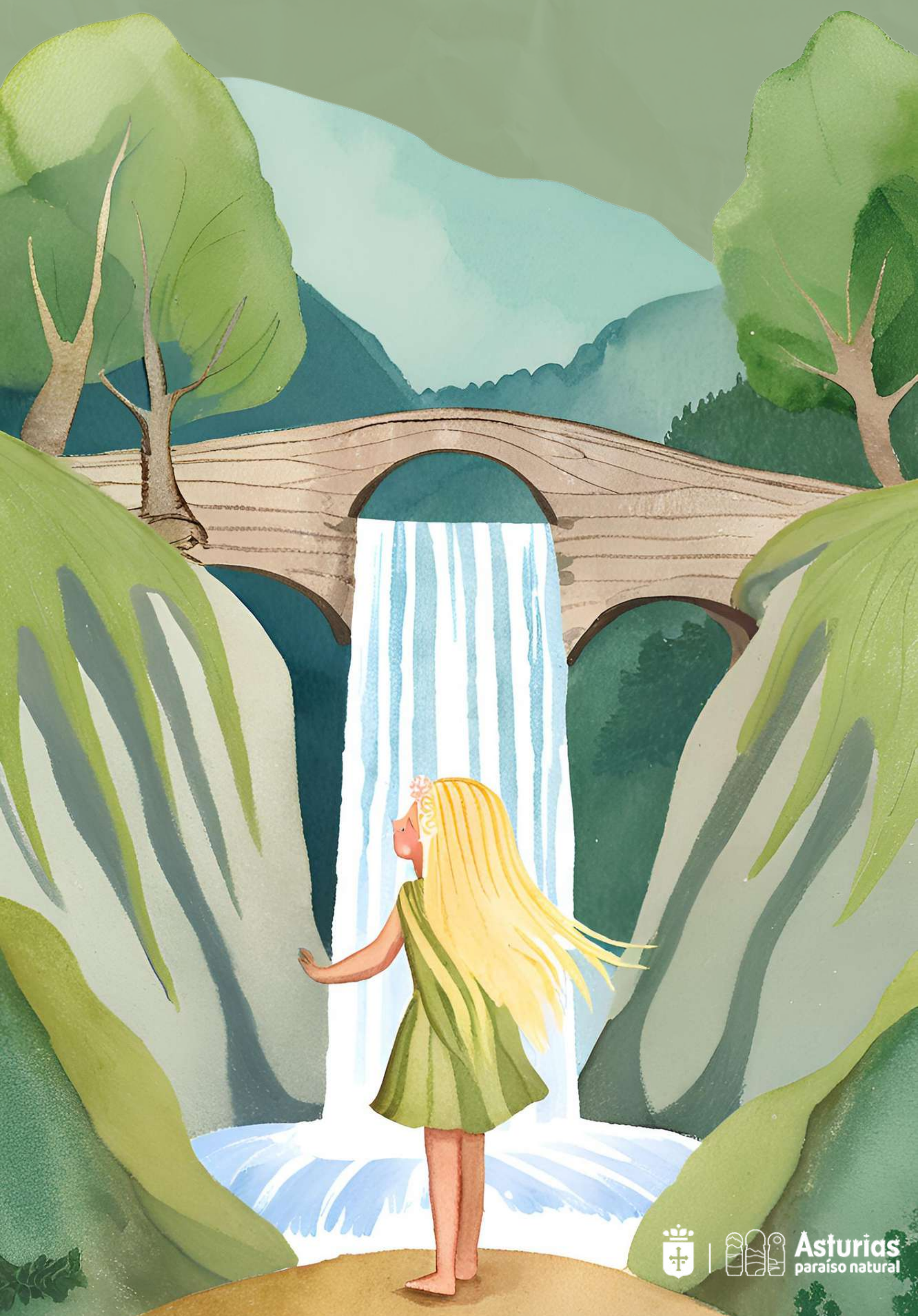


THE STORY OF **Asturias** THE NATURAL PARADISE



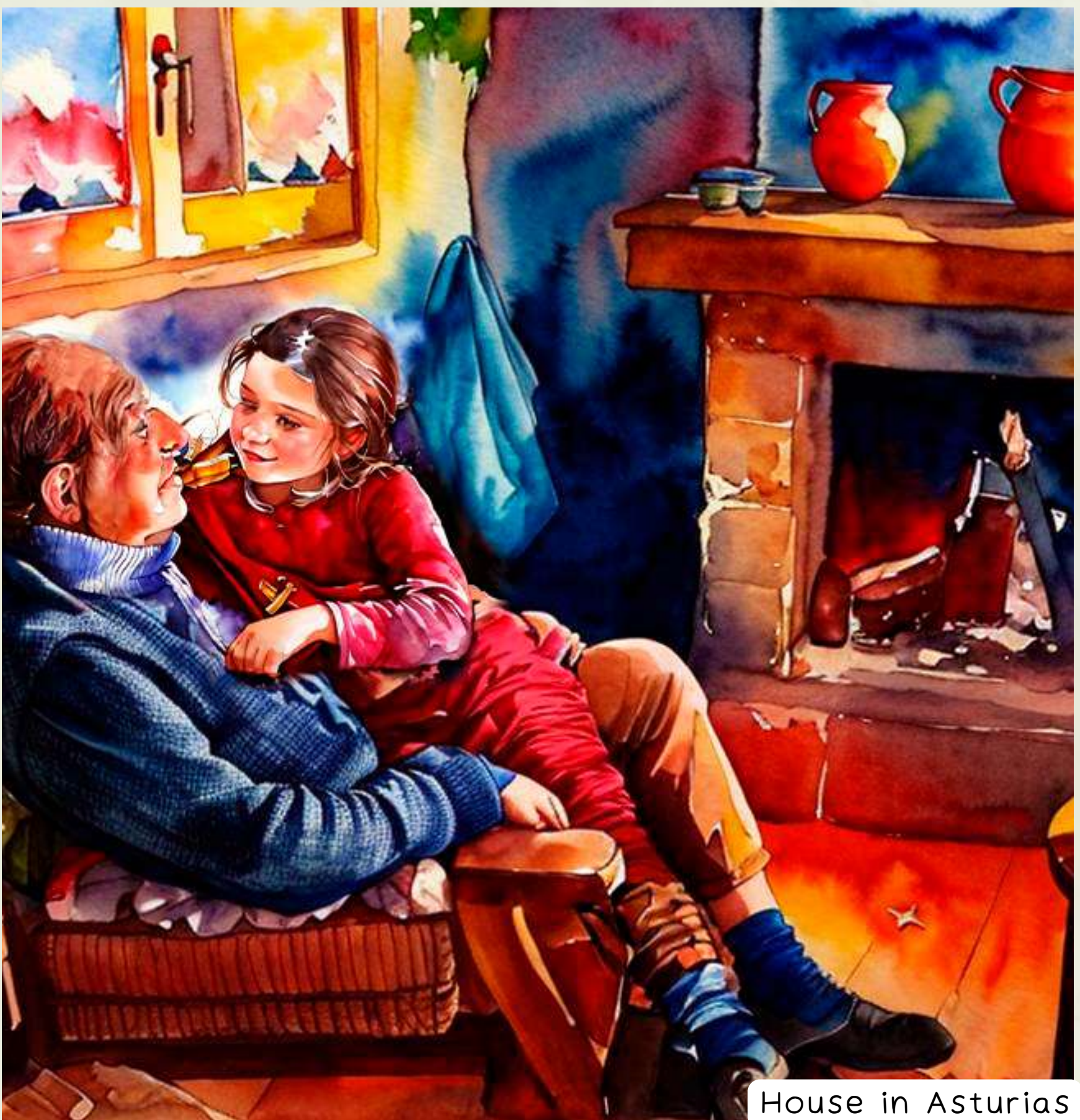
Asturias
paraíso natural

Once upon a time...

there was a house in the north of Spain which was very warm and cosy. Right at the heart of the house was a beautiful living room with a large fireplace that was always lit.

Next to that fireplace, a grandfather was sitting in an armchair, reading a book, with a small lamp lighting the pages.

Suddenly, his granddaughter, a sweet little girl, appeared and pulled him by the arm.



House in Asturias

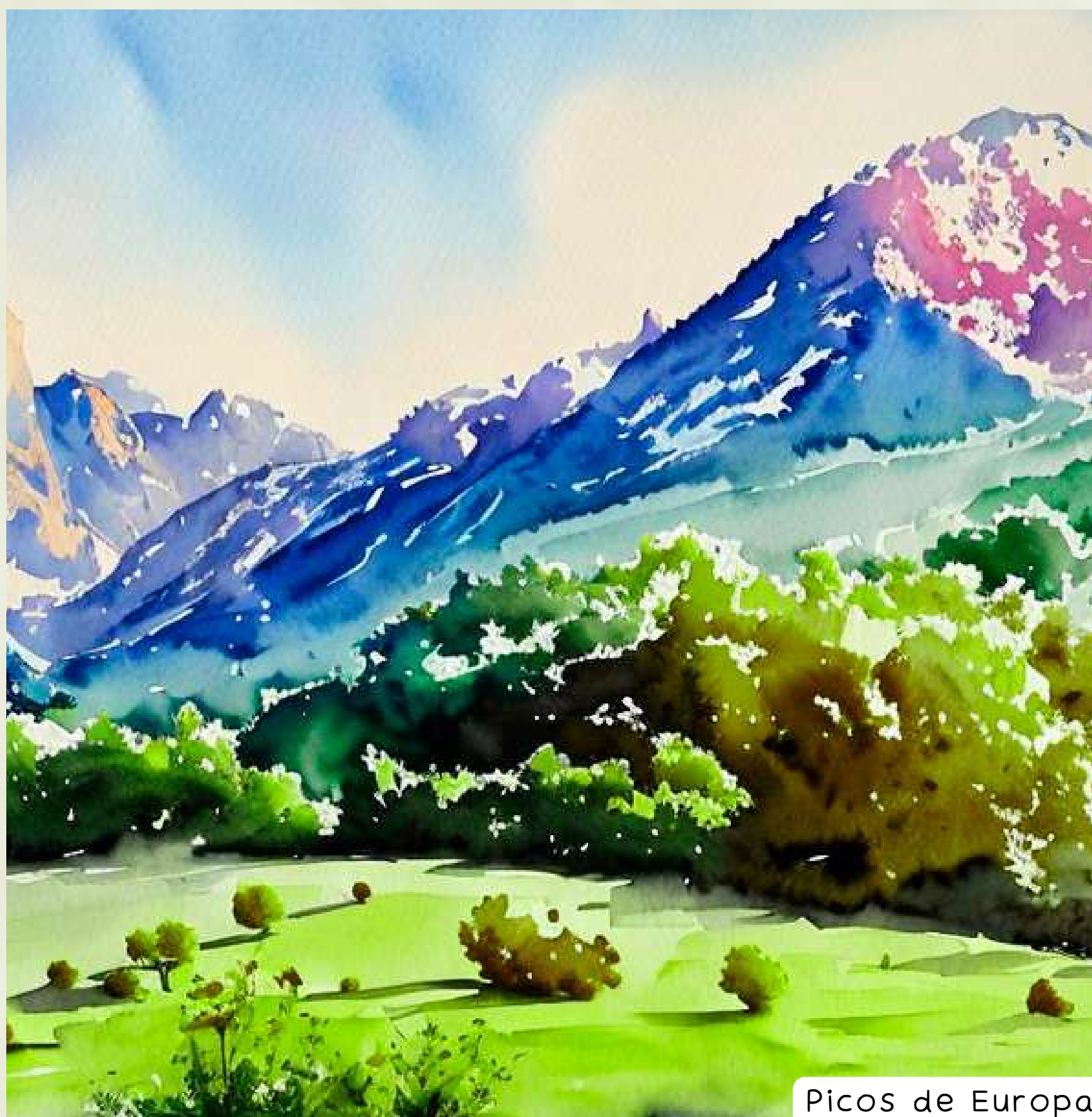
-Grandad, will you tell me a story? -asked the girl.

The grandfather smiled tenderly and replied:
-Of course I will!

The grandfather lovingly lifted the child up and sat her on his lap. He looked around and began to tell a fascinating story:

-Once upon a time there was a very, very magical land. It was a land that everyone dreamed of visiting, and those who got to see it always wanted to go back.

It was a very green and beautiful land, full of nature, with mighty rivers, beautiful waterfalls, great mountains with crystal clear lakes and snow-capped peaks which the more adventurous of us climbed.



Picos de Europa

The excited girl interrupted her grandfather:

-Grandad, Grandad, I want to go with you to see those rivers and waterfalls!

The grandfather, happy, replied:

-We'll go, my little one, and I'll show you the magical beings that live in those places.

-Magical beings? - asked the girl, surprised.

-Yes. Magical beings such as xanas, trasgos and cuélebres - said the grandad.

-What is a xana? - asked the girl, curious.

-Xanas are nymphs with very long hair. They live in magical places, where the water is pure and crystal clear, just as it is in waterfalls

-the grandad explained.

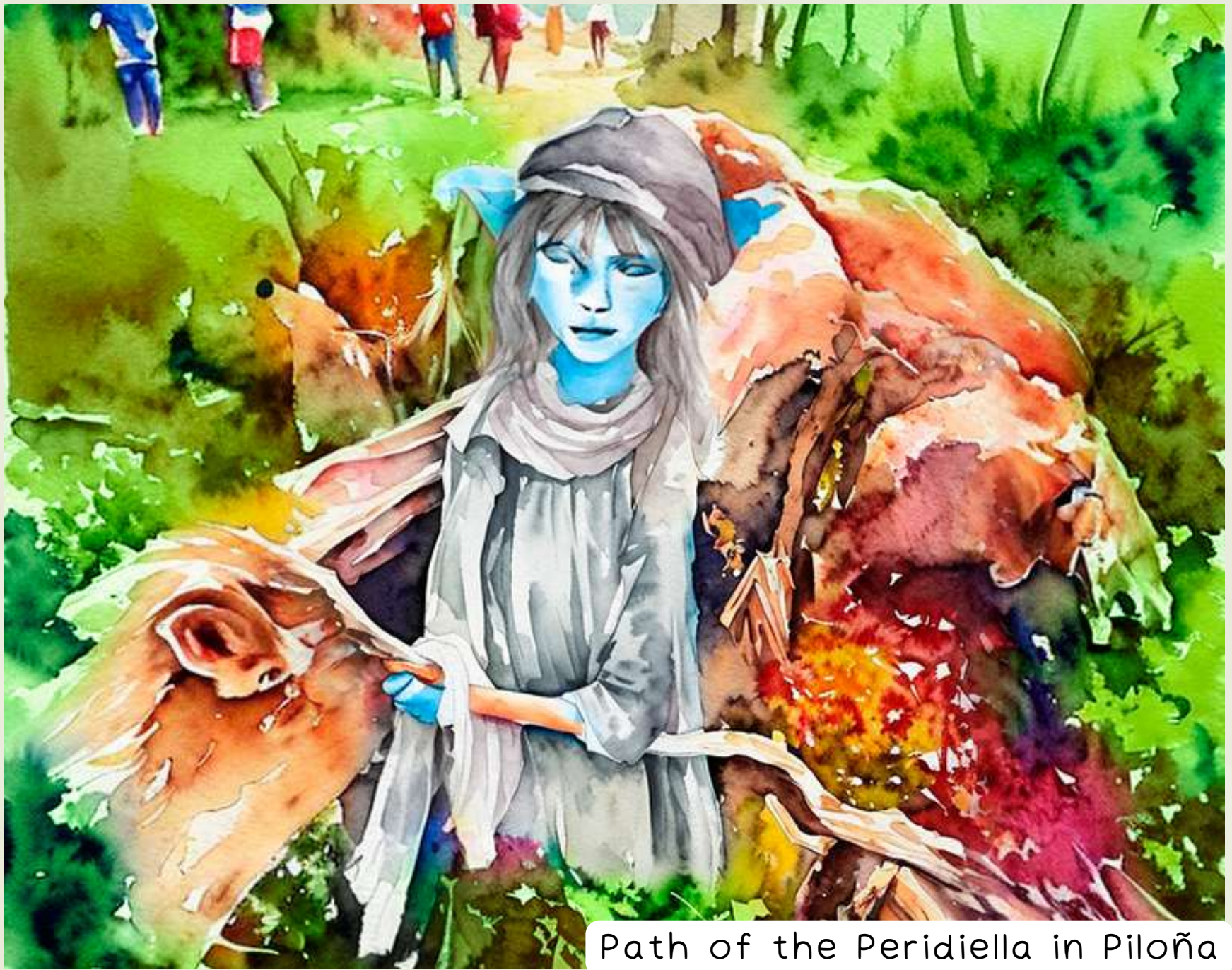


Dramatised route to the Xurbeo Waterfall in Aller

The girl continued to ask questions:

-What about trasgos and cuélebres? Where are they?

-Trasgos are mischievous goblins that live in forests, although they sometimes hide in hórreos -said the grandad with a smile.



-What is an hórreo? - asked the girl.

-An hórreo is a small wooden house on four long legs called pegollos. People in the villages stored their crops in them to protect them from damp and mice - the grandad explained.



The girl laughed and said:

-Don't forget the cuélebre, Grandad!

-How can I forget! The cuélebre is one of my favourites - replied the grandfather excitedly-. It's a massive snake with wings that looks like a dragon, with eyes that glow and see everything. Their job is to look after treasures... treasures like you! - he said as he lifted the girl up and spun her around in the air.

The little girl laughed with happiness and when the grandad put her down, he said to her:

-And now, if you'll let me, I'll continue with the tale of the magic land.

-Please do! - said the girl with a big smile.

The grandfather continued:

-It wasn't just mountains in that magic land, the sea was there too. A blue, strong and cheerful sea that washed the beaches of fine golden-like sand every day. And I'll let you in on a little secret: next to these beaches, thousands of years ago, people lived in caves near the sea. And there were dinosaurs too!



Penarronda Beach in Castropol

-Dinosaurs! - shouted the girl in astonishment.

-Yep, dinosaurs. And we can still see them there, in a place called the Jurassic Museum - the granddad explained.



Jurassic Museum of Asturias in Colunga

The grandfather went on with the tale:

-There was also a very special place called Covadonga, where more than a thousand years ago a medieval Kingdom was born, with princes and princesses.



Sanctuary of Covadonga/Cuadonga in Cangas de Onís

And in this magical land, palaces and churches were built in a style called Pre-Romanesque.



Church of Santa María del Naranco in Oviedo

The girl was absolutely enthralled and carried on listening; her face said it all. The grandfather, excited, began to talk about the people who lived there:

-The people of that land were very special: friendly, cheerful and always welcoming. No one felt strange in that place. They loved to gather together to share delicious delicacies and they also drank a magic drink made of apples, which they poured from above into a large glass. That drink was cider!



Cider decanting

-It sounds lovely, Grandad! - said the girl, delighted. The grandfather, remembering his childhood with tears in his eyes, said:

-When I was little, I played with my friends, we ran around the villages, looked after the animals and went on nature walks. It was a wonderful life!



The Bear Path in Asturias

Suddenly, the girl, wide-eyed, tugged at her grandad's shirt and asked:

-Grandad, where is this magic land? I want to see it now!



Braña de La Campa in Saliencia, Somiedo

-Do you really want to see it? - The grandfather asked tenderly.

-Yesssssss! - the excited girl replied.
Then the grandfather, in a low voice, said to her:

-That magical land is in the north of Spain and is called Asturias. And it's so beautiful that it's also known as the Natural Paradise. And I'm going to tell you one last secret... Asturias is the land where I was born.



The girl, completely fascinated, looked at her grandfather and exclaimed:

-How beautiful, Grandad! What a beautiful land! I want to go there!

And, by golly, this fairy tale is not over, because all these magical places exist and are waiting for you to experience unforgettable moments.

We're waiting for you in the north of Spain
in the Natural Paradise of Asturias!





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