

RED AND BLACK STONES



a Silesian Legend



Long, long ago, Silesia was covered with thick, ancient forests. People used wood for keeping their cottages warm in winter, because they didn't know that their land was rich in coal.

In one village, there were two brothers – the rich one, Eliasz, and the poor one – Matyjasz. They were both very fond of a beautiful girl, Hanulka.

Hanulka really liked the poor brother, Matyjasz, which made his brother very jealous.

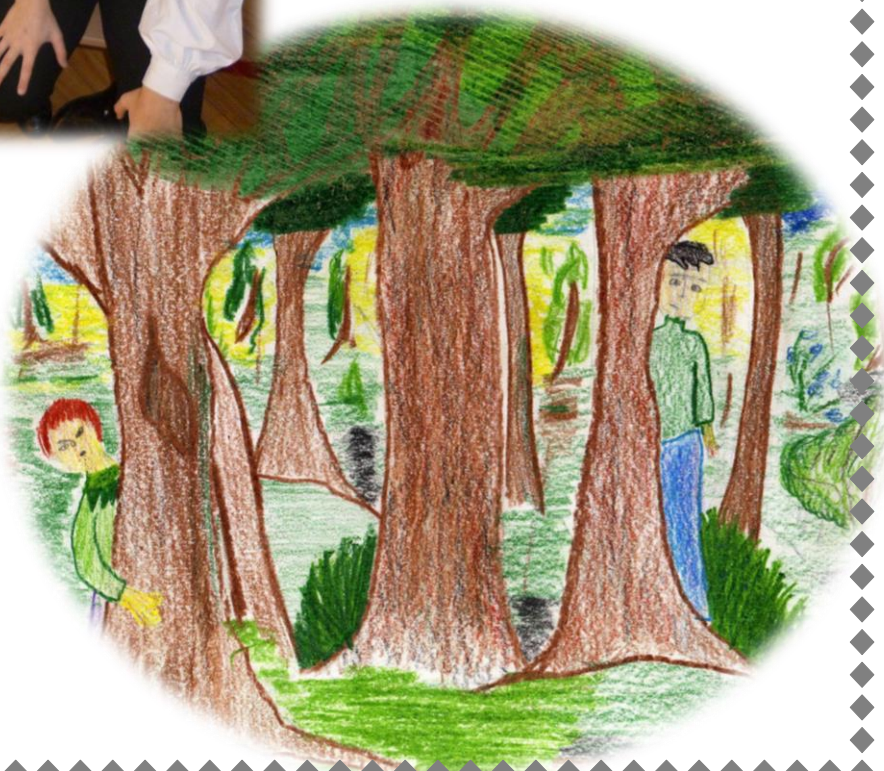
Eliasz decided to ask his uncles for advice. They suggested that he should propose to Hanulka, thus showing her his



good intentions. But, as it turned out, Matyjasz had the same idea. Old women in the village started spreading rumours that Hanulka would choose this brother whose gift she

would enjoy better.

Evil uncles, who had always preferred Eliasz, advised him to get rid of Matyjasz. So one day, when both brothers were out in the woods, he did so, by throwing his





brother down a tree hollow.

Matyjasz was falling for quite a while. Suddenly, he found himself deep under the ground. When he opened his eyes, he saw a strange creature. It was the Treasurer, now known far and wide as the ghost protector of the mines and the miners.

He is kind and helpful to the people who are good, but the evil people should be really afraid of him!

The Treasurer took pity on Matyjasz and gave him something special – a few lumps of coal.

When Matyjasz returned to his village, he saw that his brother had given Hanulka a beautiful and very expensive coral necklace. Matyjasz felt very shy, but he decided to act.



He came up to the girl with his present – a handful of black stones. Which gift

should the girl choose?



As



the day was cold and wet and the damp branches were not giving off much heat, Matyjasz threw some of the black stones into the fireplace. And just imagine what happened! Soon the whole room was filled with cosy warmth.



Hanulka realized that the black stones could be very useful not only for her, but also for the people from her village. That's why she chose the black stones for her wedding gift and Matyjasz for her husband.



They got married and – of course- lived happily ever after and the people in the village didn't have to suffer from cold any more.