



## STUDIO OCHENTA ORIGINAL TRANSCRIPT

### CULTUREVERSE – EPISODE 4: GITLI

[0:06]

NARRATOR:

This is Cultureverse... a place where myths and legends come alive in the modern world.

NARRATOR: I'm your host, Kelly Marie Tran. Episode 4: Gitli

[0:47]

NARRATOR: Today we bring you a story from Anigiduwagi also known as the Cherokee People about man's best friend.

*(SFX: HUMAN AND DOG FOOTSTEPS AGAINST THE RAIN. DOG SNIFFING. WATER OF THE RIVER RUNNING. AHULI IS HUMMING A SONG TO HIMSELF)*

NARRATOR: AHULI is walking along the Animas River in Durango, Colorado with his shepherd rez dog, Gitli. Both are best friends. They have been together since Ahuli got him for his birthday when he was 4 years old. (Pause with SFX puppy sounds and child's giggling) 'Gitli', by the way, means 'dog', in tsalagi or Cherokee language. It's a cold afternoon, and everything is quiet and still... Maybe too still. Suddenly Gitli starts to bark at nothing in particular.

*(Pause with SFX BARKING)*

[1:27]

AHULI: What are you barking at, Gitli? (Barking continues)

NARRATOR: The setting sun turns the sky burnt orange which is Ahuli's signal to make his way back home before it gets dark. But Gitli won't budge.

AHULI:What is it boy?

NARRATOR: Gitli's routine at the river is usually pretty predictable. He arrives, puts his nose in the water, runs in a circle around Ahuli, and fetches a stick he finds in the bushes. But today Gitli something feels off.

[1:55]

AHULI (nervously):Come on! It's time to get home!

*(SFX twigs snapping and leaves rustling)*

NARRATOR: Ahuli starts hearing strange sounds coming from the direction of the nearby forest. His hair stands on end and a shiver runs up and down his spine.

[2:06]

AHULI (nervously): Have a treat, boy! Come! They're your favorite. Gitli, come on, let's get out of here!!

*(SFX DOG BARKING AGAIN AND NERVOUS HEARTBEAT THROUGHOUT THIS SECTION)*

AHULI (Scared):Come on boy I wanna go home...

NARRATOR: He brings his dog close to him and buries his face into his wet fur.

[2:23]

AHULI (through muffled tears):Gitli, boy, come on, let's go home, I wanna get outta here, I wanna go...

*(SFX: Gitli turns towards Ahuli and whimpers)*

NARRATOR: Ahuli stares into Gitli's eyes and then literally falls back onto the ground because he catches a glimpse of a terrifying pool of darkness deep inside the dog's eyes.

*(SFX: SOUND OF DOG WHINING AND RUNNING THROUGH THE FOREST AND AHULI FOLLOWING)*

[2:41]

NARRATOR: Gitli breaks away and runs into the forest.

AHULI (yelling): Gitli! Gitli! Gitliii (Fades and ends in echo).

*(Sfx car and street sounds, stapling and taping flyers around town while this scene plays out):*

AHULI: Excuse me, have you seen this dog?

NARRATOR: Ahuli searches for Gitli for days but he is nowhere to be found.

[3:02]

AHULI: Have you seen this dog? He's a shepherd, he's eight years old.

AHULI (to himself): Gitli, where are you?

NARRATOR: Ahuli is about ready to head home for the day when his best friend Andre rides up on a bike.

*(SFX bike screeching to a stop)*

[3:15]

ANDRE (pressed): Yo, Ahuli! My dad said he's seen this dog acting crazy down the city pool for a few days now. He works nearby. The dog is just sittin' there like a statue, staring at some puddles from the rain... I think it might be Gitli!

AHULI: Are you serious? Did he say if he was OK?

ANDRE: I don't know but he did say that his wife was calling Animal Control if the dog was still there today so we better get over there right away!

[3:38]

NARRATOR: As the sun sets, Ahuli and Andre race to the city pool where they find Gitli in an odd position, he's sitting on his hind legs with his paws out in front and his eyes are fixed on a dirty puddle in the deep end of the empty pool.

*(SFX running)*

AHULI: Gitli, are you okay? You had me worried sick! What are you doing here?

*(SFX TRUCK HORN. DOOR OPENS AND STEPS TOWARDS AHULI)*

ANIMAL CONTROL WORKER: Alright, listen. We got a call on this stray dog. I need to take him down to the shelter.

[4:13]

AHULI: He's not a stray, he's mine.

ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER: Neighbors said he's been sittin' here staring at this empty pool for two days now. That sounds like a stray in my book.

ANDRE (confident): Hey! Got a video of him and his dog playing fetch ok? Look! (Pause - Video plays) Trust me. It's his dog!

[4:29]

ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER: Well I suggest you get your dog home and keep an eye on him. The next officer might not be so lenient.

AHULI: Yes, Officer. We're headin' home right now, come on Gitli!

NARRATOR: Suddenly Gitli heads to the driver seat of the man's jeep and he starts making an... like an eerie low grumbling sound...?...

[4:54]

*(Sfx Dog grumbling and the motor's rumble)*

ANDRE (excited): Haha, he thinks he's making the car sound!

Narrator: The dog makes the sound again (Sfx Dog grumbling and the motor's rumble) as Andre pulls out his phone to get it on camera.

ANDRE (excited): I gotta get this on camera. This is sooo cool!! He sounds just like the engine!

ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER: Alright, alright that's my seat mister. Get out of the way.

[5:09]

Narrator: Ahuli pulls Gitli onto his lap and hugs him tight. Gitli starts to squirm and then runs away from him again.

Ahuli: GITLIIII!! COME BACK!

NARRATOR: Ahuli starts to chase after his dog. Andre on the other hand, is completely oblivious. He is most concerned about posting the video to IG.

[5:24]

Andre (excited): Yo we're gonna be famous...

ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER: You better go after your dog kid!

NARRATOR: Ahuli and Andre hop on their bikes and peel out of the parking lot leaving the officer in the dust.

*(SFX Bikes)*

ANDRE (yelling, panting on the bike): What's up with Gitli, man? He's going insane.

[5:37]

NARRATOR: Andre steadies his handlebars with one hand, takes out his phone and starts making a video of Ahuli.

AHULI: I don't know... Why are you filming me? Get that camera outta my-

ANDRE: Relax, man. There could be a story here. I gotta tell ya, that growling sound was creepy, bro!

[5:53]

AHULI: It's like he senses--- something. Something that's off or something that's coming. When we were at the river I could see it in Gitli's eyes.

ANDRE (panting on the bike): What did you see?

AHULI: Darkness.

*(SFX AHULI and ANDRE yelling "Gitli" as their bikes move further away).*

Narrator: The boys search for hours but no luck.

*(Sfx Gitli WHIMPERING)*

*(SFX DOOR OPENING)*

[6:20]

AHULI: Mom!

AMA: Hi, sugar, you missed dinner again but there are leftovers in the fridge (pause). From the look on your face I'm guessing you didn't find him?

AHULI: I found him at the city pool but then I lost him again. Something's not right, mom. I'm scared.

AMA: Awww, baby, he'll show up. I'm sure of it, remember last year when he went missing, he was just down the street with the neighbor's dog.

[6:49]

AHULI: It's not that I'm afraid I won't find him, it's that the day he disappeared, that first time I

saw something in his eyes...

*(Suddenly Sound of IG notifications).*

AMA (humorously): Which one is that one---Instagram? Can't we even finish a conversation?!

AHULI: It's IG.

[7:03]

AMA: IG, Tik-Tok, Snapchat, youchat, ichtat, we-all-chat? Don't you do anything else??

AHULI: Oh mom come on...

NARRATOR: Ahuli takes his phone out, opens up IG and sees that Andre has posted the video he made of Gitli and it's getting a ton of likes.

[7:19]

AHULI: This is why I'm scared!

NARRATOR: He hands his phone to his mom and she plays the video

*(VIDEO STARTS PLAYING)*

*AHULI: When we were at the river I saw something... something in Gitli's eyes.*

*ANDRE: What was it, bro?*

*AHULI: Darkness (echos, repeats and fades)*

AMA: This is... odd. Did you ask your dog to tell you what was wrong?

AHULI: How could I? He tore off like a wild animal!

[7:39]

AMA: Well when you find him -and you will-, remember animals are our relatives. So find out what is troubling him and listen to what he has to say.

AHULI: OK, mom. Ok.

AMA: I'm off to get some more firewood for dad. Tonight is your night to do dishes!

AHULI: But Andre and I were gonna go back out and search for-

[7:59]

AMA: On a school night? I don't think so. Eat, wash the dishes and do your homework. I will be home soon.

*(SFX DOOR CLOSING)*

*(SFX night sounds, scratching at a door followed by a dog whimpering.)*

NARRATOR: Ahuli wakes to the familiar sound of Gitli announcing his arrival at the front door. It's four-O'clock in the morning and even in the dim early morning light he can see the dog is covered in mud.

[8:28]

AHULI: Gitli!

*(SFX Dog barking and tail wagging)*

AHULI: Shhhhhhhh, you're gonna wake the whole neighborhood up. And you're a mess. I'm gonna have to spray you down out back.

*(SFX: Ahuli turns on a hose and Gitli starts barking like crazy and becomes very agitated.)*

AHULI: Water... It's got something to do with the water.

NARRATOR: The neighbors' lights come on one by one. Ahuli does his best to silence the dog and before he even has a chance to ask him what's wrong, Gitli takes off--- again.

[8:58]

*(SFX school bell)*

NARRATOR: Later that day Andre and Ahuli are unlocking their bikes after school.



Andre: Yo that first vid got me like 10.000 likes on IG. But I gotta keep my #gitlifans interested.

Ahuli: He showed up at four am today.

ANDRE (disappointed): And you didn't call me?

AHULI: Something awful is about to happen and all you care about is likes! I'm out!

[9:24]

*(SFX bike peeling out)*

ANDRE: Hold up, man, I'm sorry. Wait for meeeeeeeeeeeeeee!

*(SFX hundreds of dogs barking)*

Narrator: The two boys head towards their favorite cafe for an afternoon snack. The sky begins to darken... and takes on an ominous look. Then out of nowhere a huge pack of dogs begins running towards them! Andre starts filming.

*(Sfx car sounds and people murmuring on the streets)*

NARRATOR: Andre and Ahuli begin trailing the pack, hopeful the dogs will lead them to Gitli's whereabouts.

ANDRE: You think they... you think we can find him... There are... so many of them!

[9:56]

AHULI: I hope so!

ANDRE: This story keeps gettin' weirder and weirder, man!

AHULI: Ride faster!

ANDRE: You know I love Gitli bro, but people are talkin'.

AHULI: About Gitli?

(sfx: bicycles)

ANDRE: Yeah, man.

AHULI: What are they saying?

[10:10]

ANDRE: Um... I don't know if you wanna-

AHULI: What-are-they-saying?

ANDRE: Well... someone said your dog is actually from a space race of dogs that have come to warn us about climate change, together with all the dogs on earth, their barking will fix the ozone layer...

AHULI: Who said that?

[10:26]

ANDRE: Um... my brother.

AHULI: He's eight!

ANDRE: You gotta point there, but someone else said that Elon Musk secretly kidnapped Gitli when he went missing those two days and installed a cyber chip in him to control him!

AHULI: That's ridiculous!

ANDRE: I'm putting my money on this one though: Gitli is actually the next evolutionary stage of dog, and after millions and millions of years he has finally developed cognitive abilities and soon he will be able to actually talk to us--Whaddya ya think?

[10:52]

AHULI: This isn't Stranger Things, bro.

ANDRE: You sure about that?

AHULI: Let's just find my dog!

*(SFX: Thunder rumbles in the distance)*

NARRATOR: The darkening clouds roar and, a few seconds later, rain starts to pour over Durango.

AHULI: I just want to know what he's trying to say. I'm concerned, something is wrong, this is not normal, I just... I... need to find out what is bothering him. Come on, let's go see if he's somewhere in the pack!

[11:20]

*(A chorus of barking dogs takes over the scene)*

*(SFX: dogs are barking furiously as they move).*

Ahuli: GITLI WAIT!

NARRATOR: The boys make their way in front of the enormous pack of dogs and Ahuli desperately looks for Gitli in the crowd.

ANDRE: Why are they all heading towards the river? There's gotta be hundreds of them!

AHULI: I have to get him!

ANDRE: OH MY GOD, YO I'm gonna have more views than Beyoncé with this vid. COME ON! Let's get a better look!

[11:43]

NARRATOR: AHULI finally spots Gitli who is surrounded by hundreds of dogs. Andre gets separated in the madness.

AHULI: GITLI! GITLI! GITLI!!!!!!!!!!!!

NARRATOR: Gitli jumps into Ahuli's arms, licks his face and then jumps down and begins to circle around him, barking furiously. It's obvious he is warning him of something.

*(Sfx: Barks in a circle around Ahuli - 360° surround sound / the listener will hear as if the Ahuli's dog is actually going around them)*

NARRATOR: Ahuli looks for Andre but can't find him. More dogs appear, all of them barking in a frenzy.

[12:17]

AHULI: Close your eyes, Ahuli. Take a deep breath... You can do this.

*(Sfx: 360° surround sound / the listener will hear as if the Ahuli's dog is actually going around them)*

NARRATOR: And then... (SFX: Dogs and rain scene fade in again) he bends down, takes a stronghold of Gitli, and stares deep into his eyes.

AHULI: What's the matter, boy? Tell me. I hear you.

*(Sound of Gitli barking again mixed with the distant sounds of thunder)*

NARRATOR: The darkness swirling in Gitli's eyes morphs into storm clouds and Ahuli sees a vision of a violent storm pulverizing Durango. He quickly opens his eyes.

[12:52]

AHULI: A... storm?

Narrator: Gitli starts to grumble as he did at the pool. Ahuli realizes that sound is really, really similar to...

*(SFX: RUMBLING THUNDER AND THEN CRACKLING THUNDER) (Pause. And then Gitli barks again)*

AHULI: A storm! *Gano/vsgi agasgi!* Have you been trying to tell me about a storm? (The dog licks AHULI's nose loudly and starts whining softly, as if he were murmuring something). A real bad storm? and we need to leave now? Ok, boy, I hear you. I hear you.

[12:15]

*(SFX: Steps approaching)*

ANDRE: Where did you go, man? You left me! I almost-I just waded through a sea of dog crap! This is disgusting, man. -

AHULI: He says there is a big storm coming and we have to leave now!

ANDRE: Gitli *said*?? Damn, I missed him talking???. NOOOOOOOO...

AHULI: That's not important, what's important is we gotta get outta here!

*(DEAFENING SOUND OF THUNDER)*

ANDRE: WHAT'S GOING ON?

[12:40]

AHULI: Tell your parents they gotta leave the city right now! The storm is going to flood Durango. We have to get to high ground right away.

*(Gitli barking) (fade out)*

*(Music transition here)*

NARRATOR: Ahuli and Andre make it to their homes. Ama is making dinner.

*(Radio is on with Sandy Poplore introducing news)*

*SANDY POPLORE : Sandy Poplore here at Cultureverse News... A historic hurricane is pulverising the majority of La Plata County with severe flooding, tornadoes, hail and 70 mph winds...*

[14:07]

AHULI: Ma! Ma! We gotta get outta here... There's a storm coming.(Exasperated): He told me! Gitli and all the dogs have been warning about ganolvsgi agasgi all along!!

*SANDY POPLORE (struggling with the high speed winds because she's outside):*

*...Residents have been told to evacuate beginning at 2pm today.*

AMA: Pack up! I'll let your dad know so he can meet us at Smelter Mountain and see where we head to from there. Let's get ready then...

*SANDY POPLORE (forcing her journo tone; struggling with the high speed winds because she's outside) (fade in): Meanwhile in other news, videos of literally hundreds of dogs gathering at the Animas River have been going viral on social media... Authorities are investigating to see if there's a connection.*

NARRATOR: AHULI and Ama start packing their things, gathering their most prized possessions: they pack Ama's basket weaving set, medicine bags and pictures all into the car as they get in alongside Gitli. Outside, the rain pours down harder and harder as they make their escape.

*(SFX: Rain pouring outside the car/windshields)*

[14:58]

AMA: Thanks for warning all of us, including the community. I'm proud of you son for respecting and listening to our animal relatives...

NARRATOR: They arrive safely at the family's cabin high up in the mountains, They just missed the huge storm which in the end caused disastrous flooding and severe wind damage. It would take months to clean up the destruction. But back inside the cabin Ama offers a traditional Cherokee blessing--tobacco-- to give thanks for their lives and the safety of their families.

*(MUSIC TRANSITION TO CREDITS)*

Andre: Yo-Yo, Andre here with my pal Ahuli, and his dog Gitli. Gitli saved our lives, look at him  
(SFX: dog whimpers)

[15:43]

Ahuli (LAUGHING): Dude get the camera outta my face!!

Andre (excited): Chill dude, anyway, if your dog also saved your life use #TEAMGITLI! PEACE OUT!

- STORY ENDS -

- CREDITS -

[15:56]

NARRATOR: This story is inspired by the Cherokee myth called “The Deluge”. In the story, a long time ago a man had a dog, which began to go down to the river every day and look at the water and howl. The dog warned of a flood that would soon cover the entire world. The dog convinced the man to build a raft and the man’s family (and the dog) remained safe in the raft as the water rose. It rained for a long time, and the water covered the mountaintops. When the rain stopped The man climbed to the top of a mountain and saw that everything was still and they were the few that survived.

[16:32]

NARRATOR: If you want to learn more about Cherokee culture and folklore, check out *Cherokee Myths and Legends: Thirty Tales Retold*, by Terry L. Norton, and *Cherokee Stories of the Turtle Island Liars’ Club*, by Christopher B. Teuton and America Meredith.

[16:47]

NARRATOR: This podcast was produced by Studio Ochenta for TRAX on PRX. Ahuli was voiced by Calvin Joyal. Ama was voiced by Lorna Bowen. Andre was voiced by Kevin Thelwell. Sandy Poplore, the Newscaster, is Cherie B. Tay. The Animal Control Officer was voiced by Bryan Green.

[17:07]

NARRATOR: Special thanks to our Cultureverse editorial team for this episode: Joseph Pierce, Melanie McKay-Cody and Jack Cooper who brought their experiences as Cherokee people to this story.

NARRATOR: The creative director for this series is Lory Martínez, founder of Studio Ochenta. Dr. Kiona is our consulting producer for all things culture. Our Senior Fiction Producer is Maru Lombardo. All original opening songs for this series were composed by Gabriel Dalmasso. Sound design by Chiara Santella and Luis Raúl López Levi. Music by Crowander. And our art is by Steve Aparicio.

[17:46]

NARRATOR: The Executive Producer for TRAX is Michelle Smawley and our scripts were

edited by Nathan Yungerberg. Transcripts are available at [ochentastudio.com/cultureverse](https://ochentastudio.com/cultureverse).  
Follow us on TikTok & IG @cultureversepod.

NARRATOR: And I'm Kelly Marie Tran, your host. Thanks for listening!