



## South Tyrol – Land of Myths and Legends

### Forgotten Child

**I**f you dare to enter the cellar of the old Pretzenberg Castle in Nova Levante (Welschnofen) at midnight on St. John's Eve, you will see a treasure that is easily obtained: all you need to do is just throw something that has been sanctified on top of it.

A poor peasant woman once entered the cellar at the appointed hour. For greater safety, she took her small child with her: she believed that the proximity of an innocent child would hinder any possible magic. The cellar runs deep into the mountain, though, and as the woman had reached the end of the underground passageway, she noticed a stone table on which lay a pile of gold coins. She put the child on the table and filled the bag, which she had brought for this purpose, with the gold.

Suddenly, she saw a white figure appear at the back of the opening and was so frightened that she quickly ran out. She had the bag into which she had already put quite a few gold coins with her. All her problems were solved. But the child! Yes, she had forgotten to take her child!

She was so upset about it that, despite the money, she no longer had a single moment of joy. She expressed her grief to the village priest. He advised her to go and get the child in a year, on the very same night. The woman did so and actually found her child in the exact same spot, playing with shiny pieces of gold pieces. She quickly picked up her little one and, unhindered, carried the child out.