



The Multilingual Library for Children in Europe

Belgian Traditional Story
English language version



“Fairy tales are more than true:
not because they tell us that dragons exist,
but because they tell us that dragons can be beaten.”

Neil Gaiman



Multilib Project Partnership

Viksjöfors Skola
Viksjöfors, Sweden
Project Coordinator
Helena Ehrstrand

The Mosaic Art Sound Ltd
London, United Kingdom
Teresa Dello Monaco

International Yehudi Menuhin Foundation
Brussels, Belgium
Marianne Poncelet

Language School PELIKAN
Brno, Czech Republic
Dáša Ráček Pelikánová

Technical University of Crete
Chania - Crete, Greece
Nektarios Moumoutzis

Cukurova University
Adana, Turkey
Figen Yilmaz

Authors:

Swedish	Traditional	Traditional unknown
	Modern	Viksjöfors school children year 4
Kurdish	Traditional	Adaptation from Aesop's Fables
	Modern	Viksjöfors school children year 4
English	Traditional	Oscar Wilde
	Modern	James Blake
Tibetan	Traditional	Team led by Jamyang Dhondup
	Modern	Team led by Jamyang Dhondup
Belgian	Traditional	Traditional Story from the Ardennes
	Modern	Marianne Poncelet
Haitian	Traditional	Team work led by Marlène Dorcena
	Modern	Team work led by Marlène Dorcena
Czech	Traditional	Karel Jaromír Erben
	Modern	Tereza Sokolíček
Russian	Traditional	Traditional Unknown
	Modern	Team work led by Natalia Gigina
Greek	Traditional	Vitsentzos Kornaros
	Modern	Nikos Blazakis
Armenian	Traditional	Team work led by Mary Baritaki
	Modern	Team work led by Mary Baritaki
Turkish	Traditional	Traditional unknown
	Modern	Halil İbrahim Halaçoğlu
Arabic	Traditional	Team led by İnana Abdelli
	Modern	Team led by İnana Abdelli

Illustrator:

Swedish	Traditional	Ida Uddas
	Modern	Ida Uddas
Kurdish	Traditional	Saad Hajo
	Modern	Saad Hajo
English	Traditional	Christopher Mallack
	Modern	Christopher Mallack
Tibetan	Traditional	Leona Tsiara
	Modern	Leona Tsiara
Belgian	Traditional	Amélie Clément
	Modern	Amélie Clément
Haitian	Traditional	Marianne Poncelet
	Modern	Benela Desauguste
Czech	Traditional	Kateřina Kroupová
	Modern	Kateřina Kroupová
Russian	Traditional	Barbara Dorušincová
	Modern	Barbara Dorušincová
Greek	Traditional	Nikos Blazakis
	Modern	Nikos Blazakis
Armenian	Traditional	Maria Xanthaki
	Modern	Maria Xanthaki
Turkish	Traditional	Firuze Engin
	Modern	Firuze Engin
Arabic	Traditional	Firuze Engin
	Modern	Firuze Engin



Paolo Cremona Layout design:

English Editing: Sean McManaman



The Devil's Castle

Belgian Traditional Story

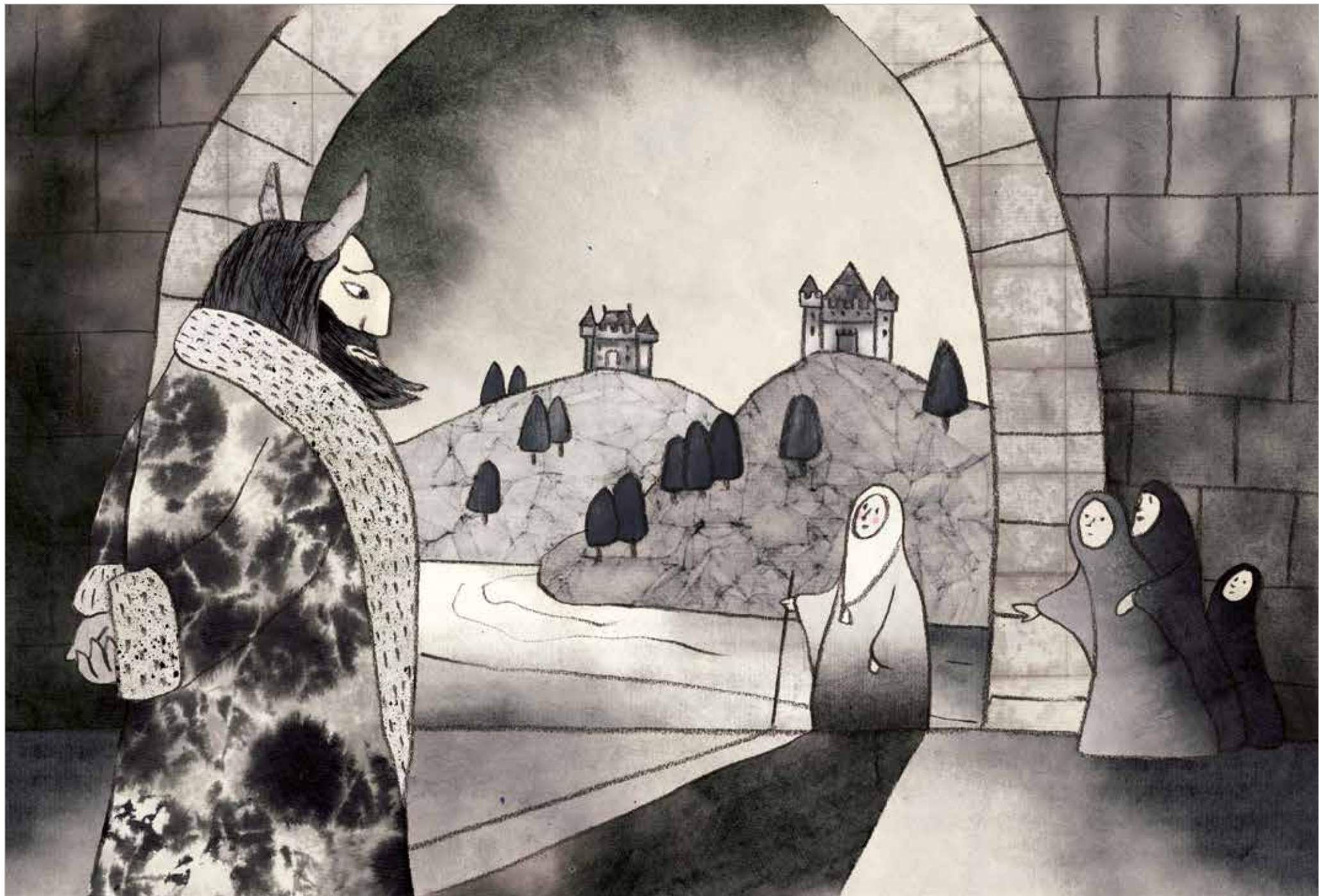
English language version

Author: Traditional Story from the Ardennes

Illustrator: Amélie Clément

In those days, a part of the land by the River Semoy and the River Meuse was the domain of the Devil. He had built a fortress on the Roc la Tour and two smaller castles on the Liry and the Fay. He ruled over the entire region, governing those who had become his supporters, while terrorising those who still believed in Christ. Those poor people would pray and hope that some saint would come to help them get rid of that terrible lord.

One day, while the Devil was resting in his castle on the Fay, he heard someone knocking at the door. The Devil went to look. It was a pilgrim who asked to stay for the night.



“How dare you! What are you doing on my land? Don’t you know who I am?” shouted the Devil.

“I’m not afraid of you,” said the pilgrim and continued, “your anger is in vain. Let me prove my superiority to you, let’s make a bet: you will set bowling pins on the top of this mountain,” the pilgrim pointed to the Roc la Tour, “and let’s see who wins the game.”

The Devil agreed reluctantly. He went to place the bowling pins on the top of the Roc la Tour and then the two players went and stood on the Fay just opposite the Roc.

“Are you ready? You start!” said the pilgrim.

The Devil grabbed an enormous rock, took aim at the bowling pins and threw it with all his strength. But the rock did not reach the Roc la Tour and fell pathetically into the River Semoy. It is still there and is known as either the Rock of the Devil or the Rock of the Tomb.



The pilgrim also grabbed an enormous rock and threw it with a steady hand, bringing down all the bowling pins. He threw the rock so well and with such strength that he even knocked over the Devil's Castle, leaving it in ruins.



The Devil recognised that the pilgrim was Christ and fled, abandoning his domain and his subjects.

Sometimes at night, a dark shadow can be seen lurking. It is the Devil who returns to weep for his lost beautiful castle.





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