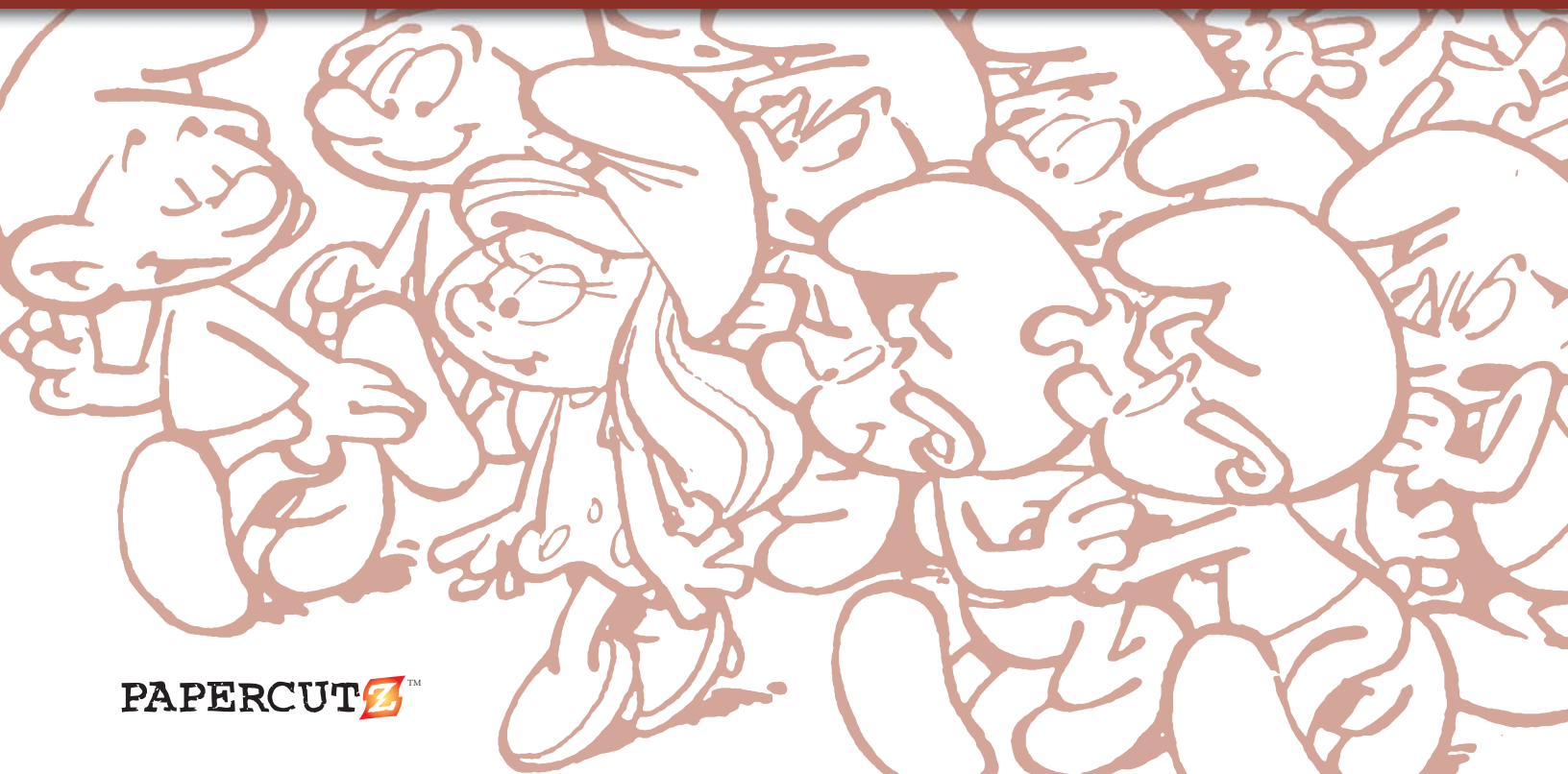




Peyo



the  
**SMURFS**<sup>TM</sup>  
**ANTHOLOGY**



# THE SMURFETTE QUESTION

BY MATT. MURRAY, SMURFOLOGIST

As a Smurfologist, the question that I get the most is: How was it that Smurfette came to be the only girl in the Smurf Village?

My answer: she wasn't. She was one of three. (Extra credit in Smurfology to whoever can name the other two.)\*

It's a cheat, of course, because for the first two decades of her existence, she *was* the only female Smurf. It wasn't until later seasons of *The Smurfs* animated series that the other ladies would rear their pretty, little, blue heads – and they were conceived in the Los Angeles offices of Hanna-Barbera during the 1980s, not Peyo's Belgian studio circa the mid-1960s; and by examining the latter part of that statement one can explain not only the "how" of the Smurfette, but the "why," although it does make the Smurfette question somewhat questionable to the modern reader.

Picture it, Smurfologists: it's Belgium circa 1966 and you are there...

Pierre Culliford, better known as Peyo, and his writing partner, Yvan Delporte, have brought back the Smurfs' nemesis, Gargamel, who is intent on exacting his vengeance upon the Smurf Village and disrupting their way of life. His plan, as they concoct it, is to let loose a destructive golem... a man-made monster constructed out of hatred... anger... and silk, pearls, and sapphires?

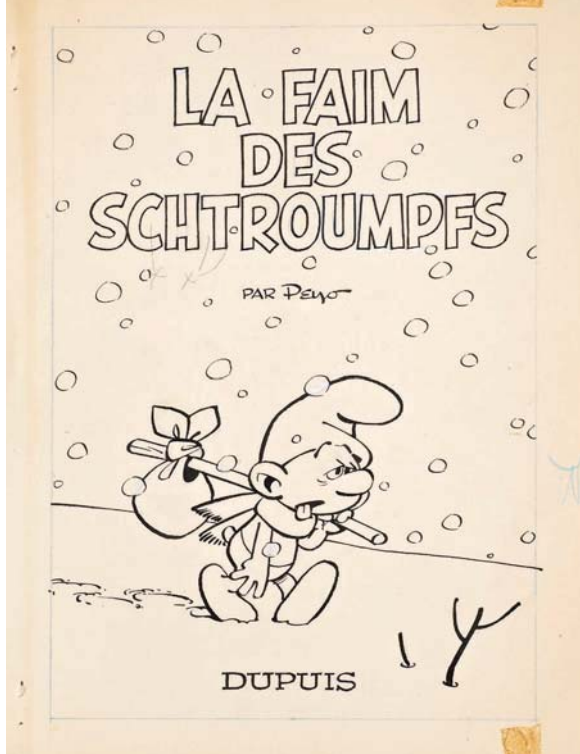
As you'll see in the following pages, if you didn't know already, the Smurfette didn't occur naturally in the species but was created by Gargamel in an effort to wreak havoc on the Smurfs. The spell he uses to fashion the little fashionista (she has in recent years launched her own clothing line on the runways of New York's Fashion Week, and has modeled in *Bazaar*) invokes the kind of mischief he's looking to let

loose on the all-male population, and can be considered incredibly sexist in light of the language and materials used.

While describing "feminine nature" as flirtatious, sneaky, reckless, proud, greedy, foolish, cunning, and volatile (among other things), Gargamel adds ingredients such as a bird's brain, a viper's tongue (powdered), and a candle burned at both ends to his Smurfette stew. In fact, when "*La Schtroumpfette*" was first translated into English by award-winning linguist Anthea Bell in the late 1970s,



\* ANSWER: SASSETTE AND NANNY



she acknowledged the misogyny by translating Peyo's lighthearted in-text footnote: "*Ce texte engage la seule responsabilité de l'auteur du grimoire 'Magicae Formulae', Editions Belzebuth*" as "The authors will not be held responsible for this formula which is the sole property of MCPW INC (Male Chauvinist Pig Wizards est. 1066)."

Even though Bell's interpretation is "politically correct" and adds another opportunity to chuckle not found in Peyo and Delporte's original script, it also subverts the original text. By changing the words completely, Bell ignores their

original context which has roots in the "*chansons*" of French saloon singers such as Jacques Brel (like Peyo and Delporte, a Belgian), that celebrated the melancholy and sometimes absurd aspects of love through ironic, dryly humorous, and mostly offensive lyrics. One need only look at the lyrics of Brel's "Amsterdam" (1964) or "Mathilde" (released in 1966, as was "La Schtroumpfette") to understand the milieu these men were trying to work in.

Where in cases such as "The Purple Smurfs" (featured in THE SMURFS ANTHOLOGY Vol. 1) Papercutz has opted to change certain aspects of Peyo's original comics (the "zombies" were re-colored from black to violet) to steer clear of unnecessary controversy, it's interesting to note that the translation of the Smurfette spell and its footnote presented here is literal, allowing for and provoking scholarly conversation about the work and the environment it was created in. Let's face it though, no matter the country, the mid 1960s *weren't* exactly the best of times in terms of gender equality, and all irony and "cultural differences" aside, "*The Smurfette*" IS a document of that environment.

But before you go dismissing the entire story, or even the character, read the comic first. You may be surprised by some of the twists and turns the Smurfette takes along the way, and ultimately by a choice she makes in the final pages of the story which may come as a bit of a shock to those only familiar with the "blue girl in town" from the television show.

You may find yourself with some new questions worthy of some Smurfological studies of your own. ●



3<sup>e</sup> SERIE

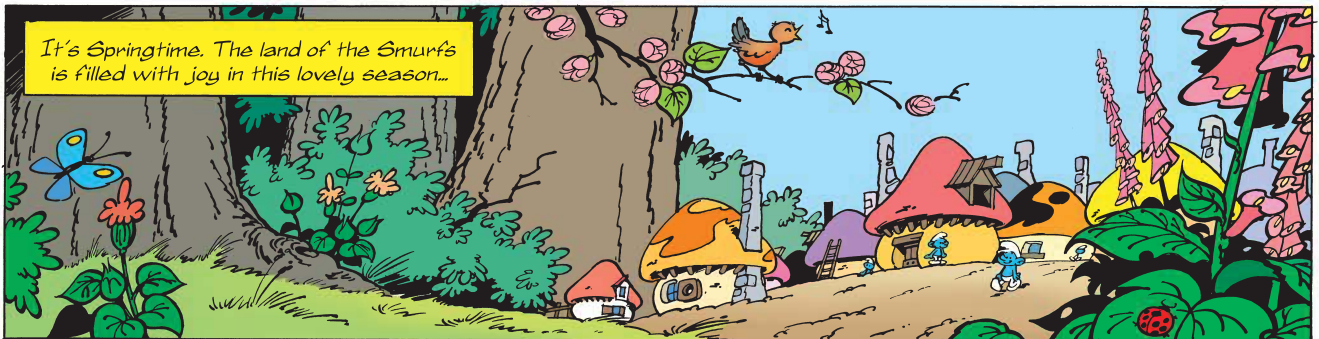
2 Histoires de Schtroumpfs   par Peyo

# La Schtroumpfette

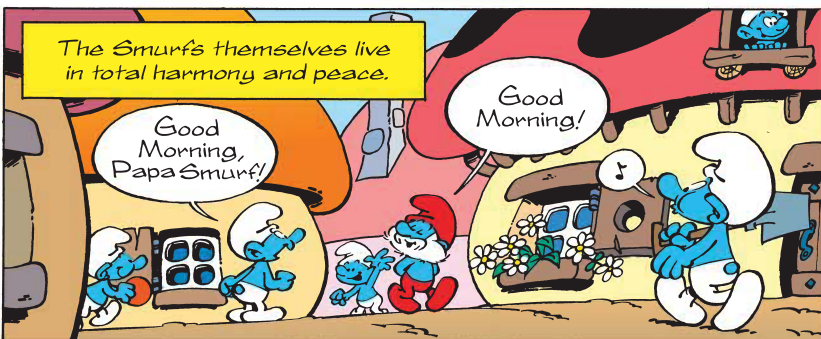


*et*  
**LA FAIM  
DES SHTROUMPFS**

# THE SMURFETTE



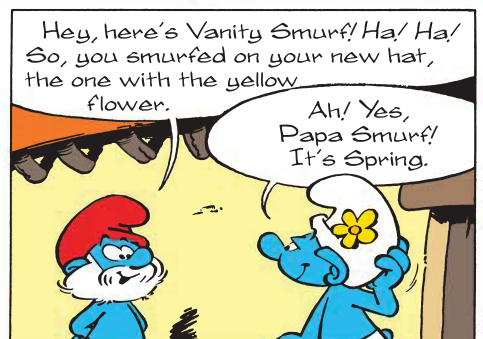
It's Springtime. The land of the Smurfs is filled with joy in this lovely season...



The Smurfs themselves live in total harmony and peace.

Good Morning, Papa Smurf!

Good Morning!



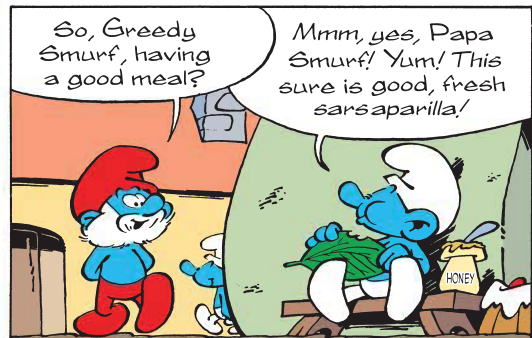
Hey, here's Vanity Smurf! Ha! Ha! So, you smurfed on your new hat, the one with the yellow flower.

Ah! Yes, Papa Smurf! It's Spring.



Hello, Lazy Smurf!

Zzz

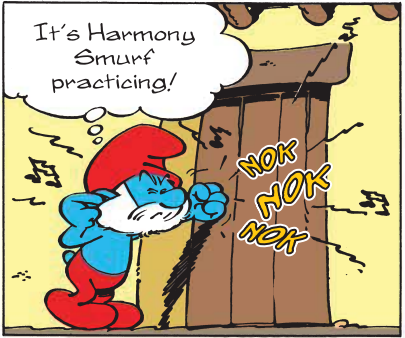


So, Greedy Smurf, having a good meal?

Mmm, yes, Papa Smurf! Yum! This sure is good, fresh sarsaparilla!



PWATWAT



It's Harmony Smurf practicing!

NOK NOK NOK



Uh... bravo! Very good! You're making progress on your trumpet!



But that wasn't the trumpet, Papa Smurf! I'm smurfing the guitar now!

!