

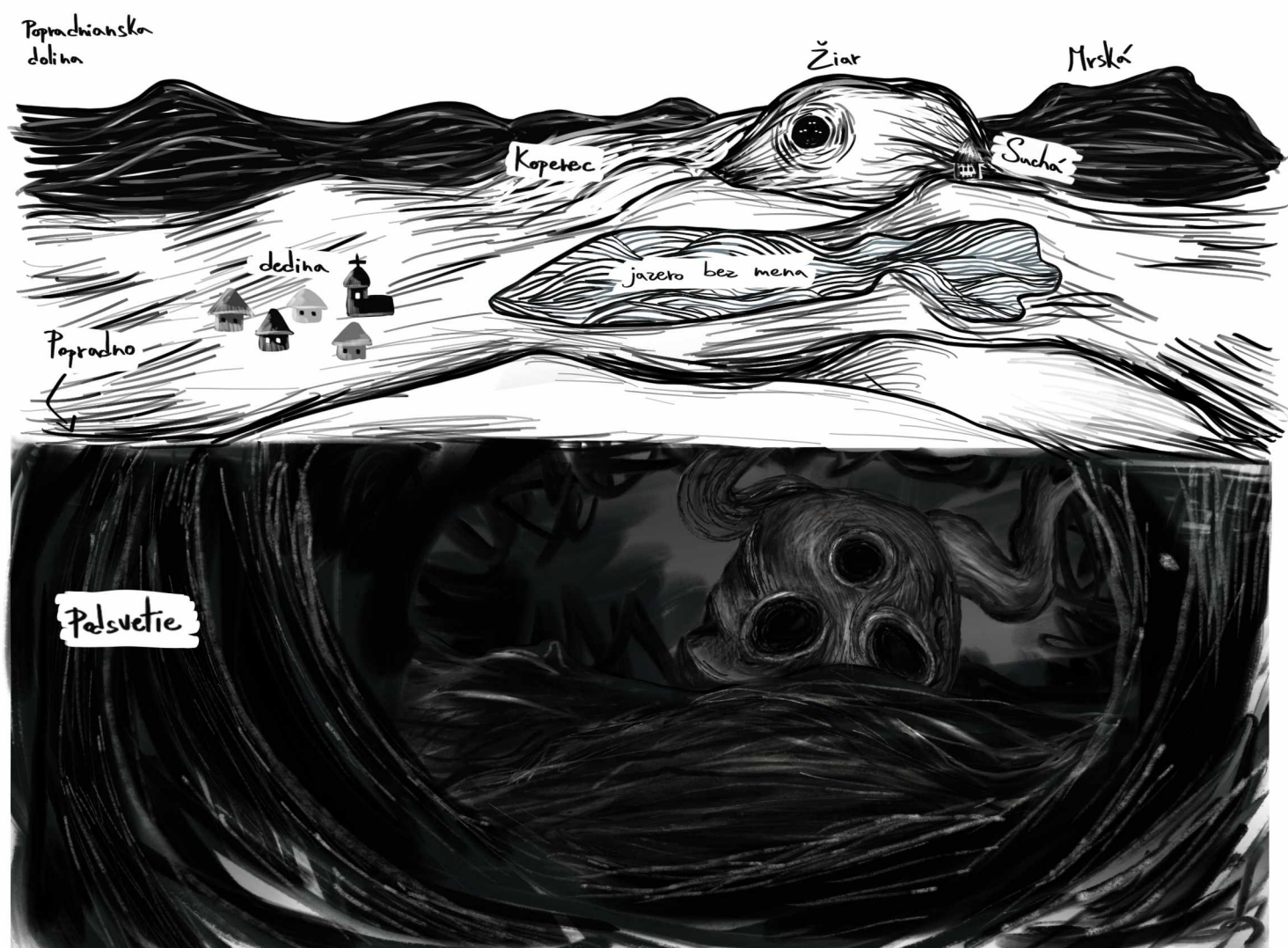


# MUROMAR

Poprad valley used to be full of enormous trees, without a single human civilian. But when first people decided to live there, everything changed.

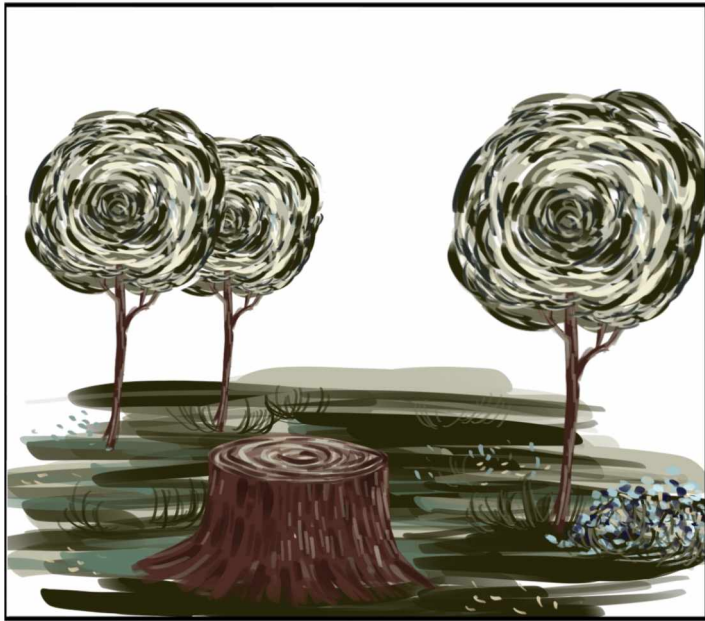


text and translation of the  
hypothesis: Anna Pénzešová  
text and translation of the legend:  
Dorota Reguliová  
illustrations: Dorota Reguliová

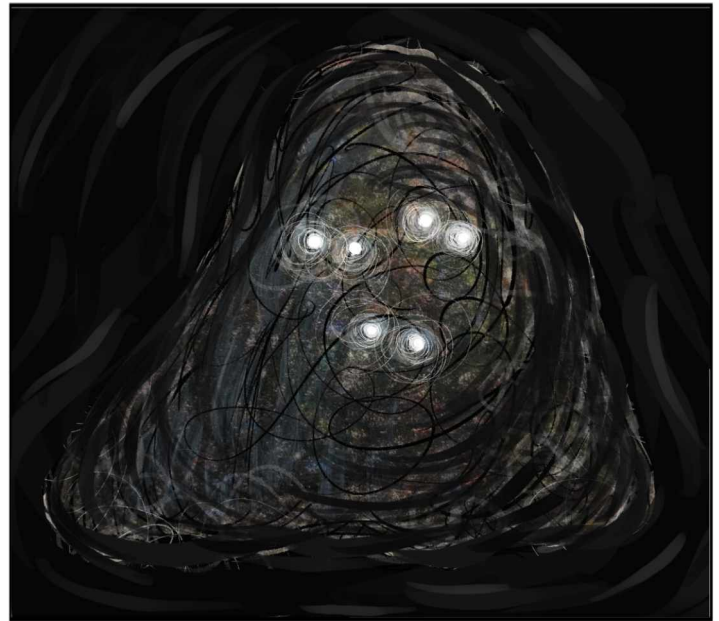


This map isn't geographically accurate, it's created according to the legend and imagination.





Men started to cut down tree after tree, ploughed the land, rooted grain.

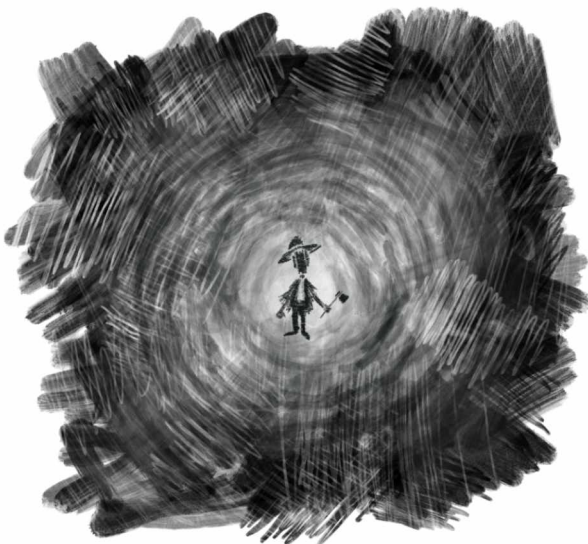


But there was also one creature living in dark chambers that lead into the underworld under the hill called Žiar. "Earthly maggots," it said sullenly and started to loudly mutter as a warning.

The ground shook.



The people thought it was a vulcano, but when it stopped, people went back to their everyday life.



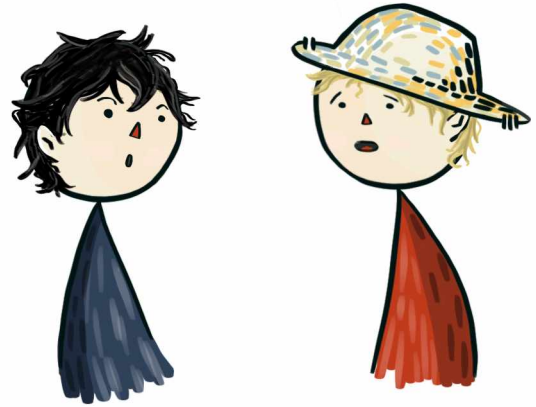
Young man named Kondal decided to move on peak Suchá. He was a strong lumberjack and was planning a wedding with a girl named Svatana.







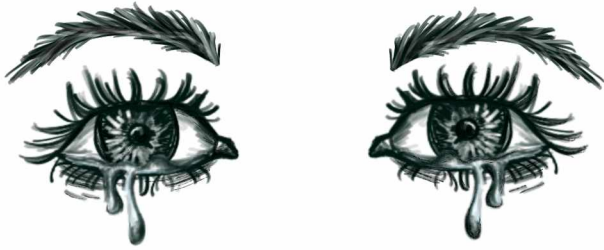
The ground shook again.  
Cows were mooing, swinging their tails and nervously running around.  
“What’s wrong with them?” Shepherds were asking each other.  
The ground shook again and the shepherds fell.



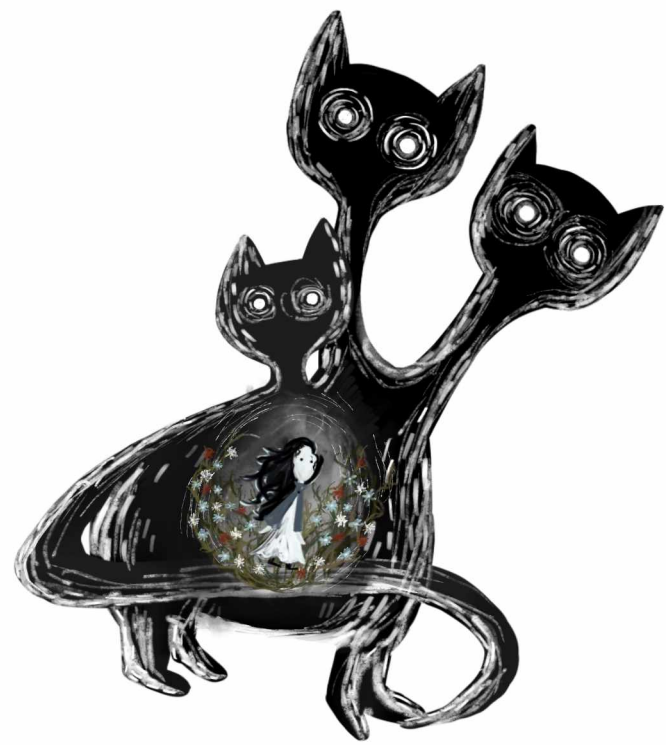
This hideous, three-headed monster was coming out of its hole. Flames were coming out of its nostrils, the air smelled like sulfur and ammonia. The people as well as animals were afraid of this monster. Prayers, sacrifices, anything won’t help them now.



The only one who wasn’t afraid was Kondal, he didn’t listen to people’s warnings and continued carelessly cutting trees down. He even stopped coming back to the village so they wouldn’t bother him.

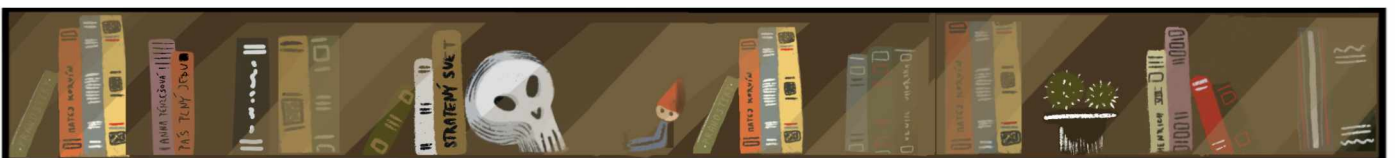


So Svatana with tears in her eyes went after Kondal to change his mind. But she didn't make it to Kondal.

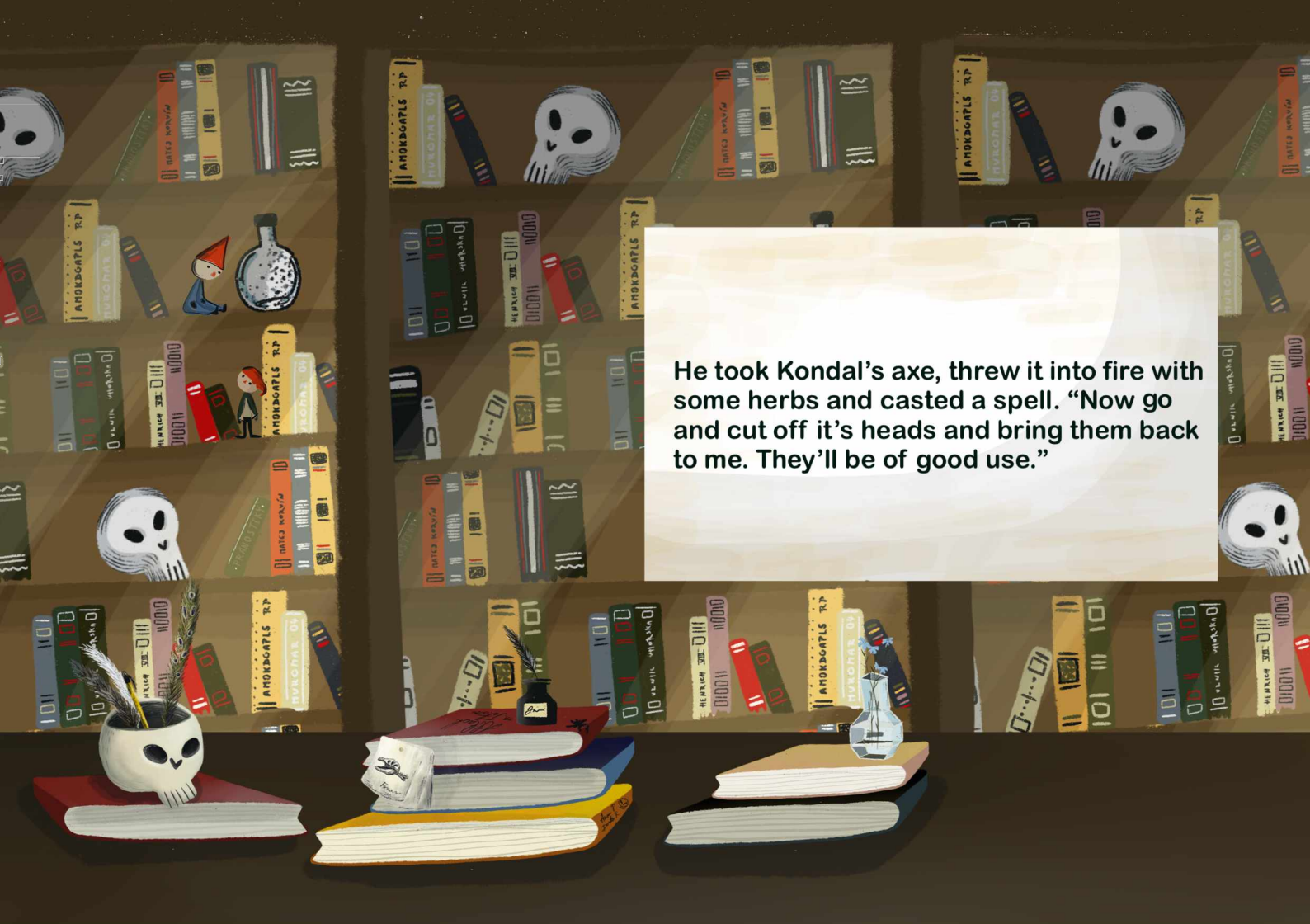


“Muromar took your fiancée. Who knows if she's still breathing?”

Kondal got mad, took his sharp  
axe and went after an evil  
wizard. “Muromar's on your  
nerves? Smiled the wizard. “It  
is a mighty devil. But I'm the  
stronger here.”







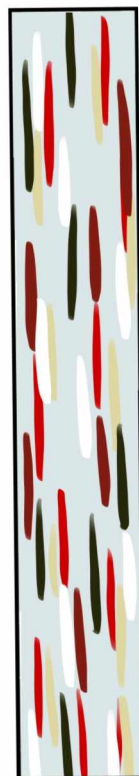
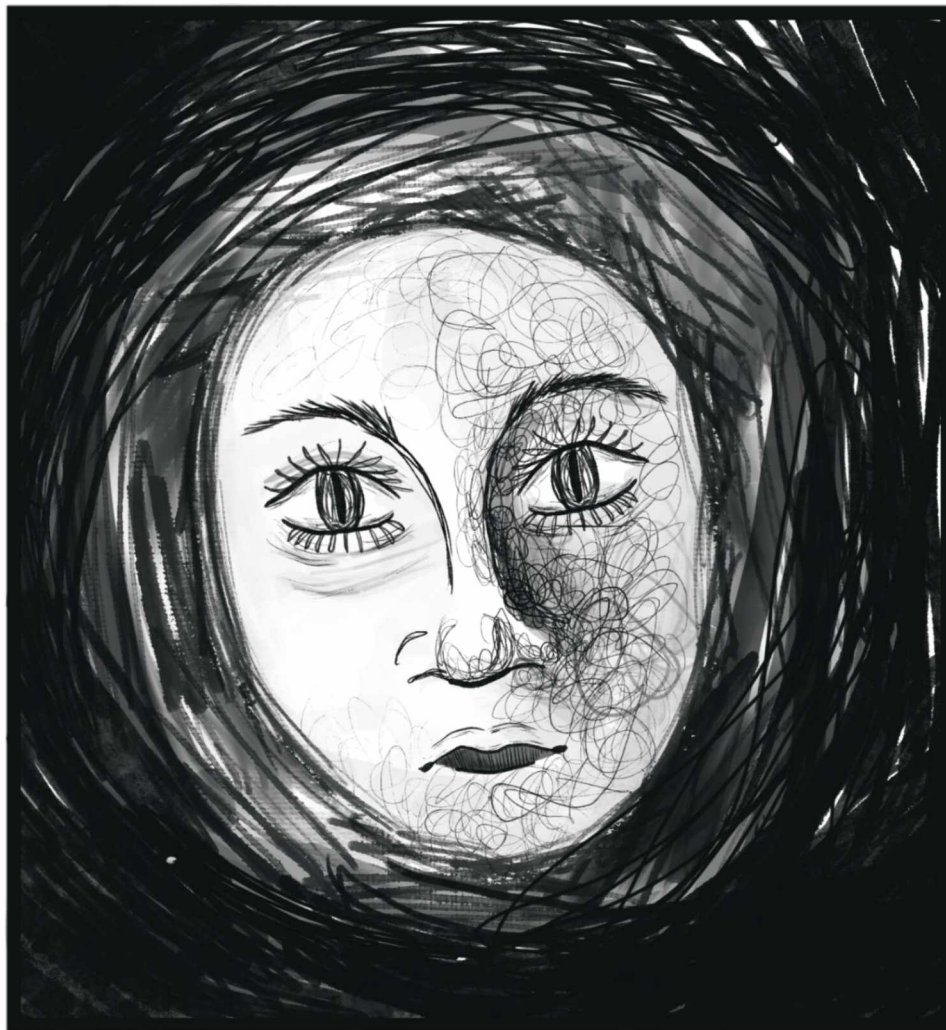
He took Kondal's axe, threw it into fire with some herbs and casted a spell. "Now go and cut off it's heads and bring them back to me. They'll be of good use."



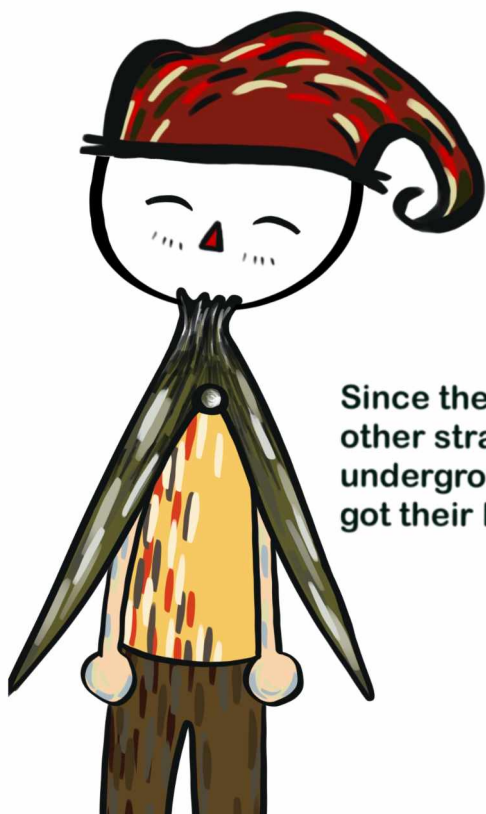
So he went after that monster and the great fight began. And like in most of legends, the brave, young boy won against the terrifying beast.







Saved his loved one from the torn prison Muromar put her in and with her the whole region around the hill Žiar. And as he promised, he brought the heads of the monster to the wizard.



Since then, there's peace, although some say that other strange civilian came to live into the underground chamber of Žiar. And the people also got their lecture and stopped making so much noise.







### Our hypothesis

Most likely Muromar was a strong earthquake. Žiar was inhabited already at the end of the 13th century. Approximately at that time there would have been an earthquake. Its magnitude could have been at least 3 or 4 of Richter's scale. Perhaps you think that the magnitude is small. However, the magnitude was enough to make people feel it. Alternatively if the earthquake was stronger by a degree, some houses could have been destroyed.

Several times the legend said that the ground shook. That's exactly how simple people can describe an earthquake. According to the recorded data there wasn't only one earthquake in that area of such scope...

As further evidence we have this information:

"Suddenly cows started to moo, they raised their tails and they timidly ran across the meadow."

By several researches some animals can predict earthquakes and then they behave very strange.

"Something ominous was in the air. Suddenly the cows huddled together, they gloomily looked at the specific place in the middle of the meadow... Just then the ground shook. The shepherds almost fell from their feet. At the place which the cows were looking at the meadow tore and the wind brought out clumps of grass up."

This is not a description of a weak earthquake. Also there is a volcano near the Žiar. Although the volcano is now extinct, but it could have exploded already during the existence of humankind. It means that magmatic and tectonic activity are not remote from this region. The legend says that people thought that some volcano was waking up. Legend also mentions:

"Flames were coming out of its nostrils, the air smelled like sulfur and ammonia." As a description of Muromar. Which explains that the people in fact thought it was a volcano. But we can't find any hint about peoples' knowledge about earthquakes. Dissemination of information was not developed yet. Neither seismographs was not invented in 13th century. It is very presumably that in fact it was the earthquake, but the science knowledge of the people was not sufficiently developed yet. People tend to instead unleash their imagination and thus that's how the legend about Muromar originated. Whatever it was the legend is beautiful and it definitely deserves our attention.