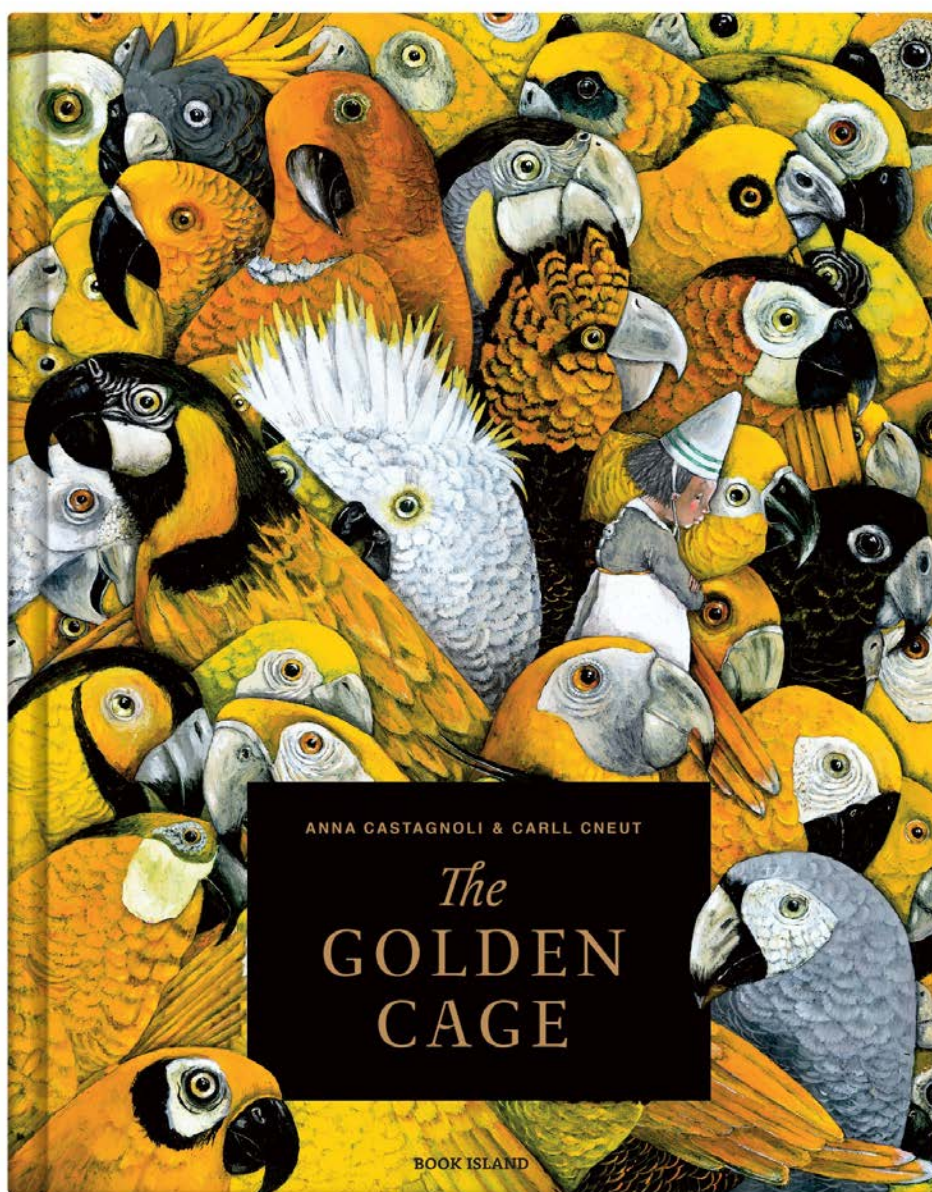


The Golden Cage

Reading Agency Resources

Recommended age: 6+



Activity sheets created by Cassie Waters, inspired by THE GOLDEN CAGE by Anna Castagnoli and Carll Cneut, translated by Laura Watkinson and published by Book Island

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The emperor's daughter
was called Valentina.
And she was a nightmare.

She had everything her heart desired,
but still she was not happy.
She had three hundred and ninety pairs of shoes,
eight hundred and twelve hats
and fifty snakeskin belts.
She liked the things she owned,
but most of all she loved her birds.

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What happens in *The Golden Cage*

This European fairy tale tells the story of Valentina, a very spoilt princess who lives in the Emperor's palace. She's obsessed with collecting rare and exotic birds and sends her servants on long missions to find them from around the world. Now, she is determined to find a talking bird to fill her special golden cage. Servant after servant loses their head for coming back empty handed. That is, until one day a mysterious young man claims he can fulfil Valentina's impossible request. He brings back the egg of the mysterious talking bird. Valentina waits and waits and waits for the egg to hatch. How did her story end? No one truly knows...



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About the Makers

Did you know that *The Golden Cage* was originally written in Italian by **Anna Castagnoli**, but it was first published in Dutch by a Belgian publishing house? The illustrations are created by a famous Belgian illustrator, called **Carll Cneut**.

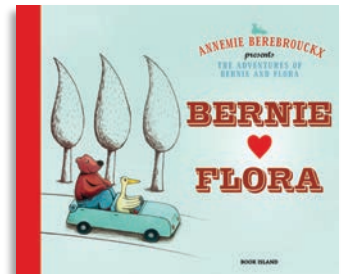
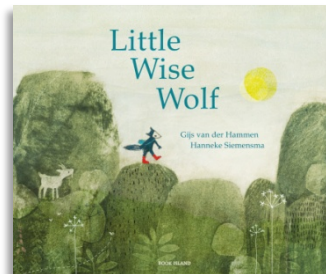
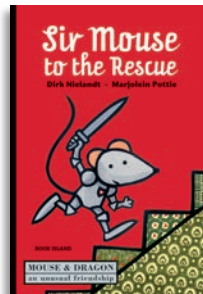
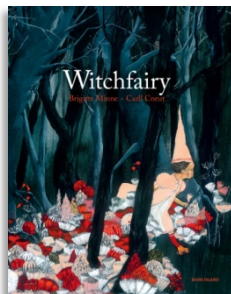
The book was then translated into English by **Laura Watkinson**, who's British but lives in Amsterdam.

Would you like to hear Laura read the story?
We'll let you know when the video will be ready. Join our newsletter on our website.



Have you seen any of these other picture books translated by Laura Watkinson before?

- Witchfairy
- Little Wise Wolf
- Sir Mouse to the Rescue
- Bernie and Flora



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Here are the photos of some of the people involved in making *The Golden Cage*. Can you join the photo to the right name?



Carll Cneut
Illustrator

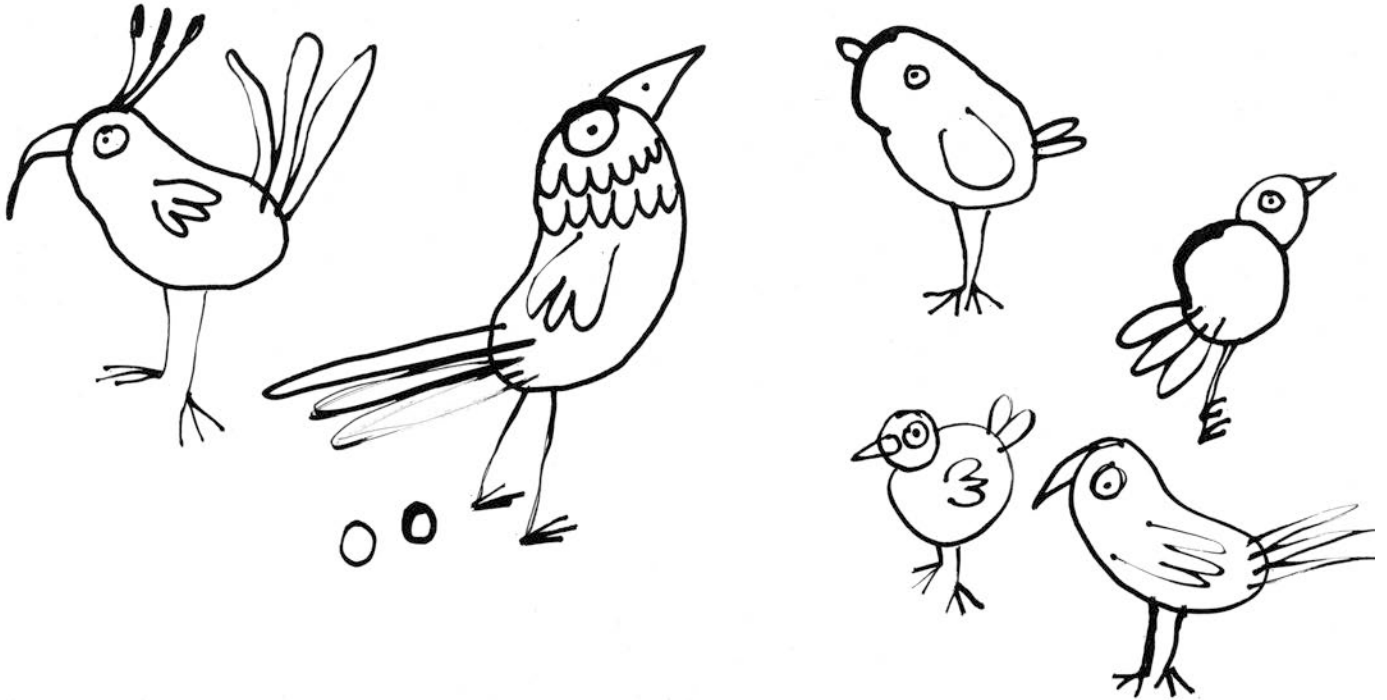
Greet Pauwelijn
Publisher

Anna Castagnoli
Author

Laura Watkinson
Translator

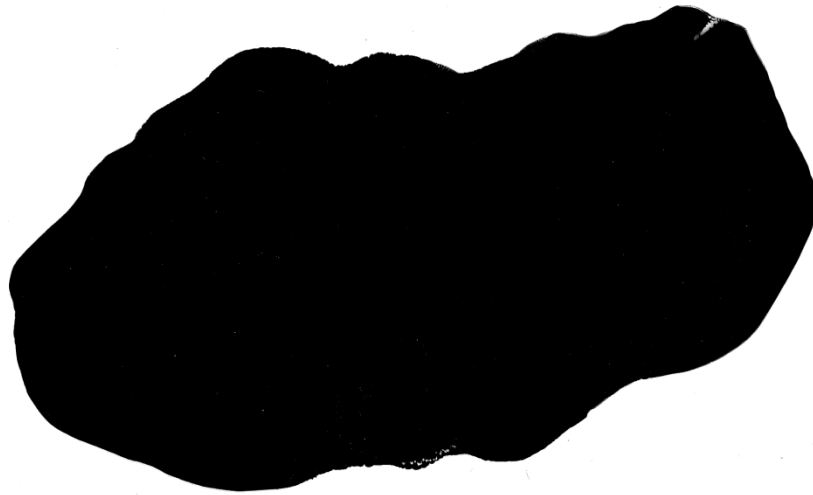
Drawing Page

Here are 6 out of 12 birds.
Can you colour, draw and scribble the rest of them?



Drawing Page

Turn this stain into a scary-looking bird!



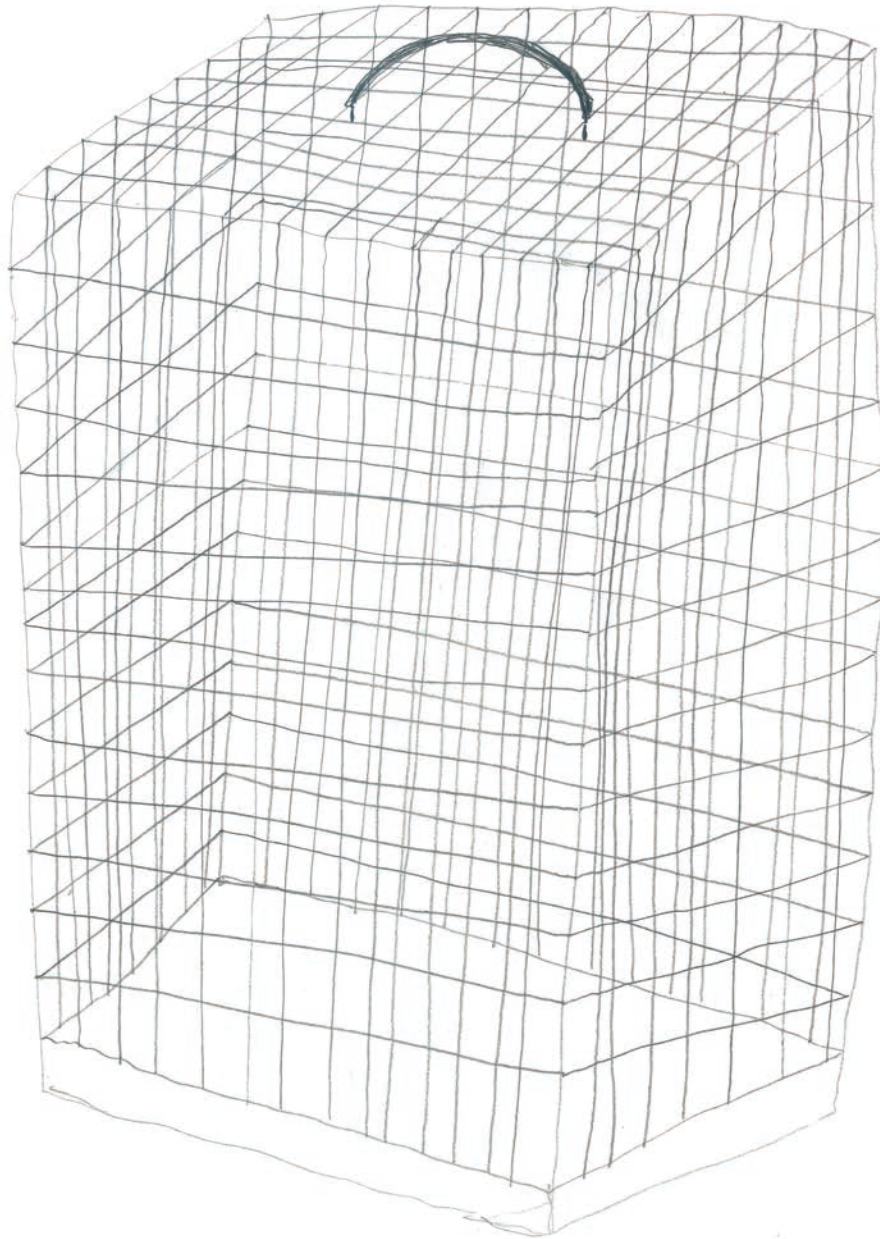
Drawing Page

Can you complete this bird?



Drawing Page

How many birds can you fit in this cage?



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What Happened?

What do you think really happened to Valentina?
Write your version of the ending.



Very gently, the princess carried the egg to the golden cage. She was so happy that she made a nest for it out of her own hair. She stayed there, waiting patiently for the talking bird to hatch.

*She waited
and waited
and waited.*

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Fact Sheet

**Imagine that you've discovered a new and exotic bird.
Write an information sheet about it
to document its discovery.**

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Name | |
| Colours | |
| Size | |
| Weight | |
| Distinguishing Features | |
| Special Talents | |
| Country of Origin | |

Counting

If you've read the book, you may have noticed that there are quite a few skulls scattered amongst the pages. Can you count how many there are in total, not including the chopped off heads?



Class Activity

Create a wall of bird art like Valentina has on your classroom wall.



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Design and Make

Valentina loves crazy hats, although not nearly as much as she loves birds. Design a new hat for her and wear it for Easter bonnet competitions.



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Design and Make

What do you think the egg of the talking bird looked like?

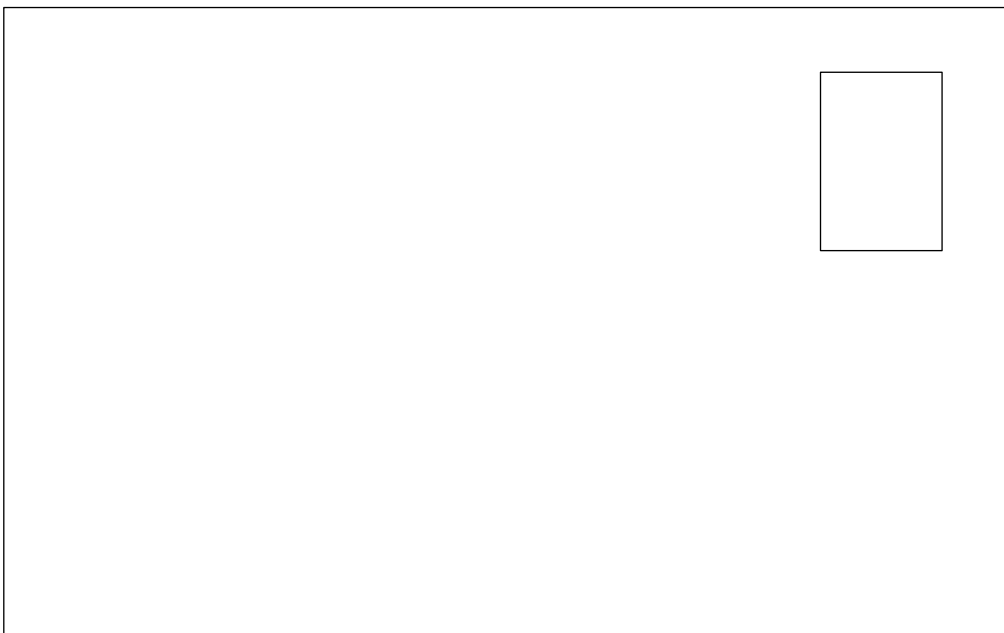
Make a tiny egg using clay, plasticine or playdough.

Make a little nest for it and a box to put it in.



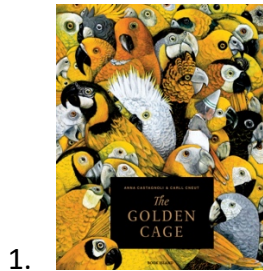
Creative Writing

**Imagine you are one of Valentina's servants.
Design and write a postcard to her updating her
of the progress you are making on your journey
to find her a new bird. Be careful what you write,
she could chop off your head for it!**



Languages

***The Golden Cage* has been published in many translations.
Can you guess which languages these different covers
have been translated to?**



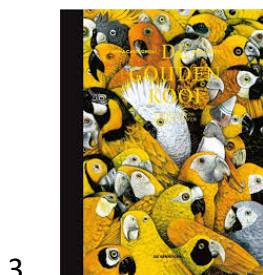
'The Golden Cage'

Language: English



'Złota klatka'

Language:.....



'De gouden kooi'

Language:.....



'La voliera d'oro'

Language:.....

ANSWER SHEET

Join the contributors of the book to the name:



Anna Castagnoli



Carll Cneut



Laura Watkinson



Greet Pauwelijn

Who else has helped work on this book?

Designer

Editor

Printer

Booksellers

Amount of skulls: 20

Languages

2: Polish

3: Dutch

4: Italian

We would love you to share your creative writing,
art projects and fashion designs with us.

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