

# The Legend of Mărțișor



Once upon a time, the Sun used to take the shape of a young man and descend on Earth to dance among folk people.

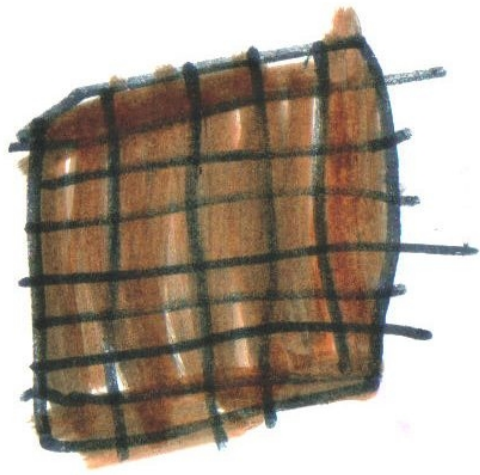
A dragon found out about this and followed the Sun on Earth, captured him and confined him in a dungeon in his castle.

The world fell into a dark sadness, the birds stopped singing and the children could not laugh anymore, but no one dared to confront the dragon.



One day a brave prince set out to find the dungeon and free the Sun. Many people joined in and gave him strength and courage to challenge the mighty dragon.

The journey was long and lasted three seasons: summer, autumn and winter.



At the end of the third season the brave young man had finally reached the dragon's castle. The fight lasted several days until the dragon was defeated. Weakened by his wounds the brave young man managed to set the Sun free to the joy of those who loved him.

Nature was alive again, people got back their smile, but the brave young man could not make it through spring. Drops of blood dotted the white blanket of snow and while the snow was melting, the snowdrops, harbingers of spring, sprouted from the thawing soil.





Since then people braid two tassels: one white and one red. Every 1st of March men offer this amulet called Mărțișor to the women they love or friends.

The red color represents the young man's courage, and white symbolizes the purity of the snowdrop, the first flower of spring.

