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# DIVČIBARE

BETWEEN MYTH AND REALITY

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REALITY



# A CONTRIBUTION TO THE PRESERVATION OF THE VALJEVO MOUNTAINS

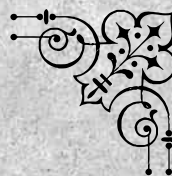
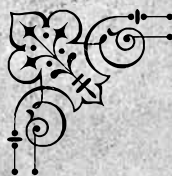
Like many before us, through our work, we try to find a hidden place for ourselves in the history of the world. And life itself is like a mountain. With every step we take, we steal a part of its beauty and change it forever. Will we know how to preserve all that gives it meaning and makes it attractive to the generations that follow? We must believe that we can protect the natural resources entrusted to us as the very source of life. And we must learn to understand their harmony, which is the essence of knowledge and the true value of what we have inherited. And then, with all our strength and the skill that has been granted to us by the Lord—we must work to protect it!

The mountain Maljen was, at different times, taken from the Serbs by Hungarian, Austrian, Bulgarian, Ottoman, and German rulers. The area was often not only the border of the Pannonian Sea and its shores, but also the front line of many empires and armies. Rulers came and went, leaving behind traces of their presence and the battles they fought. The Romans left Lastva and the foundations of the Bela Stena fortress; the Hungarians and Austrians Strazara; the Nemanjic dynasty, the monastery Manastirica and Kraljev Sto; the Ornjavcevic family, the village of Krcmar and Markovi Cani; settlers, Niksicko Field, Kosjeric, Uskokovine...

This book is not a scientific document, yet it is based on available sources, and it will certainly contain omissions that future authors and enthusiasts will correct. Here, we will record and explain, wherever possible, the origins of many Maljen and Divcibare toponyms, and revive the memory of their sources and the myths that permeate them. We will also list all the toponyms of the modern age, though they will have to withstand the test of time. These stories are intended to help the people and entrepreneurs of Maljen spark their imagination and enrich the region's tourist offer—bringing prosperity to our homeland, and rest and delight to its visitors. There will be new books, and there will be new toponyms.

May these writings contribute to the preservation of the beautiful Valjevo mountains, and may they serve as a kind of covenant and a foundation of knowledge for future generations, just as the works of earlier authors have been for us.

Enjoy.



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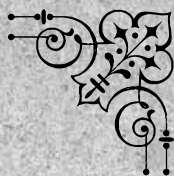
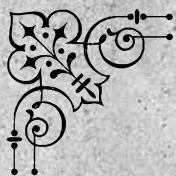
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# THE LEGEND



# THE LEGEND OF THE DIVČIBARE FAIRY



*The story is based on historical records, existing legends, and archaeological research. The fairy is a fictional character that connects them and gives them new meaning*

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## DIVČIBARE RAZVIGORA

**I**n the heart of Maljen<sup>1</sup>, sheltered by the warm breath of the fairy Razvigora<sup>2</sup>, the gentle flowering meadows of Divčibare came alive—"Divine<sup>3</sup> waters" (Božanske vode), as Noah<sup>4</sup> himself named them in gratitude, when on a stormy night of the Great Flood<sup>5</sup>, Razvigora's winds guided his Ark toward the safe harbor of Povlen<sup>6</sup>. Throughout the turbulent ages and wars that have never ceased upon the Earth, Divčibare has been a refuge and a shelter for people fleeing the towns, while its healing winds<sup>7</sup> carried hope of recovery and long life. So it remains to this day.

**H**idden from mortal eyes, Razvigora dwells deep within the forest, in the Fairy Grove<sup>8</sup> beneath the former Beli Manastir (today the Church of Saint Nicholas<sup>9</sup>), near the Skakalo

Waterfall<sup>10</sup>. No one knows exactly where she lives. The waterfall is nearly impossible to reach<sup>11</sup>, and many who dared seek her fell from the cliff and vanished into the whirlpools of the river Manastirica<sup>12</sup> upon seeing her.

When great suffering struck upon the world,  
And Noah strove to save it with his Ark,  
The sea rose upward, reaching to the heavens,  
The waves struck fiercely, smiting at the clouds.  
Then Noah called upon his God in prayer,  
And raised his hands unto the throne up high.

While Noah bowed before his God in faith,  
A breath divine directed him to safety.  
The divine fairy, goddess Razvigora,  
With saving winds bore forth the Ark,  
And moored it safely on the isle of Povlen.

The waters spread through the Pannonian Sea,  
A boundless flood that covered all the world.  
Yet there remained the guardian, the fay,  
And Noah named the land Divčibare,  
To keep remembrance of the mighty Flood,  
And of the fairy's breath that brought salvation.

## IMPERIAL ROADS

**S**ince ancient times, the Imperial Road<sup>13</sup> has led across Divčibare toward the capitals of empires<sup>14</sup>. With their armed garrisons and fortified towns, rulers controlled the transport of ore from nearby mines, protected merchant caravans, and often charged tolls.



Around the road stretched dark, dense forests, because of which the wider region of Daljen—extending all the way to the mountains of Povlen and Suvobor—has long been called Crna Gora<sup>15</sup> ("Black Mountain"), with its Crni Vrhovi<sup>16</sup> (Black Peaks) and Crne Reke Kamenice<sup>17</sup> (Black Stone Rivers). In earlier times, this was the site of military strongholds of the Illyrians, Celts, Romans, Avars... Fortifications were torn down and rebuilt again in the times of ceaseless wars.

## THE FORTRESS OF BELA STENA OF TSAR DUŠAN

14 **T**he Serbian king, later Tsar Dusan the Mighty<sup>18</sup>, with the aid of the fairy Razvigora, rebuilt<sup>19</sup> the Beli Grad near the present-day village of Krcmar<sup>20</sup>. Dusan's city was called Bela Stena<sup>21</sup>, after the cliff where it was founded, and it guarded the entrances to the empire from the north. The fairy promised him that no one could destroy the city, save the hand of a Serbian ruler. She gave him a signet ring, which would grant any future ruler the right to destroy the fortress and the power to summon her aid if the town needed defense. Dusan brought mighty eagles, Nemanjic white-headed vultures<sup>22</sup>, to watch over and warn the knights of lurking dangers while he reigned in imperial Prizren<sup>23</sup>.

Razvigora was the king's favorite, bestowing strength upon his invincible army, and he, in return, protected the people of Divcibare from harsh levies, evil, and suffering. The king was so mighty that he bound the demon of the underworld and death, the cursed Morana<sup>24</sup>, who tormented the people with magic. With the prayers of Mount Athos monks, he shackled her with silver and buried her in the shaft of the old Divcibare mine beneath Golubac<sup>25</sup>.

Through Divcibare wound the ancient paths,  
The Roman roads, then Dubrovnik's in their time,  
From ages past they stretched on every side.  
Towers rose, and fortresses were built,  
Miners dug, and strong foundations were laid:  
Some cities fell, while others took their place.

\*\*\*

When Bulgars plundered Krcmar in their wrath,  
The old and young, all fled in haste,  
Fled onward, seeking shelter in the hills.  
There Razvigora, fairy good and kind,  
Received them in the bosom of the mountains,  
To guard their souls and grant them peace and rest.

The gentle fairy struck Beli Grad down,  
With breath that mortals call the raging wind,  
And leveled it upon the darkened earth.  
The Bulgars turned and drew their armies back,  
While all the folk came forth from Divcibare,  
To live their fates in quiet and in peace.

\*\*\*

Then came the mighty host of Serbia,  
The countless legions of the mighty Tsar,  
Dusan the Mighty, king of all the Serbs.  
At the great table sat the sovereign lord,  
While lynxes paced in watch about his throne,  
And vultures soared in flocks across the sky.  
He fortified Bela Stena, both town and mount,  
And spoke these words unto the fairy Razvigora:  
"This city I shall guard from every harm,  
From Morana's curse and other sorrows dire.  
But grant me, fairy, thy immortal power,  
That I may hurl the Hungars o'er the Sava."



The fairy gave her strength into his hand,  
 And Dusan pressed the Hungars back in flight.  
 Mighty Dusan with his noble knights  
 Took Belgrade swiftly, conquered it with ease:  
 He drove the Hungars o'er the Sava wide,  
 By fairy wind unto the plains of Srem.



## KRALJEV STO AND THE BATTLE OF GOLUBAC

16

During Dusan's reign, a powerful invading army led by the Hungarian King Charles, numbering over 80,000 soldiers, swept into Sumadija and dealt heavy blows to the Serbian army. At the king's call, Razvigora came to aid the troops, and with her breath, she infused strength into the brave knights and their horses, spurring them into a counterattack. Pushed back by the Serbian forces, the Hungarians retreated all the way to the Divcibare border, to the Golubac Field, where the most important battle took place. King Dusan and his command oversaw the battle from the heights that locals now call Kraljev Sto ("King's Table") in memory of his rule in the region. The invaders regrouped with reinforcements arriving from Hungary and began pressing the Serbian forces in a decisive battle. When the fairy unleashed her destructive winds, forcing the Hungarians to falter and retreat into the dense forests of the Golubac peaks. There, to their misfortune, they became easy prey for the brave Serbian knights. The Hungarian king survived the battle with severe wounds and withdrew to his kingdom.

Thus ended one of the most important battles of Dusan in the 14th century with a Serbian victory. At Bela Stena, the Serbian king reviewed his victorious army and richly rewarded them. Following this defeat, the Hungarians lost Macva and Belgrade.

## PRINCE ANDRIJAŠ MRNJAVČEVIĆ

After the sudden death of Tsar Dusan and the defeat of the Serbian army at Marica, fate placed the responsibility on Prince Andrijas, son of King Vukasin Mrnjavcevic and brother of the later greatest Serbian hero, Prince Marko<sup>26</sup>, to govern the city of Bela Stena and protect the northern lands from further Hungarian invasions<sup>27</sup>. He carried with him Tsar Dusan's signet ring, which opened the royal gates of the city and gave him the power to summon the fairy Razvigora for aid whenever he wished.

The prince and the fairy grew fond of each other. She granted him her power, and Andrijas became invincible in battle. No one could conquer Bela Stena.

## THE CURSED TRIBE OF OSMAN AND THE BATTLE OF KOSOVO

The powerful Ottoman Empire<sup>28</sup>, with its overwhelming force, relentlessly conquered lands and peoples across Asia, Africa, and Europe. After the destruction of the Serbian army and the death of King Vukasin Mrnjavcevic at the Marica River<sup>29</sup>, Holy Prince Lazar<sup>30</sup>, himself perishing in the terrible Battle of Kosovo<sup>31</sup> in 1389, dealt a severe blow to the Ottoman Empire along with his knights.



**T**he Ottomans took the next fifty years to recover from this defeat. Yet even this could not stop the wave of people and armies advancing from the south. Relentlessly pushing northward toward Europe and Serbian towns, the Ottomans repeatedly laid siege, albeit unsuccessfully, to Prince Andrijas and to Bela Stena.

When Mighty Dusan perished from this world,  
Then Detos ruled upon Divcibare's field,  
Illustrious lord in service to Lazar.  
He christened all the land beneath his hand,  
Gave Hilandar abundant gift and grace,  
And sought the favor of Saint Panteleimon.

But from the south the Turks in fury came,  
They plundered villages and ruined towns  
With Morana, to bring the empire down.

Upon the Marica, the fatal stream,  
Many Serbs perished in sorrow and pain,  
Drunk with wine, they fell and knew no dawn.

They were avenged by Obilic the brave,  
Who struck and slew the sultan Murat there,  
On Kosovo, the field of crimson bloom.  
Yet Lazar too was slain by Turkish hands,  
Betrayed to death by wrathful Osmanlis:  
They set his holy head upon a stake.

Then Stefan, wise Despot and Lazar's son,  
Inherited the Morava's domains,  
With Detos' field of fair Divcibare,  
And under it Beli Grad and Stena,  
Which Razvigora, fairy, guarded well  
From the beginning to the end of time.

The flowery meads of lovely Divcibare  
The Despot gave in dowry to his kin,  
His son-in-law, the king of Hungary.

Yet not long after Stefan perished as well,  
Then Brankovic family received the land,  
And gave the town to Andrijas the king.

The brother of Marko, the princely lord,  
Andrijas, son of Vukasin the king,  
Began to raise the towers and the walls,  
To guard the empire from the Hungarian threat.  
Then fairy Razvigora, flew to his aid,  
And offered him the gift of her power.

To Andrijas, the master of the town,  
Beli Grad, and the fortress, Bela Stena,  
She spoke: "Go Dusan once I gave my vow,  
That I would aid the city in its need,  
To shield it well, to keep it unconquered:  
Call me, and I shall come when thou hast need."

Andrijas raised the towers high anew,  
Set strong the ramparts of fair Bela Stena,  
And bound in stone the fortress walls of old,  
Of Beli Grad lying under Divcibare,  
And in his labor Razvigora helped,  
The noble spirit, fairy merciful.

And many times the Hungars made their charge,  
They stormed the walls to take the city down,  
But Andrijas would summon forth the fay,  
And she in battle lent her strength to him,  
The more she fought beside him,  
The dearer to his soul she grew.

When he would sleep, he dreamed of her alone,  
When he would sing, his songs were all of her.  
Her lips became for him a draught of wine  
That overcame his senses every night.  
Until one morning thus he spoke to self:  
"Go, find her now, and let her be thy love."



## THE DEATH OF ANDRIJAS

Then peasants of the village Kremar said:  
"Razvigora dwells within a hidden cave,  
Near by the waters of the waterfall Skakalo,  
The rushing stream that plunges from the cliff.  
Men say that lynxes keep her company,  
And vultures serve her as her vassals."

When Andrijas had learned where she abides,  
He girded on his sword with shining eyes,  
His bow whose arrows fly as swift as birds,  
His mace of gold that gleams as bright as sun.  
To light his path through darkness of the night,  
And set his course to seek the fairy maid.

Through Crna Gora and the Mount Maljen  
Andrijas wandered for many days:  
Save for the stag and for the eagle's cry,  
He met no man upon the lonesome path.  
But on the seventh day he heard the stream,  
And thought: "The Fairy Grove is near at last."

He made his way down through the forest,  
A steep descent of manyfold perils,  
And there he saw the fairy at her bath,  
Beneath the torrent of the Skakalo.  
Her robe lay folded on the river's bank,  
Beside it shone her golden fairy veil.

He seized the veil and robbed her of her might,  
And led the fairy with him to his hall.  
He decked her out with silver and with gold,  
Arrayed her in a gown of emerald hue,  
And crowned her with the diadem of love:  
Each day with her was greater joy anew.

Through Divcibare oft they walked in peace,  
They stamped their love upon the flowery meads,  
And every blossom breathed their sweet emotions.  
He wove for her white garlands out of narcissi,  
And set the wreaths of white flowers in her hair.  
Thus Razvigora loved Andrijas in return.

Learning that the fairy gave him strength, the Ottoman beys went to imperial Edirne<sup>32</sup> to find a Sihirbaz (a man who practices black magic) to, by the Sultan's orders, perform a spell that would strip Andrijas of his fairy powers and kill him. Unable to oppose the fairy with his own magic, the Sihirbaz directed them to the old mine on Divcibare, where the cursed Morana was imprisoned. He gave them magic to lull the royal lynxes guarding the mine entrance and told them where to dig up the mine and find Morana. "...To reward with gold worthy of a Sultan and promise vengeance, and in return she would reveal the secret of Andrijas's vulnerability and help them kill him." And so they did. The cursed Morana accepted the gifts and the sweet taste of revenge. She revealed the secret: the fairy veil he wore around his neck gave power to Andrijas, and the weakness the Drnjavcevic family could not resist was the red wine, with which she had already deceived them at the Marica River. She told them: "...gather 13 of the greatest Ottoman warriors, kill the old innkeeper along the road to Bela Stena, and lie in wait at the inn for Andrijas." And so they did. The cursed Morana transformed into a beautiful innkeeper, Mara, with flowing hair and ample bosom. She emerged from the dug-up mine past the sleeping lynxes and headed to the crossroads where the inn stood. The unfortunate innkeeper had already been killed by the Ottomans, and Mara, seeing the hero Andrijas returning to town on horseback, ran to meet him and deceived him, claiming a message from his brother Marko: "...that he had arrived from distant Prilep<sup>33</sup> and to wait for him at the inn until he returned from the battlefield." Andrijas, delighted to hear from his brother, entered the inn, and the enchanting Mara brought red wine and quickly got him drunk. She removed the fairy veil from his neck and gave a signal to the Ottoman assassins, disguised as Dubrovnik merchants<sup>34</sup>, to kill him. And so they did.



Then a white-headed vulture cried out from the sky  
so loudly it could be heard all the way to imperial  
Prilep, signaling that misfortune had fallen upon  
the white town and the peaceful Divcibare fields.  
Prince Marko, hearing the cry, immediately saddled  
his horse Sarac<sup>35</sup>, took up his six-bladed mace, and  
rode to aid his brother, unaware of the tragedy. The  
Ottomans hid Andrijas's body under the fairy veil so  
that neither gods nor demons could find him while  
they waited for the army from Edirne to attack the  
fortified town of Bela Stena.

When the Turks encircled the city,  
Beli Grad beneath Bela Stena,  
They besieged it time and again  
At Krcmar, under Divcibare's heights,  
Yet the city never fell to their hands,  
And their mighty host was struck down.

Just as the Turks began to lose faith,  
Into their camp there came a youth,  
A youth from the city of Stambol.  
A plume fell low across his brow,  
Daggers gleamed at his girdled waist,  
He tilted his fez and spoke to them:

"In the heart of the silver mine  
The cursed Morana has dwelt for ages.  
Her powers are many and terrible,  
Her gaze can bewitch the bravest knight,  
Her smile can drain the strongest one.  
Yet bound in silver, her might is broken."

When Osman Jusuf Aga heard this,  
He summoned forth his scouts at once,  
And among them the spahi Radoje.  
Thus spoke the mighty Jusuf Aga:  
"Seek the silver mine of Divcibare,  
Bring forth to me Morana in chains."

Swiftly rode the Turkish scouts,  
Across the slopes of Mount Maljen,  
To seek the mine of silver deep,  
Where the cursed Morana dwelt.  
When they reached the Crni Vrh peak,  
There Radoje found the silver mine.

They drew forth Morana from the shaft,  
The cursed one, bound in silver.  
And the Ottoman warriors cried:  
"Slay for us the king Andrijas,  
And we shall grant you liberty,  
From the will of our great Sultan."

When she heard the words they spoke,  
Morana answered with her voice:  
"Bring me thirteen chosen warriors,  
Strike down the innkeeper at Krcmar,  
And I shall bring you Andrija,  
Andrijas, son of King Vukasin."

The Turks heard and swiftly scattered,  
Each to gather men of war.  
They brought six of their heroes,  
Among them mighty Sulejman,  
Who struck down the Krcmar innkeeper,  
And cast his severed head before her.

Then Morana took another form,  
She became Dara, slender and fair.  
From her eyes the sunlight poured,  
From her lips sweet honey flowed,  
About her brow, golden hair unbound,  
Her breasts like ripened apples shone.

Dara knew the curse of the Drnjavcevic,  
Who sought their solace in red wine,  
Cursing their cruel and bitter fate.  
So she awaited King Andrijas,



Beside the tavern by Dobroska River,  
With pitchers of wine within her hands.

The sun sank behind Bela Stena,  
And down the road came King Andrijas,  
Riding forth toward Beli Grad.  
Passing by the radiant Mara,  
He beheld the sunlight in her eyes,  
And she called to him with gentle words:

"Rest a while, O King Andrijas,  
Rest but a moment, King of Bela Stena.  
Thy brother Marko sent me with his word,  
To bring thee tidings from far Prilep,  
Of thy father, King Vukasin,  
And of thy mother, Queen Jelena."

Deceived, Andrijas halted his horse.  
Mara poured him crimson wine,  
And with her smile she bewitched his gaze.  
From her lips sweet honeyed words flowed,  
Enticing the king to drink still more,  
Until Andrijas fell into a dream.

Then from the tavern the Turks leapt forth,  
They struck the king down by treachery.  
They took from him his veil and rings,  
And bore them to Osman Jusuf Aga.  
He gave Mara a measure of gold,  
And freedom in the name of the Sultan.

## TERRIBLE NEWS

The fairy Razvigora searched in vain for her beloved Andrijas. She moved cliffs and forests with her strong winds, gazing at the distant horizon and the silhouette of her lost beloved. Even today, the most beautiful viewpoints are where she once moved mountains. She rejoiced when, in the

distance, she saw Prince Marko riding toward the town and flew to meet him, full of hope. When Marko dismounted his horse Sarac, he embraced her, said he had heard of the danger, and asked about his brother.

Then imperial vultures descended and told them of the terrible fate of Andrijas. The fairy burst into inconsolable tears, from which springs on Daljen<sup>36</sup> boiled (some still call them the viline suze (fairy tears)), and Marko swore by the name of the Drnjavcevic family that he would take revenge on the innkeeper Mara and the Ottomans for this crime.

## PRINCE MARKO AVENGES HIS BROTHER

As the all-seeing imperial vultures had told them, they went to the abandoned mine. They found broken chains and confirmed that Morana was free again and had transformed into the beautiful Mara. Razvigora gave all her powers to Prince Marko, making him an invincible hero<sup>37</sup>. But she warned him that it was impossible to kill Morana outright: first, he had to cut her with a sword and then strike her chest with a mace. Once she fell, he had to set her on fire with lamp oil to subdue her and then drown<sup>38</sup> her in water. Marko obeyed the fairy and, now an invincible warrior, set out to take revenge on the Ottomans and Morana. Recognizing him from afar as he rode toward the inn, Morana transformed into the beautiful innkeeper Mara and appeared before him with a goblet of red wine. She invited him inside to rest from the long journey along the imperial roads. Marko sat at the table but secretly did not drink the wine; instead, he pretended to be asleep from drunkenness. Seeing that his head had fallen on the table, Morana summoned the Ottomans, but Marko sprang up and, with his mace, struck them all down with a single blow.



The innkeeper Mara, terrified, twisted in fear and began to flee across the field. Marko caught up to her at the place now called Rastava<sup>39</sup> and struck her for the first time with his sword. This is where the cursed soul of Morana separated from Mara's body through the nose and flew toward the Krema River<sup>40</sup>. Marko mounted his horse Sarac and, with fairy strength, spurred it. Sarac leapt across the Divcibare field toward Pehar<sup>41</sup> and Morana, who was flying above them.

Sarac's hooves struck a rock with such force that sparks flew, and the fairy's tear boiled (today the spring is called Markovi Čanci<sup>42</sup> (čanci means basins)) and formed a river to drown the cursed Morana. Marko met Morana in flight, struck her with his mace in the chest, and knocked her to the ground. He poured lamp oil over her and set her ablaze with heavenly fire. With a demonic scream, Morana ran into the river, which boiled from her presence. The river's waves dragged her to its depths and drowned her. Even today, that shore is called Mara's Bank<sup>43</sup>.

When they came to the field of narcissi  
On Daljen, by the slopes of Divcibare,  
The white vulture called for Razvigora,  
The dear beloved, of the dear king,  
And to her spoke the brief, terrible news,  
Pouring forth a bitter tear like wine.

"Razvigora, my dearest sister,  
Tell Marko, your beloved's one,  
That they have slain his brother treacherously,  
By foul deceit, in the dark of Krema,  
Slain by the Turks, the Ottoman foes,  
With the help of the innkeeper Mara."

The fairy's face was wet with tears,  
She fell upon Marko's chest in grief,  
"They have slain your brother Andrijas,  
Slain him though innocent before God,  
Slain him in Beli Grad the stronghold,  
Beneath the mighty Bela Stena of Divcibare."

When Prince Marko heard this tale of woe,  
He drew his saber and grasped his mace,  
A shining armor girded his body,  
He mounted Sarac and rode toward Bela Stena,  
There came behind him the fairy Razvigora,  
And thus she spoke to Prince Marko:

"Here I grant you a portion of my power,  
The mighty wind that carries to the heavens,  
The honey that turns water into wine,  
The dragon's breath of burning fire,  
The thunderbolt gaze that breaks stone,  
Take the oil, and avenge your brother."

Marko descended to the Dobroska river,  
Where the Turks, the Ottomans, had gathered,  
And among them stood Mara the innkeeper,  
Pouring wine, with a smile upon her face,  
But when she beheld Marko Kraljevic,  
Mara began to flee up the steep hill.

She spread her arms as if to take flight,  
Fleeing the field and running to the river,  
Then Sarac leapt, borne by fairy winds,  
And flew across to Bela Stena,  
Where his hooves struck and made a spring,  
Markovi Čanci, at Pehar, where the waters flow.

At Rastava Marko caught Mara,  
With his mace he struck her breast,  
He tore her from Yusuf's treasure,  
And the beauty that adorned her face,  
Her garments scattered across the field,  
And through her nose her spirit fled,  
Only the soul of Morana remained,  
That fled across the sky toward the river,  
Sarac leapt and carried Marko forth,  
They overtook the soul of Morana,  
Which Marko struck with thunderous power,  
And with his mace he pinned it to the earth.

Then as the fairy had spoken before,  
Marko poured the oil from the lamp,  
And set it aflame with his breath of fire,  
Morana rolled across the field,  
And fell into the spring waters,  
There she plunged, and there she drowned.

Marko drew Morana from the water,  
And the fairy gave him her hand in aid,  
They bound her soul within the silver mine,  
So it would no longer wander free,  
So her curse would never smother men.

With Marko the fairy melted gold,  
Gold from the sacred lamp of flame,  
Forged the chains to bind the cursed Mara,  
They chained her in the depths of the mine,  
Buried the cursed mine beneath the earth,  
So her soul could never rise again.

Then the Turks, the Ottoman host,  
Fled forever from Maljen's fields,  
Never more to return, pray God,  
Yet Razvigora spoke to Marko this:  
Marko, you better build a church of stone,  
Upon the awful place your brother fell.

And Marko built the holy church,  
In Krcmar beneath Divcibare's heights,  
He laid his brother's tomb in the wall,  
The left-hand wall beside the altar,  
In the foundation, forever to be known:  
This is the church of King Andrijas.

When the church was finished by Marko,  
He mounted once more his steed Sarac;  
And rode away to the town of Prizren,  
At Rovine fell the noble Prince,  
Yet his grave was covered by the Danube,  
Go rest with the Serbs forevermore.

## THE BURIAL OF ANDRIJAŠ

They found Andrijas's body, but neither King Dusan's signet ring nor the fairy veil he had been given to protect him were found with him. Marko and the unfortunate fairy buried Andrijas in a monastery<sup>44</sup> near Bela Stena, so that the cold waters of the river Manastirica could soothe his wounds and remind him of

the first fairy's kiss by the Skakalo Waterfall.

They bound Morana with the gold she had received from the beys and left her in the mine to suffer for eternity until the end of the world. Then they hurried to defend the city from the anticipated Ottoman attack.

## THE BLESSING OF SAINT PANTELEIMON

Prince Marko found himself in a difficult situation. He could not stay and rule Beli Grad because he had to care for the people of his kingdom<sup>45</sup>, nor could he leave the weeping fairy, whose soul was torn with grief for Andrijas.

Marko went to the monastery and prayed to Saint Sava<sup>46</sup> to console the fairy and to enable him to return to his Prilep courts. Saint Sava listened to Marko. Sava then asked his spiritual father, Saint Panteleimon<sup>47</sup>, who had blessed him into monastic<sup>48</sup> life in his monastery on Mount Athos when he was young, to comfort the unfortunate fairy. "For Divcibare is a metochion of his monastery on Mount Athos<sup>49</sup>, and the good people have fed the monks with their toil, protected by the fairy Razvigora."

Saint Panteleimon took pity and appeared in a dream to the kind fairy. He could not bring Andrijas back, but he could raise him from the earth for a day "so that you may see him and exchange vows, awaiting the resurrection of the dead." But afterwards, Andrijas would have to follow Marko to guard the faith and defend the Serbian Empire, and to find Tsar Dusan's signet ring so that the fortified city of Bela Stena would not suffer. In return, the fairy had to vow not to show herself to humans again, nor to interfere in human destinies. Razvigora agreed and spent her last day among humans with Andrijas.

When Andrijas departed for the heavens  
And his brother Marko rode toward Prizren,  
The fairy then spoke unto herself:  
"Alone I remain, for I cannot die,  
Alone I remain on Mount Maljen,  
Forever shall I mourn my beloved."

Her tears streamed down the stony slopes,  
Her sigh of sorrow veiled Divcibare,  
Wherever she gazed the mountains shifted,  
That she might behold Andrijas from afar.  
All the brooks were but her flowing tears,  
And every spring the eyes of Razvigora.

Prince Marko's heart was moved with pity,  
And in prayer he called on holy Sava:  
"Holy Sava, king of the Serbian kin,  
Grant to Razvigora faith and hope,  
That she too may find her true beloved,  
That her soul be healed of bitter grief."  
Then spoke Saint Sava of the Serbs:  
"Hear me well, Marko Kraljevic,  
For still on Maljen lingers Detos' protector,  
Holy Panteleimon out of Nicomedia,  
To him my word I shall now send,  
That the fairy may be restored to peace."

Not many mornings nor days had passed,  
When on the meadow by the weeping spring  
Appeared the saint to the fairy maiden.  
The sun shone bright upon his brow,  
His right hand with three fingers joined,  
From calm lips his voice resounded:

"O my fairy, dearest Razvigora,  
What sorrow has so beset thee,  
That thy tears have drenched the spring?  
The winds sweep across Divcibare,  
A black cloud has veiled the sun,  
No laughter sounds, only weeping."

To him replied the weeping fairy:  
"Grant me aid, O holy Panteleimon,  
Revive my Andrijas, my beloved,  
That I may see him and rejoice.  
Make me no longer a fairy,  
But a maiden for my cherished one."

"O Razvigora, my dearest fairy,  
I cannot wake Andrijas,  
Cannot rouse nor wed him,  
From his eternal slumber.  
Yet I may rouse his soul once more,  
For but a day, that thou may see him.

If thou would behold thy beloved,  
Yet one vow must thou undertake:  
Swear, O fairy, to keep thy distance,  
From the gaze and touch of mortal men,  
Neither to be seen, nor felt again."

The fairy gave her vow to the saint,  
For love's sake renouncing her own self.  
Then spake holy Panteleimon:  
"Razvigora, come at dawn tomorrow,  
To the ancient tree of covenant,  
Where thy Andrijas shall await thee."

At early dawn, ere the rising sun,  
Set forth the fairy Razvigora,  
Set forth as a maiden,  
Flying above the fields of Divcibare,  
To greet her Andrijas once again,  
By the old and sacred covenant tree.

Upon her brow she wore a wreath,  
A white crown of narcissus bloom.  
Her gown fluttered in the gentle breeze,  
Her feet were bare, as slender as a doe's.  
When she beheld her Andrijas,  
With tender hands she stroked his face.

Then Andrijas spoke unto the fairy,  
"By the tree they named the covenant:  
Wait for me here, I shall one day come to thee."  
But when the sun drew toward the west,  
The spirit of Andrija turned to Krempar,  
And the fairy dissolved into the air.

In the springtime, when the sun shone bright,  
When rains refreshed the meadows,  
Razvigora walked through Divcibare,  
In the embrace of her king Andrijas,  
Behind her footsteps blossoms sprang.



Each step she took bore a flower of narcissus.

## THE VOW OF ETERNAL LOVE

**F**or a long time, they walked through the fields of Divcibare as they once did. They again counted timeless hours on Crni Vrh, speaking tenderly to each other. Under a tree canopy, they made a vow to one another, whispered in a voice carried today by the gentle Divcibare wind, that they would love each other even after the end of the world. Andrijas also promised Razvigora that every day he would send royal vultures to bring her his letters from afar, whatever fate might befall him, and that she would scatter the white narcissus flowers<sup>50</sup> over the meadows of Divcibare each spring as a sign of her eternal love.

30 Even today, on Crni Vrh, the silent witness to their vow of love blossoms. Many after them met and loved there: Jovana and Milan, Spasenija and Nikola, Bozana and Zivojin<sup>51</sup>... They say this unusually special Tree<sup>52</sup> will never wither as long as there is love among humans. Some claim to have seen the fairy and Andrijas embraced in the shadow of its canopy. Who can say.

## HEAVENLY BATTLES

**P**rince Marko and Andrijas were solemnly sent off to battle by the people of the Krcmar, Divcibare, and Bela Stena. From Divcibare, they were accompanied by the royal lynxes<sup>53</sup>, and the white-headed vultures<sup>54</sup> took flight. Razvigora asked her sister Raviojla<sup>55</sup> to follow and protect them along the path of glory. Many battles and much time have passed since their departure, yet Dusan's ring was not found. Their earthly battles ended<sup>56</sup> long ago, but their heavenly ones are eternal, as is Razvigora's love. The people of Divcibare say that when thunder strikes above Daljen<sup>57</sup>, it is Andrijas

and Marko dueling again with Hungarians, Turks, and Germans. And one day, when the white-headed royal vultures return to Orlovac<sup>58</sup>, they too will return in their glory with all Serbian knights to reclaim the Serbian Empire and raise Bela Stena once more.

## THE FALL OF BELA STENA

**B**ela Stena was the last Serbian fortress<sup>59</sup> to fall during the mighty campaign of Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent<sup>60</sup> toward Europe. His grand vizier, Mahmud Pasha, stood for a long time with the conquering army before the magnificent and seemingly invincible city. In his hand, adorned with Tsar Dusan's signet ring, he tightly held the fairy veil, hesitating to begin the assault. In his shadow stood the cursed and unbound Morana, revealing her demonic face.

Despite the large army surrounding him and threats of executing the population, the city refused to open its gates to the Grand Vizier. Confident in the power of the fairy's judgment, by which only a Serb could destroy Bela Stena, the Serbian army mounted fierce resistance. Morana's terrifying scream set off a fearful charge by the Ottomans.

To the astonishment of the fairy, who observed the battle from the reflection of the clear Manastirica River, hidden from human eyes, the advancing army of the Grand Vizier broke through the fortress walls, to the horror and cries of the inhabitants. Only the few residents who had taken shelter in the Divcibare refuge before the battle survived.



## MAHMUD PASHA ABAGOVIĆ (ANDJELOVIĆ)

32

**M**ahmud Pasha Andjelovic<sup>61</sup> was the first Serbian Grand Vizier of the Ottoman Empire. Together with his sultan Mehmed II, he conquered eternal Constantinople<sup>62</sup>, while his brother Mihailo handed him the Smederevo fortress<sup>63</sup> in 1458 before the campaign against Bela Stena. His family originated from Krusevac, and he was born in the largest and wealthiest medieval Serbian city, Novo Brdo, in 1420. He was the brother of Mihailo Andjelovic (an official at the courts of Serbian despots Djuradj and Lazar Brankovic), who, as a boy, was captured by the Turks along with two other Serbian children and taken to Edirne as part of the dreadful "blood tax" (danak u krvi). Having been Islamized as a child, he received the Muslim name Mahmud, while his two friends were named Ayas and Abdulkерim. After completing his education in Edirne as one of the most capable students, the Turkish Sultan Murad II took him into service at the court, where he became close with the then-heir Mehmed II the Conqueror. Soon after the conquest of Constantinople in 1453 (when the last Roman Emperor, Constantine XI Palaiologos Dragas, son of the Serbian princess Jelena Dragas, was killed), Sultan Mehmed II appointed him Grand Vizier. Thus, a Turkified Serbian came to power, replacing the Orthodox half-Serbian last tsar of what had once been the world's most powerful empire. In the ruined towers of the city of Bela Stena, Janissaries<sup>64</sup> found the letters Andrijas had sent to Razvigora and handed them over to the Grand Vizier. The letters were beautiful poems of love and longing. Mahmud Pasha glanced at them briefly and feverishly pressed them to his chest as if caught stealing. It is said he did not destroy the monastery with Andrijas's tomb<sup>65</sup> because, upon entering, he was confronted by Saint Sava and Saint Pantaleimon<sup>66</sup> at the altar. Some say that because

of this, Sultan Mehmed II strangled him. Mahmud Pasha is recorded in the history of Persian culture as one of the most significant poets<sup>67</sup> of the 15th century. Others claim that a curse fell upon him because of the theft of love.

### DEAR<sup>68</sup>

Adni (Mahmud Pasha Andjelovic)

When I beheld the hair of my beloved  
Blossomed like a narcissus,  
How it fluttered across her face, I thought:  
Strange, as if the moon had halted  
Among fragrant flowers...

A fallen strand of yours across the face,  
Which is like that of a young bride,  
In many curls hidden like a serpent  
That rests by day,  
Gathering its strength.

From your face,  
Roses and tulips indeed  
Stole both color and fragrance,  
And now, as a wondrous bouquet,  
They carry them around the bazaar.

Oh dear one, the purpose of the song is to marvel  
at beauty!

How many wise men were sent to madness,  
By the spell of your eyes!

Now they have captured me: May God help me!

Beloved, my head, my soul, at your feet  
I now lay down.  
By law: a slave with his property  
Belongs to his master...



ALBASIXA

DIVČIBARE  
1300-1400

VIA VALJEVO AND KONSTANTINOPOLIS



REIGN OF KING, LATER TSAR,  
DUSAN THE MIGHTY, 1335

