



South Tyrol – Land of Myths and Legends

The Wild Man on the Schlern Massif

It had once again turned very cold on the Schlern Massif, and a new herdsman came up and settled into the herdsman's hut. As night fell, he crawled into the haystack and made himself a cosy nest in the sparse hay that still remained from last year. He had hardly dozed off before the door opened and in came a wild man. The herdsman acted as if he were not there, staying as quiet as a mouse. The wild man went straight to the stove, lit the fire, and cooked a *Blenten* or *Pulggen*, as the people call them – but out of ashes and water. A real *Pulggen*, of course, is made from boiling buckwheat in water. The herdsman watched secretly, a little bit afraid. When the ash mush was done cooking, the wild man waved to the herdsman that he should crawl out from its hiding place. Not daring to oppose the wild man, he came down from the hayloft – even though it gave him a good case of the creeps – and stood in front of the stove. The wild man began to eat, and motioned to the herdsman to keep him company. Even though he was unwilling, the second time that the wild man waved, the dairyman popped a bit of his *Pulggen* in his mouth, if you can imagine that! It must not have been much. The wild man grinned, satisfied that he had eaten a bit. So it went a second time. When they had both eaten the mush, the wild man went away again. If the herdsman had not eaten with him, the wild man would have torn him to bits.