

THE DEVIL IN ÉMARÈSE

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Life was grim in Émarèse and sourcing daily bread a tough affair, all the more so because the devil would steal the land that belonged to the peasants, anytime he could: they had taken it from the valley floor to their fields, to cover the boulders of the arid coast, and that had cost them a great deal of effort. , . Fortunately, those mountain people were led by an unwavering faith, which had taught them to keep the devil away from the cultivated land by piously making the sign of the cross at the beginning of their daily efforts.

Annoyed by such religious piety, Cornetta decided to put an end, to those bigots once and for all by crushing them under a huge boulder. He therefore looked for the most suitable rock on the road to Saint-Vincent and, loading it onto his shoulders, he carried it right above the village.

The people of Émarèse, however, noticed this and raised such fervent prayers to Heaven that the giant boulder returned to its original place on its own; no matter what the devil did, he could no longer move it from there.

To this day, the boulder is still in place, incorporated into the chapel erected to commemorate the miraculous victory of faith over the powers of hell.

Taken from: T. GATTO CHANU, *Fiabe e leggende della Valle d'Aosta*, Rome, Newton & Compton Editions, 2004