



Lalie Walker, the author of a crime thriller, is being taken to court because the action of her new book takes place in a well-known shopping emporium in Paris. The owners of Marché Saint-Pierre say her book damages its reputation. Hugh Schofield reports from Paris:

It's a highly unusual legal situation where the author of a **piece of fiction** is taken to court because the action takes place in a particular **locality**, and the owners of that **locality** feel **their name has been dragged through the mud**. Yet that's what's happened in the case of Lalie Walker's book, *Aux Malheurs des Dames*.

The Marché Saint-Pierre, where the murder story **unfolds**, is a well-known **fabric store** near Montmartre. In the book, staff members go missing as **voodoo dolls** are pinned to the walls and **rumours swirl around** the behaviour of the shop's managers.

In their plea, the **real-life owners** of the Marché Saint-Pierre say it's a **registered trade mark** and that no one can write about it **without prior permission**. They say their image has been seriously harmed by the book, and they want damages of two million euros - more than two and a half million dollars.

The author Lalie Walker is mystified. "If you can't set stories in real-life places," she says, "then you might as well just give up."

Hugh Schofield, BBC News, Paris

Vocabulary and definitions

a piece of fiction	a story that is made-up, invented or not factual
locality	place, location
their name has been dragged through the mud	their reputation has been insulted by the things someone (here, the writer Lalie Walker) has said about them
unfolds	happens, takes place
fabric store	shop which sells material for making clothes, curtains etc.
voodoo dolls	figures or models of people which are used in a type of religion involving magic and the worship of spirits
rumours swirl around	people are talking a lot about interesting stories which may or may not be true
real-life owners	the people who own the shop (as opposed to the characters in the book who own the shop)
a registered trade mark	a particular name or logo for a product that a company has a legal right to use
without prior permission	without getting the legal right to do something before doing it

More on this story: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/mar/17/lalie-walker-marche-saint-pierre>

Read and listen to the story and the vocabulary online:

http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/language/wordsinthenews/2010/04/100409_witn_paris.shtml