

## THE CHILDREN WHO PLANTED WORDS CAMBODIA

In the Cambodian province of Pursat, the Jaroni district had developed a bad reputation as an area where people did not speak. The ravages of nature and poverty had turned the souls of the Jaronians to ashes. In place of a heart, they carried an urn in their chest. The wrath of typhoons had blown the future out of their eyes. Typhoons came to the Jaroni district strong and fresh, gathering strength as they travelled across uninhabited plateaus. They blasted through some deserted villages and then gave it their all in the little valley. The only school spent more time under water than on dry land. The roofs were blown off the houses. Pine trees, rosewood and teak trees knocked against each other until the wind ripped them out and tore off their leaves. Even when the wind dropped, there was still turmoil in the shadows traced on the ground. But both the trees and the people always straightened up again. After some time, co-existence between man and nature was further disrupted by the fighting on the border for one of the temples. The area around the largest temple resonated with artillery fire. Machine guns rattled and fragments of flesh and wood flew around. The Jaroni people nearly went crazy with all the noise. The trees turned into skeletons. There was as little calm between storms as there was between battles. Until one day the two sides involved in the conflict came up with the idea of declaring the truce of all truces. Then even the typhoon inexplicably laid low on the other side of the highlands.

At first, the Jaroni people pricked up their ears to hear when – instead of terns, woodpeckers and cicadas – landmines would once more begin to rumble and winds to howl. They listened so hard and for so long that they failed to hear the rustling of the leaves and the breeze rubbing against the grass. Only children's yelling got through to them. And the honeycomb of dew on the flowers. Old wounds and fears, buried deep beneath the surface, opened up. Tears rinsed their eyes. The Jaroni people once more heard the light, the birds, ants and stardust. But once they became accustomed to the silence, they became greedy for it. They decided to keep their newly found treasure through their own silence. They laid it across the district like a glass bell and declared a Buddhist peace. A voiceless life was ordered. The only exceptions were the village chief and the teacher at the school.

Parents continued to tie ropes around children and fasten them to themselves with clasps. Just in case winds or grenade fragments should come again. Children were thus constantly close at their parents' heels, but at the same time separated by an impenetrable desert of silence. Three school children, Munny, Phirun and Chantou, were too big for ropes and too small for silence. After school, they liked to hang out on the platform behind the school.

"Not speaking isn't the same as silence, it's worse," whispered Munny while they were doing their homework on the ground. The teacher had told them to find as many opposites as possible.

"Night and day," said Chantou with a shrug. A few scattered sheets of paper lay around her. "Someone loves us and invented night so that we can sleep."

"Shh, quieter!" hissed Phirun. "The one who invented the night did it so that at least in the dark, he wouldn't have to look at people."

"Words and silence," said Munny carefully. He felt a tension in his throat. He hated whispering, he was at an age when he wanted to shout out loud.



“Let’s hide them in tree cavities,” proposed Chantou. They thought for a bit. Then a smile appeared briefly on their faces. Phirun put his hands together, deep in thought. They would create a wonderful surprise. How had none of the adults thought of this?

“I like it,” he said out loud. “We’ll make sure that words don’t die. Whoever finds one of our messages, will read it.”

“Shhh!” Munny and Chantou reminded him. They covered their mouths with their hands and burst out laughing silently. After a while, Munny looked pensively into the distance.

“Have you noticed that there are two kinds of words,” he mumbled. “With one kind, you just open your mouth and out they burst. The other kind depends on your heart. They steal your attention and thoughts. Sometimes you’re unable to utter them, you can only write them down, but they still sound as if you’d said them.”

“Nicely put, Munny,” Chantou commented gently.

They looked at each other and their eyes reflected a story that is difficult to put on paper.

“Don’t go all soft on me,” Phirum grumbled.

“We must keep our heads clear now.”

The next few days they were very busy. At first, they had to act secretly. They tore sheets of paper out of their notebooks and discarded the covers. They folded each sheet several times and then tore it up into smaller pieces. On these, they wrote all sorts of things: their names, opposites, poems, famous quotations from their reading book and hidden messages for those who didn’t want to hear them. They folded the bits of paper several times and buried them in the soil. They put some into tree cavities, between branches and under bushes. They planted the most precious pieces of paper outside their houses, like seeds. Their families and neighbours were busy with their errands. Their footsteps loosened, stamped and turned the soil beneath which the words multiplied and matured. People got up, drove the cattle, weaved baskets, worked in the fields, went to town, plucked chickens and cooked, without having any idea that beneath their feet words were combining into sentences. That beneath the surface of the earth, another story was growing, parallel to their own.

Munny, Phurin and Chantou kept ceaselessly planting. The gaps of silence between noises had to be filled. The silence of the adults had to be filled with realisation of how the life they had missed carried on. Munny, Phurin and Chantou were worn out, but each day brought with it something that needed to be put into words. And so they simply continued.

One day, the sky once more took on the colour of a plum. The air was heavy and thick, not even the slightest breeze stirred. Sweat poured from people’s faces. An invisible vacuum sucked up the air, an otherworldly deaf silence lay above the trees. Everything became still. Then came the wind, the tree tops whistled sharply, a deafening howl could be heard. Leaves, branches, clothes, stones, shards, sticks, hoes, bags, the vegetable stall, bits of fences and tools all twirled in the air. There were loud cracks one after another and a number of trees broke in two. Dirty, slimy, brownish water came rushing in, taking with it carts, wood, cattle, crockery, buckets and other meagre possessions. The loosened mud spewed out the scraps of paper and they floated to the surface. The wind blew the scraps of paper from the bushes and tree trunks and whirled them in the air. People were fleeing their homes and shouting the names of their loved ones.

“Chaaaaaaaaaantouuuuuuuuu!” yelled Munny as loud as he could. The rushing water was pulling his legs from under him. If he fell, his shouts would turn into bubbles beneath the water. And the world would once more be dumb.

“Muuuuuuuunny!” shouted Phurin while saving his dog.

“Phuuuuuuuuuuriiiiiiiiiiiiiin!” Chantou shouted at the top of her voice. She was carrying her little sister in her arms. A tyre floated past them on which sat a boy, catching the bits of paper falling from the sky. The bits of paper were dancing around people, landing for a moment on rooftops and then blowing into the sky again. Like white petals they poured over an old man, carried motionless by the water. Shouts, laments, screams and requests, together with the written messages, undulated and disturbed the surface of silence.

Towards evening, the wind ran out of breath. The night wove a carpet of silence again. In the morning, water still persisted in places. The exhausted, dirty, wounded people made their way through the mud and silt. On their shoulders were the poles from which hung the wooden coffins of the flood victims. The crumpled, decaying bits of paper on which it was still possible to read thoughts about the beauty, love, happiness and grace of this world stuck to their soaked clothes.

## FORGIVE ME PAKISTAN

Behind the fence the colour of white coffee there opened up a yard with a garage. On the other side was a wooden bench with cushions. A garden hose ran through the kitchen wall. By the sink stood a bed and above it washing was drying on a line. The door made of horizontal logs finished in a gable the shape of a right-angled triangle with decorative latticework. Malik spent his evenings in the doorway. He pressed his cheek to the warm wood, absorbing the silence. After his *Abbu's* death, the door between the yard and the pantry became a passage between two worlds. Sometimes he could see *Abbu*, his father, in the open doorway. But in truth, the door was always closed. After a while, he poured the voices from his memory to the other side of the door. The previously unconnected sounds, individual syllables, muted murmuring. Then he peered through the keyhole. He filled the empty room with the images that rose before his eyes. His beloved *Abbu*. Hussein, father's old uncle. Malik's *Bhai*, his brother, Bahhaar. Uncle Noor. Mother's brother, Hanim Abd Rabuu. The neighbours. The members of his tribe. A multitude of *topis*, traditional caps, in different colours. Sitting on the cushions. Getting up in excitement, waving their arms. Within the whitewashed walls they raised their voices threateningly. But they all united when Malik's *Baji*, his sister Faiza, refused to marry the leader of the Islamic seminary. The marriage would bring great honour to the family. It is customary for a daughter to submit to her *Abbu's* wish.

"You will do as I tell you," shouted *Abbu*.

But Faiza remained steadfast. Their *Ammi* dragged her daughter to another room to bring her to her senses, but instead the house became filled with female screaming that was not very promising.

The punishment for disobedience was stoning to death.

*Ammi* was pressing her hands to her chest. Malik thought her heart would break from the pain and begin oozing between her fingers.

*Abbu* refused to budge. Faiza was heading for death.

Malik hurled a few stones at his sister, too. Bahhaar advised him where he should aim. Faiza was a worthless one who had tarnished Allah's name and dishonoured the family. But his sister's stoning did not remove the weight from Malik's heart. Because when he had found *Ammi* in the garden, secretly picking the poisonous oleander leaves, he had not told *Abbu*. Instead, he had closed his eyes and tried to breathe as quietly as possible to deny his presence. Nor did he say anything when *Ammi* smuggled the leaves to her daughter, who was locked in the boiler room. He had silently watched Faiza chew the leaves, together with the seeds. The bitterness in her mouth made her grimace. She put her hands into her mouth to smother her sobbing. She clung to *Ammi*, saying goodbye for the last time.

*Abbu* and Hussein put a sack over her head. They stuffed her into Hanim's car and drove her out of the town to the Kharan desert. The sand dunes rode on the waves of the wind for tens of kilometres. In the distance, stretched Hamun-i-Mashkhel with its cracked layers of clay and faded gravel.

In the blazing sunshine, Faiza collapsed from a heart attack before they managed to kill her with stones. They buried her in a shallow hollow and covered her grave with stones.

Malik stared at the heap, telling himself his sister had chosen her own destiny. Hussein spat on the stones and kicked the nearest one so that it rolled into the sand like a chewed, forgotten bone.

Malik rubbed his forehead. His eyes were stinging from the images penetrating his eyelids. Uncle Noor was on his way with important news.

After *sallah*, the morning prayer, the next day, *Abbu* said firmly: “Chin up, son! Whatever you hear about me isn’t worth a penny.”

“But everyone says only good things about you,” said Malik. “You’re the best doctor, you save lives! You give antibiotics to the poor for free. You’re the best *Abbu* in the world. Or should I not believe that?”

*Abbu* stroked Malik’s hair and shook his head: “You’ll hear bad things tomorrow. They’ll tell you about my dark side. But Allah is merciful, he’ll help you separate the wheat from the chaff. You’ll understand.”

*Abbu*’s last words comforted Malik. He would understand one day. But for now, he was lost in fog. “Let those fight in the cause of Allah Who sell the life of this world for the hereafter...”

*Abbu* recited *ayat* seventy four in the fourth *sura* of the Quran.

Malik swallowed hard and continued in a trembling voice: “To him who fighteth in the cause of Allah - whether he is slain or gets victory – soon shall We give him a reward of great value...”

“Control yourself, in the name of the merciful Allah!” *Abbu* ordered him. Then, as if regretting this, he held Malik tight and continued in a calm voice:

“Malik, remember that while there are many who are trying to extinguish in every possible way the flame of Allah’s faith and shake our belief in Prophet Muhammad, Laa Ilaha Ila Allah, none has the right to be worshipped but Allah. If anything should happen to me, you’ll be the head of the family. Be strict and just! Repeat the *ayats* about jihad, the holy war that is defensive, aimed at the Western bloodsuckers!”

*Abbu* kissed him on the forehead. Then he pushed him away and quickly went out the door. The scent of garam masala, a mixture of spices *Abbu* liked to put in his yoghurt, was all that lingered after him.

In the afternoon, Malik snuck into the yard. He was eavesdropping the conversation on the other side of the door with the decorative gable. He peeped through the keyhole and saw something that astonished him. *Abbu* put on a waistcoat and Hussein and Hanim Abd Rabuu fastened it with the straps at the sides. The waistcoat had countless pockets. Long, tubular objects with screw tops protruded from them. They were all connected by wires, leading to a box in the middle. One of them finished in a kind of trigger.

Malik stopped breathing. He jumped away from the door and bumped into Bahaar, who had sneaked up behind him. “Do you want *Abbu* to catch you?” hissed his *Bhai* and slapped him round his ears. “He’ll beat you into a kebab.”

Malik rubbed his burning cheek.

“I’d like to know what’s happening,” he whispered.

“Have you heard of Haqqani?” Bahaar quietly asked him. Malik shook his head cautiously.

“Better for you that way,” Bahaar gently shoved him in the chest and left.

Malik had a premonition. Haqqani. He remembered the mysterious strangers. The angry voices. The subdued murmuring in the middle of the night. The answer came to him when in

the corner attic room he found his *Ammi* inconsolable. She was peeling off layer after layer of the endless emptiness left by the loss of her daughter. Upon seeing Malik, she started and put her hand to her chest.

“You frightened me.”

“*Ammi*, what is Haqqani?”

Something in his look defeated her. Her face acquired strange features. Her voice toneless, she mildly, barely audibly occupied the room. Her words pushed the breath from Malik’s chest. He walked over to the window. His lips attached themselves to the glass, flattening his nose. Children ran around the street. There were clouds in the sky. Haqqani, a Taliban network. An extreme Islamic group. He couldn’t understand what *Abbu* had to do with it. He thought hard, but his thoughts climbed into paper boats and sailed down the rapids. He turned to his *Ammi*, who was standing by the door like a ghost. He wavered between the need to understand and the desire for a blind, unshakable faith in Allah, the kind that *Abbu* had. But Malik was unable to combine the two under the same roof.

“Forget it!” his mother said. “You must forget what you’ve heard!”

The next day, at midday, *Abbu* exploded in the middle of the town’s marketplace. Nine other people died with him, including two women and one child.

In the living room, *Ammi* fastened the muslin curtain behind the coffered door. *Daddi*, Malik’s grandmother, was sitting on the couch. Swaying rhythmically, she mourned her late son. On the wall hung a picture with a quote in relief from the Quran. As he looked at the saying God is Great, something shifted in Malik’s chest.

*Abbu*’s doctor’s coat hung across the chair. Someone had thrown his cardigan with the tattered elbows over it. *Abbu* used to put it on when he visited his patients in their homes. The sight produced such pain in Malik that the saliva escaped from his mouth uncontrollably. He wiped his mouth with his sleeve. He was missing *Abbu*, oh Jahannam, hell, how he missed him! Hussain kept repeating: “The Quran, second *sura*, *ayat* two hundred and sixteen says: ‘Fighting is prescribed for you, and ye dislike it. But it is possible that ye dislike a thing which is good for you, and that ye love a thing which is bad for you. But Allah knoweth, and ye know not.’ Your *Abbu* sacrificed himself for the higher good! Let’s celebrate the name of Allah!”

Malik hunted down the screaming birds inside him. Obediently, he shut them in a cage. He wanted to believe in Allah. But Hussain was tarnished with someone’s blood. Whenever he was not kneeling on the *sajjāda*, the prayer mat, he had a knife stuck in his belt. As soon as he laid down the holy book, he would put a Kalashnikov over his shoulder. At night, Malik had bloody nightmares. He could not get the picture of his *Abbu* putting on the waistcoat with the explosives out of his head. Drops of sweat collected on his upper lip, while his uncle’s breath whipped his face.

“Don’t think about the dead,” Uncle Noor told him.

“What matters is the message!” And he added: “Pack the essentials. I’ll come and get you in a few days. Allah needs a solid, strong army!”

And so Malik didn’t shed a tear for his *Abbu*. They tried to persuade him that every droplet passing his eyelids would be a betrayal of his father’s heroic act. His *Abbu* had paved Allah’s way with his own blood so that Malik and Bahaar would not stray from it. And so Malik

absorbed the tears, which wet the dried out layers of his insides. Externally, he was empty and dead, but inside a flood of betrayal and denial raged on.

Malik remembered Faiza. By killing her they had saved her from hell. But had they? He sighed and put a white *topi* on his head. It was time. He could already hear voices from downstairs. Uncle Noor had depicted the training camp as the last stop before paradise. Malik would start the day at four in the morning with prayers, then he would run for over ten kilometres along the dried up riverbed, swim and crawl along excavated tunnels. This would be followed by learning about weapons and special training.

“The no-goods describe us as fundamentalists, but in truth we are liberators!” said Noor loudly. At their last meeting, he had put his hands on Malik’s shoulders and looked at him trustingly: “After you finish your training, we’ll send you abroad. Your *Abbu* would be proud of you!”

“But I was proud of my *Abbu* when he was saving lives, not taking them,” blurted Malik.

“Shut up, dog!” shouted Uncle Noor. “Your *Abbu* has become all-powerful!”

“He hasn’t!” exclaimed Malik. “He was all-powerful, now he’s just dead!”

He evaded the hand that sprung out towards his throat. He jumped down two stairs at a time and ran into the street. The bright light nearly blinded him. He heard his *Ammi* jostling with his Uncle.

“Run, Malik! Run!” she shouted as dust fell on her.

“But...”

“Forget your family! Just run!” she shouted, blocking his Uncle’s path with her body.

Malik looked over his shoulder and continued along the street. There was sand between his teeth. His every movement was accompanied by a cloud of dust. It rose from his sleeves, the ground, his jacket and passing vehicles. He ran across the road and by the railway tracks. The train going past rattled a slow melody. As if bewitched, Malik stared at the windows reflecting the whole world outside. The movement of the train was interrupting the circuit in the wires that provided power to the light bulbs. And so the train carriages were rhythmically lit up by blinding orange lightning. Together with them flickered the bloody, butchered faces. Malik felt as if they were looking at him accusingly. Oh, *Abbu*, what have I done! He couldn’t hear the footsteps of anyone following him, but he was running as fast as he could. He climbed a fence at the spot where there was a gap in the barbed wire. Goats and hens scattered before him. Sweat was running down his temples. Exhausted, he grabbed the edge of a stone well, gasping for air. He found himself in a small marketplace. On the other side, the nimble locals were building a channel, through which to direct water from higher lying areas.

A man wearing a *salwar kameez* – loose trousers and tunic – walked up to Malik. He offered him a bucket of water. Malik hesitated. Then he reached for the clear, cool water. He washed his face and greedily sipped from his cupped hands. The taste of dust and the feeling of dirty, sticky skin disappeared. They were replaced by an all-encompassing silence.

“You’re the doctor’s son,” said the man. Malik nodded carefully.

“I saw you with him in town.”

Malik looked at him questioningly, at the same time somehow staring at himself.

“Why?”



“Your *Abbu* is a good man,” nodded the man. Malik’s face turned to stone at this. The man didn’t know that the hand that had given so generously was in one single gesture able to take more than those that took in small instalments.

“He saved my son’s life. He paid for the medicines himself and came every day until my son was well again. Tell him that the poverty stricken Jabbar sends his regards.”

Malik’s face revived. A mixture of feelings stirred with such rapidity that he felt shame, pleasure and disbelief all at once. He stared at the man carefully, at *Abbu*’s messenger, Malik’s saviour.

“Really?” he said.

“To a father his son’s life means more than the whole of mankind,” said the man.

“Really?” Malik repeated. Hope grew in his voice.

“Respect your *Abbu*! And pray for him!” said the man with a laugh, stroking his moustache.

“Bismillah-ir-Rahman-ir-Raheem!” he added. “In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful!”

Malik fell on his knees and closed his eyes. He offered his face to the sand, dust, air, breath, the world. He felt a tingling on his neck. The warmth of *Abbu*’s invisible hand. *Abbu*’s breath brushed his face. It was like a caress. It left behind a feeling of blissful happiness.

HOME  
SLOVENIA

On Sunday mornings, Granny went to mass. Very focused, she sat in a pew, with the prayer book in her hands. She stared at the cross behind the priest in order to draw the attention of God's son to herself. She needed his help more than ever.

Meanwhile, Granddad sat on the concrete plant trough behind the church. While Granny was begging those above for Granddad's health, Granddad was busy filling his pipe with tobacco. When Granny was being given absolution in the confessional, Granddad was inhaling his fatal vice. Before Granny crossed herself on all sides of the sky, Granddad fed his lungs with smoke. Granny was terribly afraid for Granddad's health. She persistently placed it in the care of the angels, but deep in her heart she didn't trust them. Perhaps that was why Granddad's health was declining, but his heart was getting stronger.

After the mass and the pipe of peace, Granny and Granddad joined the family for Sunday lunch. Granddad wore an Alpine hat, even though there had never been any Alpine herdsmen's huts on the Slovene plains. Lukec was the one made happiest by their visits.

"Lift me, lift me!" he would say, reaching up to Granddad.

"Lift you where?" replied Granddad with a grin.

"Up, up," begged Lukec.

"Not up, that's Granny's domain!" After his pipe ritual, Granddad was in a terribly good mood.

"Carry me!" said Lukec, who at that time still lacked a sense of humour, stomping his feet.

"Alright, I'll carry you. But later, you'll carry me," said Granddad. He put Lukec on his shoulders and carried him out among the horse chestnut trees behind the house. After a while, they swapped places. Lukec gave Granddad a piggyback.

"Like Martin Krpan carrying his mare!" said Granddad with a chuckle. They both laughed so much that they nearly fell into the soft leaves.

"I had no idea that you were that strong," Granddad praised Lukec.

Granddad.

Lukec's face lit up. Granddad was as light as a feather on his shoulders.

They went deeper among the trees. They climbed a few metres along the slope and found themselves on the edge of a field with rows of sunflowers. The sight of hundreds of suns took their breath away.

"When I was little we used to kick a ball made of old rags in this field," said Granddad.

"Sometimes we went to school, but more often we had to help at home. Then years ago they planted sunflowers here. One for each of us children."

"If we played catch among the sunflowers, we'd get lost," said Lukec. "They're all the same and we'd never find our way home again."

After a while, a bench was put in the horse chestnut plantation. After all, the concrete trough was intended for plants. But strange things began happening to Granddad. Lukec and he would sometimes still go to the horse chestnuts behind the house. But Granddad found it increasingly difficult to put Lukec on his shoulders. He kept tripping up, wheezing and coughing up phlegm. Ever more often, he would go off on his own.

Sometimes, Granny would find him on the bench beneath the trees. Even more often she had to get him from the sunflower field. Lukec went with her.

“Shall we play football?” asked Granddad.

“I’ll be the goalie,” Lukec offered.

“There’s just the three of us,” said Granny, gently berating him.

“That’s not true!” Granddad stuck to his guns. “Count all the sunflowers, if you can!”

“You should be in bed,” Granny said.

“We can play football with the joy pad on my computer!” Lukec tried to please them both.

“Football on a computer? How wimpish is that!” said Granddad grumpily.

“We’ve got to go home,” repeated Granny nervously.

“I’m like a sunflower,” said Granddad, wheezing. His cheeks were deathly pale. He looked at Granny and ran his hand over his forehead. “Where am I?”

“Let’s go home,” said Granny.

“I don’t know how,” said Granddad, exhaustedly.

“The way home is the first thing a person remembers,” said Lukec.

Granddad took off his Alpine hat and put it on Lukec’s head. “This hat is only for hikers. Not for old men.”

They went home. Granny helped Granddad into bed.

“What’s wrong with Granddad?” Lukec asked Granny at the table. She said nothing for a long time. Then she replied dryly: “Something is growing in his lungs. He has difficulty breathing.”

“How did that thing get into his lungs?” said Lukec.

“Often it’s from smoking. And sometimes it just happens.”

“But why is he so strange?”

“Sometimes he loses his mind because of the pain.” She put a cup of sweet cocoa in front of Lukec.

“Is Granddad going to die?” Lukec asked.

Granny didn’t reply. She was a woman of few words.

After this, Lukec most often found Granddad on the bench below the horse chestnuts. Bed finishes you off, Granddad would say, resisting Granny when she tried to drag him home. Lukec tried to carry him piggyback, as before. But Granddad had become too heavy and they could barely keep their balance. Lukec wondered how much the mind must weigh. Because in the past, Granddad had been considerably lighter, together with his mind. Lukec accompanied Granddad home and stayed with him. In church, Granny tried to get the saints to give Granddad a little more time. She no longer stared at the cross, but preferred to look inside herself.

“Can’t be helped, I’m going to die,” said Granddad in bed. It sounded reasonable.

“I’ve never seen a dead person,” said Lukec. “Will I be scared of you?”

“Put some tobacco in my pipe, I’d like to smoke,” Granddad said.

Together they got the pipe ready. Granddad said blissfully: “Now I can die.”

His sigh came from a remote loneliness.

“How will we talk?” asked Lukec.

“You’ll find me in the sunflower field.”

“But what if I want to talk to you in the evening? I’m not allowed to leave the house at night.”

“I’ll be with you,” said Granddad. That did not sound reasonable.

“How will you be with me? Even now, you can’t find your way home.”

But Granddad had closed his eyes.

Lukec started thinking and couldn’t stop. Suddenly he came up with a solution.

“I’ll be right back!” he shouted to Granddad and ran out of the house.

He drew markers on the trunks of the horse chestnuts trees. He put another on the fence of their house. And he made the last marker from cloth and fastened it to his hat. A marker shows the way. With its help, a person can return to the beginning. He smiled. Even after dying, Granddad would not get lost.

The markers would lead him to Lukec. Home.