



Jan and the Mysterious Stranger: A Story about Devil's Peak



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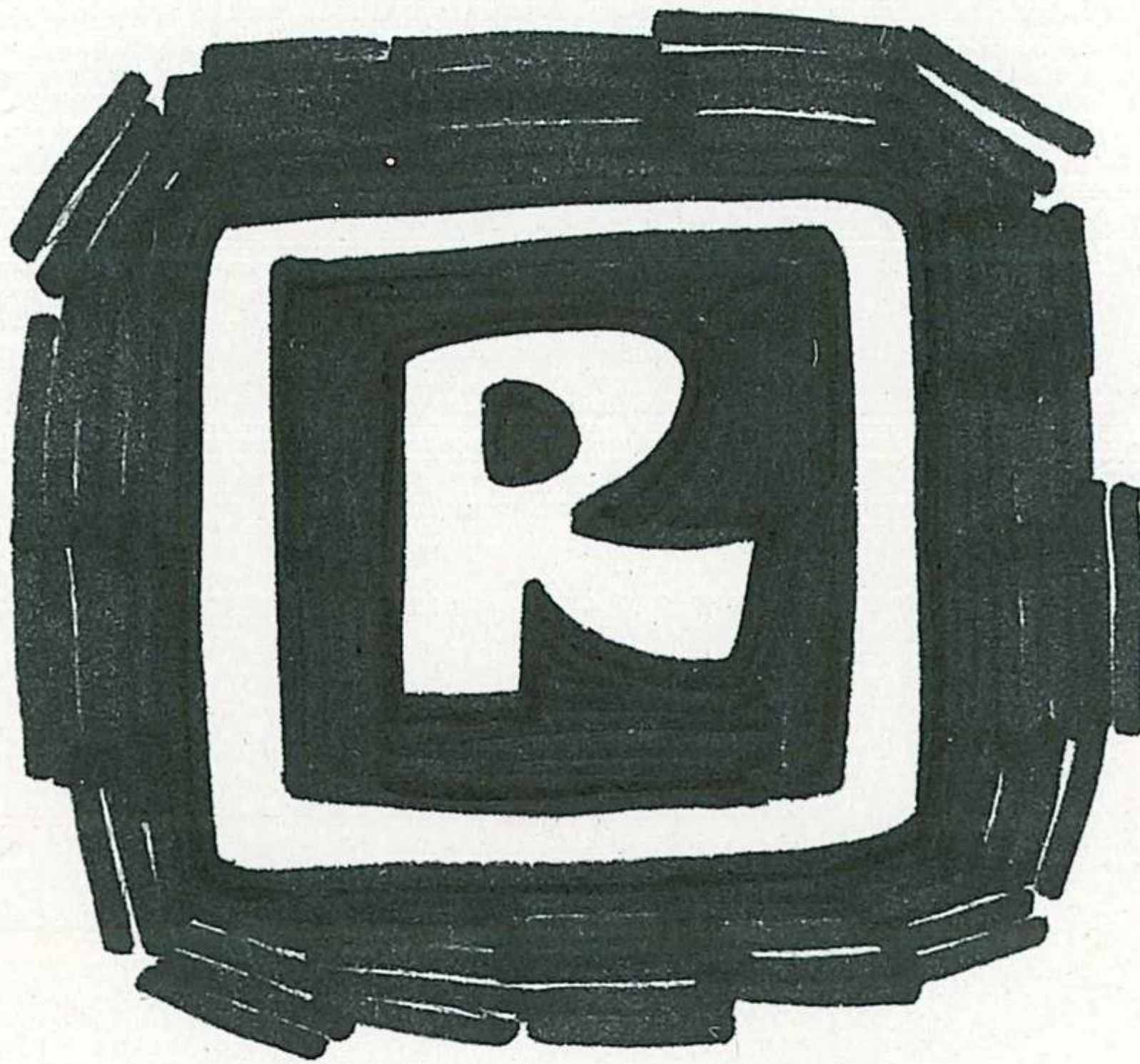
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Illustrated by

Robyn van Zijl



ROBYN VAN ZIJL

Long, long ago, at the foot of a tall mountain called Windberg, very close to Table Mountain there lived a man called Jan van Hunks.

Jan was a big, friendly man. His favourite thing to do was to smoke his pipe. He loved to smoke it every day, sitting in his cozy little home, puffing out clouds of smoke that swirled around him like magic.

But Jan's wife didn't share his love for his pipe. "Jan, you smoke too much! I can hardly breathe with all that smoke inside the house!" she would say.



So, Jan would smile and say, "Don't worry, dear. I'll go outside to smoke." And off he would go, walking up the hill to the mountain's slopes, where the wind would carry the smoke away into the sky.



One day, while Jan was sitting on the mountain, happily puffing on his pipe, he noticed a strange man standing nearby.

The man looked very mysterious – he wore a dark cloak and held a pipe just like Jan’s.

“Ah, another pipe smoker,” Jan thought.

“Perhaps we can enjoy our pipes together?”

The strange man turned to Jan and said, “I see you love to smoke your pipe too. But I bet you can’t smoke as much as I can. I’m the best pipe smoker in the world!”



Jan, being proud of his pipe-smoking skills, puffed out his chest. “Oh, really? I can smoke with the best men! Let’s see who can make the biggest cloud of smoke.



And so, the two men began to smoke. They puffed and puffed, each trying to outdo the other. The smoke grew thicker and thicker, swirling around them like a storm. Soon, the entire mountain was covered in smoke, and the wind carried it high into the sky.

The smoke was so thick that it turned into a huge cloud, so big that it seemed to cover the whole mountain, turning the sky into a blanket of fog and completely covering Table Mountain too.



Jan kept puffing away, determined to win the contest. After a while, he started to feel very tired. The strange man didn't seem tired at all. He just kept puffing and puffing.

Finally, after what seemed like hours, Jan gave one last, mighty puff of smoke, just as the strange man stopped.

“I win!” Jan cried out, feeling proud. The strange man smiled mysteriously and said, “You may have won the contest, but I am not just any man. I am the Devil, and I will take my leave now.”

With that, the mysterious man vanished, leaving Jan sitting alone on the mountain. The smoke slowly began to clear, and Jan realized something incredible had happened. The smoke had formed a giant cloud over the top of the mountain, which stayed there, floating like a tablecloth, even on the clearest of days.



The mountain was forever known as Devil's Peak, because of the mysterious contest between Jan van Hunks and the Devil.

Jan returned home, but from that day on, every time he looked at the mountain, he remembered the strange contest and the giant cloud that hung over the peak. He learned that sometimes, it's not always wise to brag or compete too much, for the consequences could be quite strange – and very smoky!

