

The Legend of the Wawel Dragon.

Once upon a time, in Kraków, there lived King Krak with his daughter. They lived in a big castle, built on a hill called Wawel.

The princess was a beautiful girl and many princes and knights from different countries wanted to marry her but the king didn't like any of them. No one was good enough for his daughter.

Krak was a very good king, who cared about his people so everyone loved and respected him. They were all very happy.

One day a terrible thing happened and everything changed. A terrifying dragon came to Kraków. He found a cave at the foot of the Wawel hill and made his home there. The dragon was very big and he could breathe fire. He was always very hungry so every day he ate animals – cows, sheep, horses – which he saw in the fields. He drank water from the river, flowing by the hill. Some people even said that the dragon ate young girls so everyone got more and more scared.

People didn't want the dragon to eat their animals so they didn't take them to the fields and started to keep them at their houses. The dragon was more and more hungry and angry so he breathed fire on the houses, burnt them and ate the animals.

All the people were very worried. They decided to ask their king for help.

"Your majesty! Please, help us".

"The monster is going to eat all our animals. Please, your highness, do something".

The king and his daughter were also very worried. "What shall we do, dad?" asked the princess and the king did not know what to answer.

The next day, the king announced – "the man who will kill the dragon will marry my daughter and will get half the kingdom." The news spread quickly among the people and they hoped that somebody will come and kill the dragon.

Many brave knights came to Kraków to fight the dragon. They fought with all their might but no one killed the monster. The dragon ate some of the knights, he breathed fire on some others and a few of them escaped when they saw him.

The people in Kraków grew more scared and the king more worried. But one day, a young man came to see the King.

"Your majesty" he said, "I want to kill the dragon".

"How come?" said the king. "You are so young. So many brave knights tried to kill him and they're all dead now. How do you want to fight him when you don't even have a sword?"

"Well, your majesty, I'm not a knight, I don't want to fight with the dragon. I'm just a poor shoemaker but I watched the dragon many times and I've got an idea. I just need your help, your Majesty."

“Well, son, try if you can. “ answered the king and he ordered his servants to give the shoemaker whatever he needed.

The shoemaker returned home with some sulphur, wool and a dead sheep and he started working. He cut the sheep’s stomach and filled it with sulphur. Next he sewed the sheep and at night he left the animal in front of the dragon’s cave.

When the morning came, the shoemaker was watching the cave again. The dragon woke up and left his home. He was very happy and surprised when he saw the sheep. He ate it quickly but... suddenly he felt fire in his stomach. He ran to the river and started drinking water from the river. He drank and drank and his stomach looked like a very big balloon. He drank even more and then....(BANG) - the dragon exploded. When the king and the people saw it, they were very, very happy. “Hurray, hurray” everyone shouted and thanked the shoemaker for his help.

The shoemaker married the princess and the king gave him half the kingdom. Everyone was happy again and they all lived happily ever after.