of the Sea of Okhotsk.*

*2nd February, 1949."*

The huge territory, bordering on the Sea of Okhotsk and intersected by the Joogdyr and Joogjoor Ranges and the eastern end of the Stanovoi Range, has long since attracted the attention of explorers, although it is only on rare occasions that geologists have found their way there. The past has left no grave-mounds or other relics of ancient or modern civilizations in that part of the world. The stream of humanity has bypassed this remote corner of the Far East that never became the scene of man's activity. All this only made us the more anxious to penetrate into a district whose central part was topographically blank. There was such a paucity of detail on existing maps that they did not give a true picture of the region and had an unfinished look.

And so we reached the Far East. Our headquarters was located in the old but otherwise obscure town of

Zeya. The expedition had been equipped to map the extensive region bordering on the Sea of Okhotsk, and included surveyors, topographers, astronomers, aerial photographers and geographers.

Working parties would have to erect the beacons of the triangulation system, take aerial photos of the whole region, determine the heights of mountain ranges, plateaux and plains, find the sources of rivers, follow existing paths, investigate the flora, determine the nature of the soil and collect other information indispensable to the country's national economy.

We knew that the task ahead of us would demand the utmost exertion from all of us. Nobody could guess what successes and disappointments lay ahead. We were splendidly equipped, we had powerful modern aircraft and the latest precision instruments but none of these things could save us from a direct tussle with nature in the raw. The majority of us were new to the region. We did not know the caprices of its climate, we did not know where there were passes through the mountain ranges or fords across the rivers, we had no idea of the bounds of the taiga or where we would meet with swamps. We knew from experience that work in the field would bring many changes to our assumptions and calculations and would confront us with many surprises. There were problems that would have to be settled right on the spot to suit the situation and in solving which we could rely only on ourselves. Savage nature always tries to impress man with a sense of his own helplessness, but in reality nature herself is powerless against human intellect, courage and persistence.

At the expedition headquarters work went on day and night, food and equipment were being packed and special clothing fitted. The clatter of hammers, the rattle of pots and pans and the endless hum of human voices merge into one irregular uproar. The busy atmosphere

of the place might well infect the laziest and arouse the envy of a seasoned traveller.

Vasily Nikolayevich Mishchenko, my constant companion in fifteen years of wandering through the taiga, and our four-footed friends, Boika and Kuchum, had not yet arrived. They would arrive at Tygda Station on the Amur Railway the next day, 10th February.

When we reached the platform the train was already pulling into the station. With a rattle and clatter the engine passed the idle, waiting crowd and stopped just beyond the baggage shed. The dogs were standing on the platform of the brake van. "Will they recognize me?" I wondered, for I had not seen Boika and Kuchum for the past eight months.

I waited on the platform. While the bales and boxes were being unloaded the dogs had been tied to the fence. They were both as black as coal and looked exactly alike with the same bushy white brows, light breasts and sprinkled grey stockings on their legs; their curved tails lay alike on the thick coats of their backs. Kuchum was a bit bigger than Boika. His long, lithe body was supported by strong legs, there was a cheeky look about his face and cunning in the way he screwed up his eyes. In a tussle with other dogs he had only to show his fangs for them to get their backs up and then start sniffing round Kuchum, displaying both respect and curiosity. Devotion to people formed part of the nature of that shaggy beast.

Boika was more reserved, always had a worried look and was submissive. She was never noticed in camp, but when she was on the trail of a wild animal she was unrecognizable! She did her job impetuously and with precision—nobody knows where she got the agility. At such moments all the other dogs obeyed her; no sooner had the danger passed, however, than she would change again and become quiet, gentle and unnoticeable.

A noisy bunch of small boys appeared from nowhere and crowded round the dogs. They pointed to Boika and Kuchum, squatted down fearfully in front of them, gazed into their eyes and were gesticulating and arguing furiously about something.

Another lad, a bit older than the others, a boy of about eleven with his skates under his arm, climbed over the fence to join them. When the younger boys saw him they stopped talking and the new-comer, with the dignity of a judge, examined Kuchum and Boika, fumbled in the pockets of his sheepskin coat, got out something edible and threw it to the dogs. I did not hear what he said to the others but I saw them waving their hands and making as much noise as a flock of startled sparrows, all of them trying to prove something to him at once.

I stood some distance away wondering how I could make the dogs remember me. A very faint, scarcely perceptible breeze swept along the platform. The dogs were immediately on the alert, they turned their heads in my direction and stood still in anticipation. The breeze carried with it the smells of oil, smoke, deal boards, paint, dried grass and of the hundreds of people who were around the train. What had excited the dogs?

There could be no doubt that they had discovered my presence. But what a sense of smell was needed to pick out one particular scent from amongst so many and after such a long time!

I could not resist walking towards them. Boika and Kuchum grew more excited. They stretched out towards and sniffed at every passer-by and wagged their tails. At last they saw me and began barking and howling.

I put my arms round them, said something to them and they licked my hands, jumped and barked. Only people whose dogs have got them out of difficulties can fully



understand what this meeting with my four-footed friends meant to me.

After that I went to see Vasily Nikolayevich whom I had not seen for a long time. This had been our first parting after many long years of taiga exploration together. We embraced and shook hands for a long time.

The boys had left the dogs and were pressing against the fence looking at me in amazement.

"Oo-oo! Are they your dogs?" the cheekiest and probably the youngest of them suddenly called to me, pushing his fur cap on the back of his head and adjusting the school satchel that hung at his side.

As everybody knows there is no getting rid of a crowd of boys once they have started an argument.

"Alyosha says those dogs are sheep-dogs and we say they're not: sheep-dogs have long ears and these are sleigh-dogs. They are, aren't they?"

"You and your sleigh-dogs!" put in the boy with the skates. "Look, they've got white eyebrows, of course they're sheep-dogs! Not police dogs, mind you, but real sheep-dogs that look after sheep. I've seen pictures of them."

"Those sheep-dogs have mugs like yours, Alyosha! Only there's nothing wet under their noses," said another and the boys all laughed.

"Don't argue," I said, trying to reconcile the boys, "they're ordinary Siberian huskies."

"There you are, I said they're hunting-dogs," the smallest of them put in. "Dad had a dog like that, Valetka it was called, and it used to go after ducks. What do your dogs hunt, eh?"

"They don't catch ducks, in fact they don't touch birds at all, they go after bears and moose; sometimes we put them in harness, too."

"Where are you taking them?" asked Alyosha.

"On an expedition."