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*ear the Story, which is arriving on wings of the Wind.*

*The ever-present Wind, which rustles in bamboo groves, drones within the rocks of high mountains, flies through fertile lowlands and far wastes of the North and the South. The Wind, which whistles inside deep forests, rumbles over the surface of seas and whose whisper often reaches human homes in towns, in villages as well as in distant, solitary dwellings. The eternal Wind, which comes, leaves and returns again.*

*Hear the Story, which, in its uniqueness, has happened many times already. There, where the Past and the Future merge with the Present at the Moment short as a flash but deep as the whole Universe. The Beautiful Moment, which you know so intimately and thanks to which we still exist.*

Some thousands of years ago, a young farmer named Sambou lived with his Family, in the middle of a warm and majestic Country. The cottages of their village were hidden under tall trees of a large grove surrounded by dried and dusty Rice fields. Only a few lone hills were rising from the flat countryside on the far horizon. Their silhouettes often flickered in hot air as if they were living beings.

In the late afternoon's stuffiness, Sambou, his wife, their two children and a small monkey named Tojt were sitting on the top of the stairs of their wooden house, which was built on high poles. A slight breeze was blowing this high up. The overhanging roof and close trees were providing a bit of shade to the Family.

They were waiting for the Rain, which had not come for a long time this year. They had been unable to start the necessary field work at the right time without it. The last harvest was not good and the Family's Rice supplies were running alarmingly low. Sambou knew that the merchant Sokha could not lend

him any further Rice in that situation. He was worried about his Family and about his village, because their Neighbours were not doing any better. The whole Country was slowly succumbing to hunger.

The warm and gentle rustle of the afternoon wind within the crowns of the nearby trees caused members of Sambou's Family to one by one fall asleep on their mats laid out behind the entrance to their house. Sambou had already started to snooze as well.

Suddenly, the small monkey Tojt squirmed restlessly next to him. Sambou opened his eyes and sat up. It seemed to him that the number of hazy contours of the distant hills was gradually rising. Their movements were becoming more evident and clouds of dust, which had risen around them, were getting bigger. In a while, it was clear to him that the large herd of Elephants was approaching his village. This was unusual. Elephant migration routes lay far from his village. It was probably the big drought causing this change. The Elephants had not found enough water within the usual territories and they started suffering from thirst. Now they were heading through the shortest route as fast as possible to the still distant shores of the Big River.

The elephant herd had already passed along his village when Sambou noticed that one female Elephant with her young Baby had stopped in clouds of dust. Sambou could see how the baby Elephant's legs shook from exhaustion due to the long and fast march. The baby Elephant's Mother was confused, looking at the leaving herd, then at her Baby and at the plain heated by the Sun.

Finally, she turned around and she and her Baby Elephant started walking directly towards the village - to the outer cottage, where Sambou sat, surprised and speechless.

Both Elephants had not stopped before they reached the shade cast by Sambou's house. Sambou's wife's last two chickens clucked in surprise. Nonetheless, they calmed soon and went back to their dimples, carefully dug out in red-brown soil. They were curiously observing the incoming giants from there.

The Elephant Mother caught the scent of water and stretched her long trunk towards the close water well, where in great depth, some water still remained.

Out of Compassion for the Elephants, Sambou overcame his fear of those big wild animals, as well as the worry that his Family might not only lack food, but drinking water as well. He went down to the ground and started to draw one bucket of water after another from the well. The Mother Elephant drank gladly and poured the water on the overheated back of her Baby to cool it. The Baby Elephant started getting better fairly quick. He was able to drink his Mother's milk soon thereafter.

Then both Elephants returned to the shade of Sambou's cottage, where they stayed until the evening. The water, shade, several hours of rest and a couple of nearby shrubs to eat helped the Mother Elephant take good care of her offspring, and soon, it was full of strength again. When the Sun touched the Western horizon and the bright Moon appeared in the sky, it was already getting colder. The Elephants were preparing to make their way back to their herd.

All of a sudden, the Baby Elephant bent its back legs and sat erect like a Human Being. Then, he nodded to Sambou with its trunk for so long that he finally dared approach him. The Mother Elephant silently backed away a little. When Sambou got closer to the Baby Elephant, he saw that he held something small and shiny in his trunk. Then, the Baby Elephant pressed a beautiful dark blue gemstone into his palm. Sambou was so surprised he was unable to make a sound, so he bowed deeply in front of the Baby Elephant, which was the custom. The Baby Elephant slowly bowed as well.

Then, a clear voice rang out in Sambou's ears: "If you will always be so compassionate and generous, you and your followers will keep finding many similar blue sapphires on your fields, and all suffering will be reduced in your Countries for generations to come."

Sambou's wife gently shook his shoulder. Sambou sat up on his mat, confused. The Sun touched the Western horizon and the bright Moon appeared in the

sky. There was not a trace of the Elephants. The small monkey Tojt was cheerfully jumping around the trees and the children were good-heartedly teasing each other at the water well. Everything seemed the same as it was before he had fallen asleep. But there was still a small, dark blue sapphire in Sambou's palm and his wife was looking at it with utter disbelief.

Sambou told her what had happened to him. Finally, they decided that even if they had no idea what really happened, they would sell the gemstone in town and buy the Rice, which was already running out.

When Sambou returned from town with a full load of Rice, Neighbours from the whole village had gathered, and they were curiously asking Sambou how he got the Rice. Sambou told them his story and the Neighbours wished him Luck. When Sambou saw how his worried Neighbours started walking back to their empty granaries, he felt a deep Compassion towards them. He decided to give out enough Rice to all the Families every day while his supply would suffice.

The Neighbours were so happy when he told them, that they offered to help Sambou find the other blue sapphires which the Baby Elephant spoke about before the Monsoon Rains come and the fields flood with water.

And they did, just as they had agreed. Every day, twenty of his Neighbours were coming to Sambou's field. They dug out the soil, sifted through it and then piled it up along both sides of the hole which they created. In the evenings, they happily brought the Rice home to their Families and thanked Sambou for helping them in their difficult situation.

However, nobody was able to find even one small precious stone. Sambou was not saddened. He was simply happy to help. But he still believed that the words of the Baby Elephant would come true one day.

They all continued working for twenty four days. The search still had no results and they were once again starting to worry what they would eat when the Rice ran out. On the twenty fifth day, when not a stone had been found... the Rain started. Lightly first, then harder and it did not take long for the first

Monsoon Rain to come. Everybody was elated and rushed home to prepare themselves for the upcoming fieldwork. Farmers thanked Sambou once again and comforted him that after the harvest, his Luck would surely improve. Sambou also hurried to prepare his field for the upcoming season.

The fieldwork was exhausting and it consumed Sambou and his Family, every day from Sunrise to Sunset, for several weeks. The only place on his field which Sambou avoided during this entire period was the trench, which they had dug out with his Neighbours when they were looking for sapphires.

When the time of the Rice flowering was over, the time of Rice maturing came. Fields around village were slowly changing their colors from yellow-green to yellow-gold. Water had been let out of the fields a long time ago. After a hard day, Sambou was resting in his favorite place, the top step of the stairs to his wooden cottage. The Sun had just set and the bright Moon was starting to rise up over the Eastern horizon. Suddenly, a bluish flash of lightning caught Sambou's attention. It was the reflection of moonlight from some water surface, even though there weren't supposed to be any bodies of water for miles around. But still, the reflection was real and it was clearly shining with a bluish sapphire color into the oncoming night. Then Sambou understood. It was coming from the surface of the lake created by the hole in his field filling with Rain water. After enjoying this beauty for a while, Sambou noticed many fine wavelets on the surface, and he curiously set out towards the lake.

When he got to the lake, he saw that it served as a dam, surrounded by a wall of soil, which was elevated compared to the surrounding field. To his surprise, Sambou realized that as the fields were flooded, a flock of fish got stuck in the lake. The fish were already growing fairly large, vivaciously rippling the surface of the water, catching the flying and swimming insects. Sambou stayed there for some time without moving. All of a sudden, he heard the rustling of big wings. Two white Swans were just landing on the surface of the lake. They

sailed majestically for a while and then disappeared from Sambou's view into the reeds growing in one of lake's corners.

*That night, Sambou could not sleep. He finally understood the words of the Baby Elephant. He had already found first blue sapphire on his field and he also hoped to discover the way to find more gemstones in the future.*

*After the harvest, the ever-present happiness settled on the village. The yield was quite good despite the delayed sowing and re-planting of the Rice. Everybody was celebrating and enjoying themselves.*

*Only Sambou was diligently preparing for future fieldwork, as if a Monsoon were to come.*

*One day, he fished out all the big fish from his lake leaving only the young ones. He arranged a feast for his Neighbours. Since some of them had never even tasted fish and those who had didn't get a chance to eat it for a long time, everybody was enjoying themselves.*

*The next day, Sambou started moving some water from his lake to his field. During the following days, Sambou and his wife over-picked the Rice plantings, which they had grown from seeds on a small field behind their cottage. The Rice prospered due to the hot weather and a steady supply of water from the lake. Therefore, when the time for the harvest came, Sambou's yield was almost one and a half times as high.*

*Then, he invited his two closest Neighbours and told them: "I will give each of you half of my first harvest from the dry season. Thanks to this Rice, you will be able to create the same two lakes as I have and buy some fish, ducks and geese. It is up to you – whether you dig them out with your Families or ask your Neighbours for help, there won't be such a lack of Rice as during the last season."*

*The first of the Neighbours gave work to sixteen other farmers for the whole month. The second one worked with his large family for whole dry season. When the following Rain season came, there were three blue sapphires shining on the fields around the village.*

*Fish, ducks and geese were doing very well in those lakes. One could see, with great pleasure, how the families of ducks with younglings navigated through the flooded Rice fields within the Rain season, and how they were carefully picking nymphs of mosquitoes and other annoying insects with their beaks, while removing weeds from the proximity of the firm roots of Rice plants with their moving legs.*

*Soon, farmers could afford to purchase some hens and livestock. Those animals were given to the Families which did not have a lake yet.*

*Some of the farmers made smaller lakes first, in order to ensure at least one good harvest each year. If the Monsoon came late again or was weakened when the Rice needed good irrigation, they would be ready and protected.*

*Other farmers, on the other hand, built bigger lakes for several Families.*

*Sometimes, it was necessary to cover the bottoms of the lakes by layers of clay first, so that less water would leak through. It was also practical to plant fruit trees around the lakes in order to reduce evaporation.*

*Then, the people put water Turtles in the lakes and placed seeds of Lotus inside, slightly cutting their core first to ready them for germination.*

*Thanks to all those diligent activities, when both Neighbours gave their first dry-period harvest of Rice to the next two Families and those to the other Families the following year, there weren't fifteen blue sapphires shining around the village, but exactly one hundred and eight in total.*

*In some villages, People also made narrow channels bringing water to their lakes from shallow boengs. Places in the surrounding countryside, where the excess water was retained on huge areas after the Monsoon Rains, which, in the past, had quickly evaporated without being used.*

*In one of the more distant villages, near the Big River, the farmers were already able to create a small channel to one of its closest branches...*

The words of the Baby Elephant started to come true: “If you will always be so compassionate and generous, you and your followers will keep finding many similar blue sapphires on your fields, and all suffering will be reduced in your Countries for generations to come.”

And the People were. From one village to the next, from town to town, over the mountains and valleys, along the area where the brilliant Angkor with peaceful Faces of Bayon would once be built by the great Kings of the Future, to all other respectable Countries of wise Elephants and then further and further around the Globe.

To those who actually needed help.

*And thus it has been happening everywhere in the World until our days.*

*Oh yes. You do intimately know this absolute Moment, at which the Past and the Future merge with the Present, motionless - the Moment, which is the Curtain and the Gate, the Magic Gate to the Happiness. You have opened it for the others many times.*

*I know it well.*

*The eternal Wind carries Your Story on its wings already.*

*He likes to narrate it to the Lotus Flowers in the Country of sapphire-blue Lakes and of kind People.*

*Thank You.*

