



The Dragon of Krakow and other Polish Stories; A Fistful of Pearls and other tales from Iraq

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Editorial Choice:

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

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Traditional tales are always enjoyed by children and these two books will be no exception. **The Dragon of Krakow** is an excellent book, containing seven sparkling Polish tales, including 'The Amber Queen' (explaining how amber is still found on the Baltic shores) and 'The Golden Duck' (a tale from Warsaw). 'The King who was eaten by Mice' is a cautionary tale from Gniezno whilst my favourite is the title story. 'The Dragon of Krakow' is about the legendary tale of King Krak and how the beautiful city of Krakow came to be built. Monte was undoubtedly assisted in his research from having a Polish wife, whilst Hess's stylish illustrations add humour and atmosphere in equal measure.

A Fistful of Pearls is an entertaining collection of well told folk stories from Iraq. We meet thieving porcupines, boastful tailors, and in the short but sweet 'The Sign of the Tassel', we meet a clever wife with a cunning way of controlling her husband's temper. In the title story, we hear of a father's quest to bring gifts for his daughters which leads to strange and majestic happenings. Elizabeth Laird lived in Iraq for a time and in the introduction, young readers are informed of aspects of Iraq, about which present children will probably know little. Unfortunately, the childlike illustrations by Shelley Fowles don't quite work for me.

There are four books in the series each from different countries and cultures, the others being **Ghaddar the Ghoul and other Palestinian Stories**, and **The Prince Who Thought he was a Rooster and other Jewish Stories**.

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