

Illustrations of an enchanting beauty tell the story of the blood-princess

# The Golden Cage

CARLL CNEUT & ANNA CASTAGNOLI

Valentina, the emperor's spoilt daughter, collects birds. She has the most magnificent specimens in her garden. Blinded by greed, she wants to add ever-more specimens to her collection. Countless servants die horrible deaths trying in vain to meet Valentina's demands. When Valentina encounters a talking bird in her dreams, a use for the empty 'golden cage' is quickly found.

## A stunning work of art

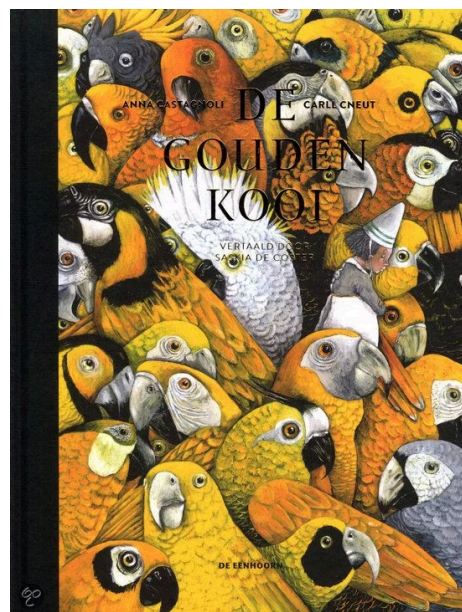
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Servants who end their quest with an ordinary parrot pay with their lives, because Valentina desires a bird that can converse on its own. Heads are chopped off in rapid succession: the royal palace quickly becomes a ruin. Until one day a servant as handsome as he is charming elicits a promise from Valentina in exchange for the seemingly unfindable bird. But, as so often in fairy tales, things never go the way you expect them to.

Cneut magnificently transforms this fairy tale into sumptuous, variegated images. The combination of the naïve simplicity of children's drawings and the bewitching beauty of majestic prints contributes to the creation of a mysterious setting. Cneut's prints exceed all the limits of the illustrative powers of expression: this is art with a capital A.

## An immersion in beauty for both young and old

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## AUTHORS



**Carll Cneut** (b. 1969) is one of Flanders' leading illustrators. His illustrations are works of art, each and every one, appealing to the reader's imagination and creativity. It is barely possible to keep up with the awards and accolades that Cneut has scooped. Photo © Niccoly Caranti

**Anna Castagnoli** (b. 1971) is an Italian author and illustrator. Collecting antique illustrated books inspired her to delve deeper into children's literature.

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