High above the clouds lies the fairytale land Svaneti, rightly referred to as the roof of Europe. Several populated villages at an elevation of 2,000 metres are situated between mountain peaks of over 5,000 metres. Isolated in untouched nature, age-old traditions long gone in other regions of Europe are still alive well in Svaneti. Come with us on a journey into this unknown fairytale land!

In this book the Norwegian Richard Bærug tells the story how he and his Svan travel companion Shako Margian became the first men in history to travel all the way around Svaneti on foot and on skis. It turned out to be a wonderful journey into a unique natural world with fabled mountain peaks, beautiful little churches, secluded villages, and characteristic tower houses included in the UNESCO World Heritage List. And not least, exciting encounters with the people who still live in this mountain region.

Shako Margian was born in the mountain region Svaneti, Georgia. Educated as an engineer at the Technical University in Tbilisi and one of five co-owners of the Grand Hotel Ushba in Svaneti, he comes from a renowned family of mountain climbers, and was for many years an active alpine skier.

Richard Bærug was born in Brunlanes, Norway. He is a Ph.D. student of Media and Communication at the University of Tartu, Estonia. A former head of the nordic information office in Riga, Latvia, he was a co-initiator of the Vidzeme University College, and has for many years worked within the tourism industry in Scandinavia and the Baltic states. A co-owner of the Grand Hotel Ushba in Svaneti.