

*SPIRITUAL STORIES FOR
THE NEW WORLD*



Regiena Heringa

Handserre and the Magic Presence

As the villagers understood things, the middle of their great land was graced with the shimmering and sacred forest of Mareithia. From there outwards and to the north lay the meadowlands, home of the many grasses, flowers, willows, insects and streams. Extending further up the rocky foothills were the beautiful mountains of mauve with their gentle animals, while further still in a north-easterly direction resided the vast and mysterious sea of Sevenaaz.

To the south of Mareithia little was known of the land. It was claimed that only one established path linked Sevenaaz to Mareithia, as no proof of other trails was ever offered. It was also suggested that the widest portion of this path, simply called the “Cheminaad,” was found between the mountains of mauve and the great forest. Beyond Mareithia the road supposedly dwindled into a very small pathway and finally into a meagre trail of unknown vegetation for unknown animals to wander and enjoy.

Some of these facts were true; others had been modified over the years by those who felt the need for greater inspiration.

And so, to such a great adventurer as Handserre and his magnificent cream-coloured horse, Colo, the excitement of exploring the dubious vastness beyond Mareithia could simply not be contained.

Handserre, now quite old, had spent his entire life exploring – exploring idea, word and land. Wherever he stopped, villagers welcomed him warmly with cakes and fruit hoping to be transported by one of his breathtaking tales of courage and strange places. His long silvery hair and full beard would shiver with excitement when he wove fantasy with fact in the hour-long stories sometimes told around an evening fire. His grey eyes would sparkle with wit while his surprisingly elegant fingers would gently stroke a flower which some child, amazed and shy, had placed in his lap.

But now Handserre and Colo were alone. They had just moved beyond sacred Mareithia and were embarking on the path to the southern heading, closely observing everything in front of them and delighting in the possibility of new discovery.

“Well, Colo,” said Handserre in quiet fellowship, “I believe we are beginning to venture upon a part of the earth where no one has ever been. How does that feel?”

There was no answer, but the great explorer felt Colo smile. Handserre chuckled to himself and began to whistle.

They travelled a long day, meeting no one and hearing nothing. In the distance huge red and orange hills spread out to eternity. The sky was pale blue and empty.

It was towards the end of the afternoon that something strange happened at the exact point where the path began to shrivel. A small, shiny stone rolled out in front of Colo’s feet. It was the bright flash of the sunlight on that small pebble that caused Handserre to call out, “Whoa, Colo! What’s that?”

Colo stopped immediately and Handserre jumped down intrigued to know more. The stone simply lay there brightly. Looking up, he saw a small cavern not far from the trail and at its mouth light streaked forth. “Stay here my friend. I won’t be long.” The intelligent animal nodded and began to chew on a few stalks of grass nearby.

It was a very easy walk up to the opening but the closer Handserre came to it the uneasier he felt. He never did make it into the cavern for the moment he placed his foot inside the opening, a great warm wind blew him away and he found himself in the air far above Colo and the rolling, orange hills. Although the sky was clear, Handserre felt he was sitting on a soft, comfortable cloud peering down to the earth through a veil of pink and gold. Before him was the most beautiful being he had ever seen. She shimmered and laughed and continued to call his name as if he couldn’t hear her.

“Handserre, Handserre, I’m over here!” She smiled mischievously and disappeared in front of him only to reappear elsewhere, confusing an already very confused explorer.

“Who are you?” called out the astonished Handserre.

"I'm a very close friend and I have watched over you since you were born. You know, with your highly developed sense of exploration there are times when I have had to work very hard to ensure your safety."

She spoke with such gaiety and love that Handserre was moved to a place of deep gratitude.

"How can I repay you for your kindness?" asked Handserre. He found the entire incident rather bizarre but somehow felt that a great Truth lay in front of him.

"All I ask is that you become more aware of the good that you are doing for others. When you tell your stories to the inhabitants you are helping them to consider other possibilities. When you are gentle and kind you give hope to those around you. When you spend time with the children, you inspire them and you help them on to a greater sense of being and doing. As you become more aware of how you are helping others, greater gifts are offered to you. When individuals bestow good upon others, they are granted greater opportunities to lift the world to a higher expression of itself."

Handserre contemplated these words. As he began to smile in agreement a great hand of shimmering silk scooped Handserre up with infinite tenderness and placed him gently back on the ground close to his beloved Colo.

Handserre and his animal friend went no further that day. Camp was quietly set up not far from the small cavern and both man and beast admired the stars as they came out one by one. The world around them remained respectfully silent, but Handserre was very aware that that same silence was filled with wisdom and love.