

Text 1: The tale of Bizbal

This text was recorded in October 2008 by Parvin Mahmoudveysi in the village of Gawraĵū. The narrator is a woman approximately thirty years old. Her child was also present during the recording, which took place at her house. The story is a traditional children’s folk tale of the “chain story” type: The main character is given a task, for which he requires the help of various people. Each person he asks for help requires a further task of him, so that in order to fulfill the original task, a whole chain of tasks must be fulfilled. This particular story is widespread throughout the region, and versions of it are well-known all across Kurdistan, as far north as the Caucasus (in other versions the main character is sometimes a fox instead of a cat).

The story appears to be based on a Southern Kurdish original, because it contains numerous semi-formulaic stretches of speech which are in Southern Kurdish. These stretches are enclosed in curly brackets, {...}, in the text. The style of these sections could be compared to language used with children or considered similar to song. We refer to this as “children’s verse style”. It is in verse form and contains Gawraĵūyī and Southern Kurdish elements, as well as some Central Kurdish elements. In some of these stretches, nouns occur in a phrase with the form of a genitive relation (noun ‘of’ noun), but the meaning seems to be that of goal/benefit (noun) ‘to’ (noun) (see sentences 82 and 83, for example).

	GORANI	ENGLISH	
(1:1)	dāstān bizbal	The tale of Bizbal.	(00:00)
(1:2)	ya dāya ³⁸ kaywānū mawu, ya biziniš mawu, nāmiš bizbal mawu	There is an old lady (and) she has a goat; its name is Bizbal.	(00:01)
(1:3)	dāya kaywānūwaka-yč ³⁹ šir bizinakaš ⁴⁰ mawšē, mārēša bān	The old lady also milks her goat (and) takes it (i.e., the milk) upstairs.	(00:05)
(1:4)	ya iwārān ⁴¹ šawakī ⁴² mašu, mawinē širakaš ya kučiš wiřišē, ya kučiš řišišē	One evening, very early in the morning, she goes (and) sees her milk; one portion of it has been consumed (and) one portion of it has been spilled.	(00:09)
(1:5)	xulāsa, dāya kaywānū mwāy, yārā ī šir mina arā řišišē, ča wan hāmay	Finally, the old lady says: “O God, why has this milk of mine been spilled? What happened to it?”	(00:15)
(1:6)	ī šaw ⁴³ kuł mayrē	The next evening she hides.	(00:21)
(1:7)	ī šaw kuł mayrē, manyayša žir	The next evening she hides, puts it (i.e.,	(00:22)

³⁸ The word *dāya* ‘mother’ can also be used to address one’s mother or as used a general reference to older women.

³⁹ On *kaywānuwaka-yč*, there seems to be no audible final (č). It could be assimilated to the following consonant of *šir*.

⁴⁰ The term *bizin* refers to goats in general, but in some contexts, it can refer specifically to female goats. Another term, *miš*, refers to male goats (rams).

⁴¹ The phrase *ya iwārān* is an expression; with plural ‘evenings’, it means ‘one evening (among evenings)’.

⁴² The narrator corrects herself after ‘one evening’ and says ‘very early in the morning’. This term, *šawakī*, refers to a time period between about 5 a.m. to 8 a.m.

⁴³ The phrase *ī šaw* refers to ‘the following evening/night’, while the term *īšaw* refers to ‘that/this evening’ (i.e., ‘tonight’).

	GORANI	ENGLISH	
	qulīna, mawīnē batē	the milk) under a basket; she sees, yes.	
(1:8)	pišīk hāma, sar qulīna(k)ašiš lā dā-u	A cat came, pushed the lid off the basket, and	(00:26)
(1:9)	damiš niyā šīraka, tā tānisiš šīraka wardiš-u bāqīš-ī(č) řišnī	put its mouth to the milk, drank as much as it could, and poured the rest of it out.	(00:30)
(1:10)	xulāsa dāya kaywānū mwāy bazbarāftat niya	Finally, the old lady says (to the cat): “You don’t have (a chance of) running away.”	(00:34)
(1:11)	taraštayēk mārē, matiya wa mil dimišay, dimiš maqirtinē	She takes a hatchet, brings it down on its (i.e., the cat’s) tail, (and) cuts its tail off.	(00:38)
(1:12)	dimiš maqirtinē-u	She cuts its tail off, and	(00:41)
(1:13)	pišiyaka-yč makariya dād-u hāwār, ⁴⁴ mwāy dāya kaywānū	the cat in turn calls out for help (and) says: “Old lady,	(00:43)
(1:14)	tu xwiyā dima kułakam biya wanim, {xxx} dī tikrāriš nimakarim, dī nimāyim, šīrakat bwarim, mwāy na	by God, give my cut-off (lit., short) tail back to me, {xxx} I will never do it again, I will not come (back) anymore to drink your milk...” (The old lady) says: “No!	(00:46)
(1:15)	bāyad biši až pā-y dār wiyaka, wī bārī	You must go to the foot of the willow tree, bring (back) willow (leaves),	(00:52)
(1:16)	bināya war ī bizin mina bwarēš šīr bāya gwāniš	put it in front of this goat of mine, (so that) she may eat it (and) milk may come into her udder,	(00:55)
(1:17)	šīrakaš bitī	(so that) she may give her milk...	(00:58)
(1:18)	bīyam ařā ⁴⁵	(that) I may give (it) to...	(01:01)
(1:19)	šīrakaš bikarma šīr birinǰ, ⁴⁶ didānim ⁴⁷ niya, ī šīr birinǰa bwarim	(that) I may make her milk into (a dish with) milk and rice; I have no teeth, I may eat this milk and rice.”	(01:02)
(1:20)	mwāy bāša(d), mašuwa ařā pā-yē ⁴⁸ dār wī, mwāy {children’s verse style: dār wī, wī da, wī bizbal da ⁴⁹	(The cat) says: “All right.” (The cat) goes to the foot of the willow tree (and) says: {children’s verse style, to end of sentence 21: “Willow tree, give (me) willow (leaves), give the willow (leaves) to Bizbal.	(01:06)
(1:21)	bizbal šīr dē, šīr dāyam ⁵⁰ dē,	Bizbal gives milk, she gives the milk to	(01:12)

⁴⁴ The phrase *dād-u hāwār* ‘call out for help repeatedly’ can be compared to Persian *dad-u bidad*.

⁴⁵ The narrator corrects herself here.

⁴⁶ The name *šīr birinǰ* refers to a dish made with rice cooked with milk. Because it has a soft consistency, it is often served to elderly people or children.

⁴⁷ The word-medial alveolar plosive in *didānim* is realized as a continuant with velarized quality.

⁴⁸ The form of the Ezāfe on *pā-yē* is not the common Gawraǰūyī form, but instead as in Persian.

⁴⁹ The verbs in *dār wī, wī da, wī bizbal da* are considered imperatives, comparable to Kurdish *bida*. In the quotation (here and elsewhere), the form *dē* occurs. This is used as both imperative and indicative. These uses are only distinguished by context.

⁵⁰ The form *dāyam* here and elsewhere is literally ‘my mother’.

GORANI	ENGLISH	
dāyam dima kuṭē bû, ⁵¹ bo baghdād čēt}	the old lady; the old lady (gives back) the (cat's) short tail; (the cat) goes to Baghdad.”}	
(1:22) mwāy naxayr	(The willow tree) says: “No.	(01:17)
(1:23) min ay tu tā našī āw hawnakarī, āw nāya pām nimatānim pal bikarim	Me, well, unless you go (lit., not go), take out water, (and) make the water flow to my foot (i.e., base), I cannot grow leaves.	(01:19)
(1:24) bāyad tu bišī āw aḷ hānīyaka hawbikarī, ⁵² bāya pā-y min, min āw bwarim	You must go, take out water from the spring, (that the water) may flow to my foot, (that) I may drink the water.	(01:24)
(1:25) jā āsā pal bikarim, tu palaka biškinī, biyārī ⁵³ ā bizinaka ⁵⁴	Then I may grow leaves; you may break off the leaves, you may take (them) to that goat.”	(01:28)
(1:26) māy mašūwa ⁵⁵ aḷ sar hānīyaka, mwāy {children's verse style: dār wī wī dē	(The cat) sets off for the spring (and) says {children's verse style, to end of sentence 27: “The willow tree gives willow (leaves),	(01:32)
(1:27) wī bizbal dē, bizbal šīr dē, šīr dāyam dē, dāyam dima kuṭē bû, bo baghdād čēt}	(the willow tree) gives the willow (leaves) to Bizbal; Bizbal gives milk, she gives the milk to the old lady; the old lady (gives back) the (cat's) short tail; (the cat) goes to Baghdad.”}	(01:36)
(1:28) mwāy a	(The spring) says: “Oh.”	(01:42)
(1:29) hānīyaka māya qisa mwāy	The spring starts to speak; it says:	(01:44)
(1:30) hā pišīk, mwāy baṭē, mwāy bāyad tu bišī	“Hey, cat.” (The cat) says: “Yes?” (The spring) says: “You must go,	(01:46)
(1:31) sē čwār gila mināṭ bārī, aḷ sar-e min hawpiṛki ⁵⁶ bikarin	fetch three (or) four children, (so that) they may do a dance above me,	(01:49)
(1:32) tā min bitūqyayim ⁵⁷ āw āwim biṛawē bišūwa ⁵⁸ aḷ pā-y	so that I may give forth water (and) my water may go, may go to the foot of	(01:53)
(1:33) dār wīyaka wī ⁵⁹ bikarē	the willow tree, (so that) it may grow willow (leaves).”	(01:56)

⁵¹ In this context, the meaning of the Kurdish word *bû* ‘was’ is unclear, though ‘give’ seems to be implied.

⁵² The term *hānīyaka* ‘the spring’ refers to a source of water just underneath the ground, which appears temporarily after a heavy rain or snow. The phrase *aḷ hānīyaka hawbikarī* refers to getting the water out of this spring by making a small canal that leads to the base of the tree.

⁵³ In *biyārī*, *a* is pronounced as a short vowel but transcribed as *ā*.

⁵⁴ The second vowel *i* of *bizin* is not pronounced in this context, followed by a suffix.

⁵⁵ The construction *māy mašūwa* (lit., comes-goes) here and elsewhere is usually translated as ‘sets off’.

⁵⁶ The term *hawpiṛki* refers to a Kurdish style of dance.

⁵⁷ The verb *bituqyayim* has a primary sense of ‘explode’.

⁵⁸ Both forms, *biṛawē* and *bišūwa*, are translated with the same basic meaning of ‘may go’.

⁵⁹ The term *wī* could refer to the leaves only or to all green, tender parts of the willow, including the berries, that is, parts which the goat could eat.

	GORANI	ENGLISH	
(1:34)	māy mašu, māy masan mwāy	(The cat) sets off, comes, for example, (and) says	(01:59)
(1:35)	wa min	to me: ⁶⁰	(02:01)
(1:36)	ʕarūs, mwām baṭē, mwāy ditakat kil bika	“Arus.” ⁶¹ I say: “Yes?” (The cat) says: “Send your daughter,	(02:01)
(1:37)	tā ya sāʕat hawpīrkī aṛām bikarē, min-ī(č) mwām wa dāwu	so that she may do a dance for one hour for me.” In turn I say: “By Dāvud, ⁶²	(02:04)
(1:38)	kawšiš nīya mawu ya kawš aṛāš bisani	she has no shoes; you must buy a (pair of) shoes for her.”	(02:06)
(1:39)	xulāsa mašu, mwāya dāyka-y čīman, mwāy	Finally, (the cat) goes (and) says to the mother of Čīman; (the cat) says:	(02:09)
(1:40)	mīm tamīna dasit dard nakay, ditakat kil bika ya sāʕat hawpīrkī karē, ānī mwāy birā	“Auntie Tahmineh, ⁶³ please (lit., may your hands be free of pain), send your daughter, she should dance for one hour.” She (i.e., Auntie Tahmineh) says: “Brother,	(02:12)
(1:41)	kawšiš nīya, mawu bišī kawš aṛāš durus karī, mwāy wa bān čaš	she has no shoes; you must go (and) make shoes for her.” (The cat) says: “At your service (lit., on the eyes).”	(02:17)
(1:42)	xulāsa mwāy haft hašt mināt ī jūra	Finally, (the cat) speaks in this way to seven (or) eight children.	(02:20)
(1:43)	dāykašān, yānī mwān kawššān nīya, mawu bišī kawš aṛāšān bisani	Their mothers, that means, they say: “They have no shoes; you must go buy shoes for them.”	(02:23)
(1:44)	tā ĩnka	Until then...	(02:26)
(1:45)	mašuwa aṛā lā-y usā-y ⁶⁴ kawšduruskar	(The cat) goes to the master shoemaker.	(02:29)
(1:46)	mašu mwāy {children’s verse style: usā kawš dē	(The cat) goes (and) says {children’s verse style, to end of sentence 51: “The master tradesman (i.e., shoemaker) gives shoes,	(02:31)
(1:47)	kawš bo kiča, kič ⁶⁵ samā kay, la sar kānī ⁶⁶	shoes for the girl(s), the girl(s) do a dance at the head of the spring;	(02:34)
(1:48)	kānī āw dē, āw dār wī dē	the spring gives water, gives the water to	(02:37)

⁶⁰ The pronoun ‘me’ refers to the narrator here.

⁶¹ Arus is the name of the narrator of this tale. In this use of vocative case, stress is placed on the first syllable of the name.

⁶² The name *dāwu* ‘Dāvud’ refers to a divine being of major significance in the Ahl-e Haqq religious tradition.

⁶³ Auntie Tahmineh is a neighbor of the narrator and the mother of Čīman. The term *mīm* is typically used to address older women.

⁶⁴ The term *usā* refers to a master tradesman, primarily to the person who oversees the building of a house. Here it is qualified and refers to the master tradesman who is a shoemaker.

⁶⁵ The form *kič* here is singular, but it refers to plural ‘girls’ in this context, as a kind of verse (see also sentences 58, 59).

⁶⁶ The phrase *la sar kānī* refers to the location just above the spring, opposite the direction in which the water flows out of the spring.

GORANI	ENGLISH	
	the willow tree;	
(1:49) dār wī wī dē, wī bizbal dē	the willow tree gives willow (leaves), gives the willow (leaves) to Bizbal;	(02:40)
(1:50) bizbal šir dē, šir dāyam dē	Bizbal gives milk, gives the milk to the old lady;	(02:43)
(1:51) dāyam dima kuṭē, bo baghdād čē(t)}	the old lady (gives back) the short tail; (the cat) goes to Baghdad.”}	(02:45)
(1:52) usā kawšduruskaraka mwāy min gurisnam-ē, bāyad biši	The master shoemaker says: “I am hungry; you must go,	(02:47)
(1:53) hāya aṛām bārī, bikarya dile ṛuwan, min bwarim	bring eggs for me, fry (them) (so) I may eat (them);	(02:51)
(1:54) tā ka sir bwim āsā kawš aṛāt durus bikarim	until I may eat my fill, then I may make the shoes for you.”	(02:55)
(1:55) baʿd mašu	Afterwards, (the cat) goes	(02:58)
(1:56) mwāy {children’s verse style: māmir xā dē	(and) says: {children’s verse style, until end of sentence 60: “O chicken, give egg(s),	(03:01)
(1:57) xā-y usā dē	give the egg(s) to the master tradesman (shoemaker);	(03:03)
(1:58) usā kawš dē, kawš bo kičē	the master tradesman (shoemaker) gives shoes, shoes for the girl(s);	(03:04)
(1:59) kič samā kay la sar kānī	the girl(s) do a dance at the head of the spring;	(03:07)
(1:60) kānī āw dē, āw dār wī dē}	the spring gives water, gives the water to the willow tree.”}	(03:09)
(1:61) {Narrator’s child speaks:} mān, mān, ēma hāyamān bē āsā bitiyām wan {Narrator speaks:} {xxx} {children’s verse style: dā wī, wī dē	{Narrator’s child speaks:} “Mama, Mama, did we have (an) egg then, that we could give her?” {Narrator speaks:} “Willow tree, gives willow (leaves)!	(03:11)
(1:62) wī bizbal dē, bizbal} {narrator’s child speaks:} mān jā āsā, jā āsā	gives the willow (leaves) to Bizbal, Bizbal...” {Narrator’s child speaks:} “So then, so then!	(03:17)
(1:63) ēma hāyamān dā wan	Did we give her eggs?”	(03:21)
(1:64) {Narrator speaks:} na, kuṛakam, māmiraka hāya matiya wan	{Narrator speaks:} “No, my son, ⁶⁷ the chicken gives her (an) egg.”	(03:23)
(1:65) xulāsa maṛawē, kam kam ya dafayī	Finally, she goes, little by little, suddenly,	(03:25)
(1:66) māmiraka mwāy ay min	the chicken says: “Hey, well, I am hungry,	(03:30)

⁶⁷ The narrator uses the term *kuṛakam* ‘my son’ to address her daughter. It is a sign of endearment in this dialect to address one’s daughter in this manner.

GORANI	ENGLISH	
āwrām-ē, mawu biṛawī	you must go,	
(1:67) ganim bārī, karya warim, min ganim bwarim, ǰā āsā hāya bikarim, hāya bitīma tu, biyārī a(ṛā) ā usākat	fetch wheat, scatter (it) in front of me, (so that) I may eat the wheat, then I may lay egg(s) (and) may give the egg(s) to you (so that) you may take (them) to that master tradesman of yours.”	(03:33)
(1:68) mwāy bāša(d)	(The cat) says: “All right.”	(03:40)
(1:69) māy mašuwa lā-y falā	(The cat) sets off, goes to the farmer.	(03:41)
(1:70) mwāy {children’s verse style: falā dān dē	(The cat) says {children’s verse style, to end of sentence 74: “Farmer, give (me) grain,	(03:43)
(1:71) dān māmīr {dē}, māmīr xā {dē}, xā-y usā dē	give the grain to the chicken; the chicken gives egg(s), gives the egg(s) to the master tradesman;	(03:45)
(1:72) usā kawš dē, kawš bo kičē, kič samā ⁶⁸ kay la sar kānī	the master tradesman gives shoes, gives shoes for the girl(s); the girl(s) do a dance at the head of the spring;	(03:49)
(1:73) kānī āw dē, āw dār wī dē, dār wī wī dē	the spring gives water, water to the willow tree; the willow tree gives willow (leaves),	(03:54)
(1:74) wī bizbal dē, bizbal šīr dē, šīr dāyam dē}	gives the willow (leaves) to Bizbal; Bizbal gives milk, gives the milk to the old lady.”}	(03:58)
(1:75) xulāsa	Finally,	(04:01)
(1:76) falākay mwāy ay wā nīya, min xarmānakam šan bikarim	the farmer says: “Well, there is no wind (that) I may winnow my piles of grain.”	(04:03)
(1:77) mwāy wa kunāwāka wā hawkarē	He says to the wind hole: “Bring forth wind!”	(04:06)
(1:78) mašina, wā {dē}, wā-y falā {dē}, kunāwā wa	They go, (he says): “{Give} wind, {give} wind to the farmer, the wind hole to ...”	(04:08)
(1:79) masan lā-y xwāwan taḥālā mwāy	For example, to the Lord Almighty, he says,	(04:11)
(1:80) čun řijā wa lā-y xwiyā bī	because (this) request was made to God.	(04:13)
(1:81) mwāy xwiyā	He says: “O God!	(04:15)
(1:82) {children’s verse style: kunā wā dē, wā-y falā dē	{children’s verse style, to end of sentence 88: Hole, give wind; it gives wind to the farmer;	(04:16)
(1:83) falā dān dē, dān māmīr dē	the farmer gives grain, gives the grain to the chicken;	(04:19)
(1:84) xā dē, xā-y, usā dē	gives egg(s), egg(s), give egg(s) to the	(04:21)

⁶⁸ The term *samā* refers here in a general sense to a lively ‘dance’. It often refers to a specific style of dance with religious meaning.

GORANI	ENGLISH	
	master tradesman;	
(1:85) usā kawš dē, kawš bo kičē	the master tradesman gives shoes, gives shoes for the girl(s);	(04:24)
(1:86) kič samā kay la sar kânî	the girl(s) do a dance at the head of the spring;	(04:26)
(1:87) kânî āw dē, āw dār wî dē, dār wî wî dē, wî bizbal dē	the spring gives water, gives the water to the willow tree; the willow tree gives willow (leaves), gives the willow (leaves) to Bizbal;	(04:28)
(1:88) bizbal šîr dē, šîr dāyam dē, dāyam dima kučē, bo baghdād čē(t)}	Bizbal gives milk, gives the milk to the old lady; the old lady (gives back) the short tail; (the cat) goes to Baghdad.”}	(04:32)
(1:89) baʿd	Then,	(04:37)
(1:90) ya dafayî wā hawmakarē	it suddenly brings forth wind.	(04:39)
(1:91) tā pišîyaka māya lā-y falāka, falāka xarmānaka šan makarē	Then, by the time the cat comes to the farmer, the farmer winnows his grain;	(04:41)
(1:92) ya gūnî ganim matîya wa	he gives a sack of wheat to	(04:45)
(1:93) (wa) pišîyaka mwāy bîya, bikarša war māmîrakān mārē makarēša war māmîrakān, māmîrakān mwarin	(to) the cat; (and the farmer) says: “Give (it), put it in front of the chickens.” (The cat) takes (it), puts it in front of the chickens; the chickens eat (the wheat).	(04:46)
(1:94) fawrî hāya makarin, hāya mārē matîya usāka	Immediately (the chickens) lay egg(s); ⁶⁹ (the cat) brings the egg(s), (and) gives (them) to the master tradesman.	(04:51)
(1:95) usāka-yč kawšakān durus makarē, mārē makarēša pā-y ditakān ⁷⁰	The master tradesman also makes shoes for them; he takes (them), (and) puts them on the feet of the girls.	(04:54)
(1:96) mayariniš sar kânîyaka ⁷¹ hawpiŕkî makarin	He takes them (lit., they take him/her) to the spring (and) they dance.	(04:58)
(1:97) xulāsa hānîyaka matūqē	Finally, the spring gives forth water;	(05:00)
(1:98) āw mašuwa pā-y dār wîyaka	the water goes to the foot of the willow tree;	(05:02)
(1:99) dār wîyaka wî makarē, wîyakaš maškinin, mārē manāya war bizbal	the willow tree makes willow (leaves); they break off its willow (leaves), (the cat) brings (the willow leaves), (and) puts (them) in front of Bizbal.	(05:03)
(1:100) bizbal šîr matîya wa dāya kaywānū, dāya kaywānū	Bizbal gives milk to the old lady; the old lady	(05:08)
(1:101) šîraka mawšē, mārēša bān	milks (the goat), brings it (i.e., the milk)	(05:11)

⁶⁹ It is possible to use singular forms to refer to plural non-human entities.

⁷⁰ The term *ditakān* can also refer to the girls in a general sense.

⁷¹ The term *kânî* ‘spring’ is Kurdish, while *hānî* is Gawraǰūyî.

GORANI	ENGLISH	
	upstairs, (and)	
(1:102) āsā mwāy ā piši! mwāy baṭē, mwāy baw tā	then she says: “O cat!” (The cat) says: “Yes?” (The old lady) says: “Come now, so that...	(05:13)
(1:103) baw tā	Come now, so that...	(05:17)
(1:104) dimakat časb bitīma qaytay waš hāmay	I may stick your tail back on you (and then) our business is finished (lit., you are welcome).”	(05:18)
(1:105) dim pišiyaka časb matiya, piši mašuwa aṛā baghdād	She sticks the cat’s tail back on (and) the cat goes to Baghdad.	(05:20)
(1:106) ē, mwāy	Eh, they say,	(05:24)
(1:107) mināṭānē ka masan hawpiṛkišān aṛāš kardē-u	(as for) the children, who, for example, have danced for her, and	(05:27)
(1:108) kasānē ka kumak pišiyakašān kardē	the people who have helped the cat,	(05:30)
(1:109) mayrē, manāšāna dile āw taṭā-u līra	(the cat) brings (them), puts them in liquid gold and coins.	(05:32)
(1:110) libās-u mibāsšān mawu nuqra	Their clothes and such things become silver.	(05:34)
(1:111) baṣd ē, čapa-y guṭ-u čapa-y narges, margtān nawīnim hargizā-y hargiz	Afterwards, eh: A bouquet of flowers and a bouquet of narcissus; may I never see your death, never, never.	(05:37)