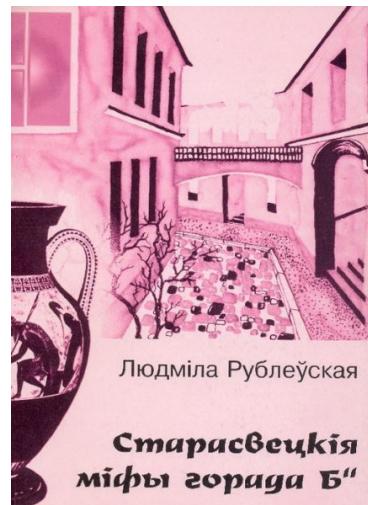


Liudmila Rubleūskaia

## The Old World Myths of the Town of B\* [Старасвецкія міфи горада Б\* (Starasvetskiia mify horada B\*)]

Belarus (2001)

TAGS: [Achilles](#) [Actaeon](#) [Admetus](#) [Alcestis](#) [Apollo](#) [Artemis](#) [Echo](#) [Eurydice](#) [Galatea](#) [Ganymede](#) [Heracles](#) [Jupiter](#) [Marsyas](#) [Narcissus](#) [Odysseus / Ulysses](#) [Orpheus](#) [Pandora's Box](#) [Paris \(Trojan Prince\)](#) [Pygmalion](#) [Semele](#) [Sidon](#) [Sirens](#) [Trojan Horse](#) [Troy](#)



Людміла Рублеўская  
**Старасвецкія міфи горада Б\***  
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General information	
<i>Title of the work</i>	The Old World Myths of the Town of B* [Старасвецкія міфи горада Б* (Starasvetskiia mify horada B*)]
<i>Country of the First Edition</i>	Belarus
<i>Country/countries of popularity</i>	Belarus
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<i>First Edition Details</i>	Liudmila Rubleūskaia [Людміла Рублеўская], <i>Старасвецкія міфи горада Б*</i> [The old world myths of the town of B* (Starasvetskiia mify horada B*)]. Maladēchna [Маладэчна]: Бібліятэчка часопіса Күфэрак Віленшчыны [Bibliatēchka chasopisa Kuférak Vilenshchyny], 2001, 59 pp.
<i>Available Online</i>	<a href="http://kamunikat.org">kamunikat.org</a> . (accessed: July 5, 2018)
<i>Genre</i>	Myths, Short stories
<i>Target Audience</i>	Young adults (children of 11-18 years old)

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Liudmila Rubleūskaia by [Gruszecki](#). Retrieved from [Wikimedia Commons](#), licensed under [CCBY-SA 3.0](#) (accessed: December 30, 2021).

### Liudmila Rubleūskaia , b. 1965 (Author)

Liudmila Rubleūskaia (Людміла Рублеўская) is a Belarusian poetess, writer, literary critic. She was born in Minsk. She graduated from the Architecture Department of Minsk Architecture and Construction Technical School and worked as a technical architect. In 1986-1987 she studied at the Poetry Faculty of the Literature Institute in Moscow and later on transferred to the Philological Faculty of Belarusian State University to study Belarusian philology. She has worked in various periodicals related to literature. In 2002 she started to work as an editor at the literature department of the weekly *Literature and Art*. Since 2003, she has been a columnist at the culture department of *Belarus Today* newspaper. She is best known for her historical and adventure novels, including *The Heart of the Marble Angel* (2001), *The Ring of the Last Emperor* (2002), *Nights at Pliabanskia Mlyny* (2007). The series *Adventures of Prantsish Vyrvich* (2012-2018) became very popular among readers, and one of the novels, as it was announced this year, will be filmed by *Belarusfilm* company.

Bio prepared by Maria Pushkina, National Academic Janka Kupała Theatre, [maryapushkina@gmail.com](mailto:maryapushkina@gmail.com)

## Additional information

### Summary

*The old world myths of the town of B\** is a cycle of 12 stories. Each one starts with a short author's retelling of an ancient Greek myth. The title of the story includes the main characters of the corresponding ancient myths, and its plot follows the stated *synopsis*. The protagonists, who inhabit a generic Belarusian town at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, repeat the fate of ancient heroes. The similarity is vividly emphasized by the parallel details of the story:

1. *Artemis and Actaeon*. The drunkard Charatsila looks after the bathing of the old maid Panna Kanstantsyia – an adaptation of the myth about the bathing of Artemis;
2. *Apollo and Marsyas*. Mikalaŭ Palivanaŭ, a visiting star from St. Petersburg, competes with the tavern violinist Girsha in playing the violin – an adaptation of the myth about the musical competition between Apollo and Marsyas;
3. *Orpheus and Eurydice*. Stas' Harbuzok, the brewer, persuades a b-list actress Ksienia Chychalovich to return from her tour to the city of B\* – an adaptation of the myth about Orpheus leading Eurydice from the Underworld;
4. *Pandora's box*. Chemistry teacher Kaputski receives a package that everyone in the town wants to open – an adaptation of the myth about opening the jar of misfortunes;
5. *Narcissus and Echo*. Eccentric Hanul'ka is in love with aegotistical metropolitan poet Mikalaŭ Shpadarovich – an adaptation of the myth about a narcissistic young man and unrequited love
6. *Sidon and the Trojans*. Alfons Burdeika, the spiritist and mystifier, convinces the inhabitants of the town of B\* that their deceased relatives talk to them in his voice – an adaptation of the myth about the insidious capture of Troy;
7. *Semele and Jupiter*. The half-blind Aühinnia goes through an operation to improve her vision and now can clearly see her husband, firefighter Mikhas' Kudyka for the first time ever – an adaptation of the myth about Jupiter's appearance to Semele;
8. *The Ascension of Ganymede* (Ganymede and Jupiter). Maitre d'hotel Kviatkoŭski takes Danilka, the son of an innkeeper, to Moscow and offers him work as a waiter – an adaptation of the myth about the capture of Ganymede to Olympus;
9. *Odyssey and the sirens*. Liutys', the telegraphist, is fascinated by the performance of the choir of the Association of Sobriety Lovers – an adaptation of the myth about the cunning escape of

Odysseus from the enchanting singing of predatory sirens;

10. *Achilles heel*. The rich man Bazyl' Marharysh agrees to grant money to Women Protection Society – an adaptation of the myth about the murder of Achilles committed by Paris;
11. *Pygmalion and Galatea*. Art teacher Pan Ramuald makes a portrait of Zosia and tells her about the wonders of Paris, trying to arouse her interest in art – an adaptation of the myth about the creation of Galatea;
12. *Heracles by Admetus* – vagabond Mamon'ka is trying to get the locksmith Pamidorchyk's wife from sectarians house - an adaptation of the myth about Heracles' rescue of Alcestis from the Underworld.

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## Analysis

Liudmila Rubleūskaia describes the conflict-freelife in the generic town of B\* and pays attention to the smallest details of everyday life. This small town in the middle of nowhere can be compared to the classical descriptions of provincial towns made by Chekhov and Gogol. All the heroes of the stories represent stereotypical characters of world literature, however these images are extremely lyrical, and are made with great sympathy. Their daily routine is full of events, a living description of which is firmly fixed in city's life in forms of gossip and rumor. Accordingly, classical mythological stories become an indivisible part of the history of the town of B\*. The stories are marked with moderate burlesque and ironic rethinking of ancient myth: half-blind Semele (Aühinnia) is horrified when she sees the true face of Jupiter (firefighter Mikhas' Kudyka) for the first time after her eye surgery; the tales of Pygmalion (artist Ramuald) do not encourage his model (Zosia) as much as they encourage her clumsy husband (Han'ka). Mythological ground becomes the starting point for numerous plots that thrive in the nostalgic aura of a multinational Belarusian pre-revolutionary town. This reincarnation is complemented by details that emphasize the similarity of the characters and allow us to trace the mechanisms of deconstruction of classical subjects and images. The use of ancient motifs not only romanticizes the life of the old town, but brings it closer to world traditions. Unlike most famous Belarusian mock-heroic texts, *The old world myths of the town of B\** don't depict gods in a travesty of peasant images, but let urban residents adopt the behavior of mythological characters. This indicates both the continuation of traditions and the modification of this type of reception.

Classical, Mythological,  
Traditional Motifs,  
Characters, and  
Concepts

[Achilles](#) [Actaeon](#) [Admetus](#) [Alcestis](#) [Apollo](#) [Artemis](#) [Echo](#) [Eurydice](#)  
[Galatea](#) [Ganymede](#) [Heracles](#) [Jupiter](#) [Marsyas](#) [Narcissus](#) [Odysseus](#) /  
[Ulysses](#) [Orpheus](#) [Pandora's Box](#) [Paris \(Trojan Prince\)](#) [Pygmalion](#) [Semele](#)  
[Sidon](#) [Sirens](#) [Trojan Horse](#) [Troy](#)

Other Motifs, Figures,  
and Concepts Relevant  
for Children and Youth  
Culture

[Love](#) [Memory](#) [Multiculturalism](#) [Parents \(and children\)](#) [Past Relationships](#)  
[Small town life](#)

Addenda

The book's title written with the use of the [Belarusian Latin script](#),  
[łacinka \(latsinka\)](#): *Starasvieckija mify horada B\**.

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