

Eglė the Queen of Serpents

1. First, a young girl named Eglė discovers a serpent in her clothes after bathing with her two sisters. Speaking in a human voice, the serpent agrees to go away only after Eglė pledges herself to him in exchange for his leaving the clothes, not realizing the possible consequences. Three days pass, and thousands of serpents come for the bride, but are tricked by her relatives each time. A goose, a sheep and a cow are given instead but the cuckoo warns about the deceit. Enraged serpents return for a final time and take Eglė with them to the bottom of the sea to their master.
2. Instead of seeing a serpent, Eglė meets her bridegroom Žilvinas, a handsome human - the Serpent Prince. They live together happily and bear four children, until Eglė decides to visit home and her husband denies her permission. In order to be allowed to visit home, Eglė is required to fulfil three impossible tasks: to spin a never-ending tuft of silk, wear down a pair of iron shoes and to bake a pie with no utensils. After she gets advice from the sorceress and succeeds, Žilvinas reluctantly lets Eglė and the children go.
3. After meeting the long lost family members, Eglė's relatives do not wish to let them back to the sea and decide to kill Žilvinas. His sons are threatened and beaten by their uncles, in order to try to disclose how to summon their father; however, they remain silent and do not betray him. Finally, a frightened daughter discloses it:
*"Žilvinas, dear Žilvinas,
If alive – may the sea foam milk
If dead – may the sea foam blood..."*

The twelve brothers call Žilvinas the Serpent from the sea and kill him using scythes.

4. The worried Eglė calls her husband, but unfortunately only foams of blood return from the sea. When Eglė discovers that her beloved is dead, as a punishment for betrayal she turns her children and herself into trees - the sons into strong trees, an oak, an ash and a birch, whereas the daughter was turned into a quaking aspen. Finally, Eglė transformed herself into a spruce.