

# **CHRISTMAS TIME IN THE EDUCATIONAL HAIKU, STORY AND AI IMAGES**

**Elzbieta Perzycka-Borowska**



**London 2024**



**CHRISTMAS TIME  
IN THE EDUCATIONAL HAIKU,  
STORY AND AI IMAGES**

**Scientific reviewer:** Anna Zembala (Catholic University of Applied Sciences)  
**Published by:** University Press, Polish University Abroad in London  
**Author:** Elzbieta Perzycka-Borowska

PUNO PRESS, 2024  
The Polish University Abroad,  
138-246 King Street, London, W6 0RF, United Kingdom,  
Email: [info@puno.edu.pl](mailto:info@puno.edu.pl); Telephone: +44(0)2088469305  
ISBN 978-1-7394413-8-8

This book has received funding from the two funding programmes.



**Engineering and  
Physical Sciences  
Research Council**

GRANT OFFER: Research Grant, Other JeS Guarantee Calls  
GRANT TITLE: Communities and Artistic Participation in Hybrid Environment  
(CAPHE). Grant Ref: EP/X038572/1



HORIZON-MSCA-SE-01-01 grant agreement Communities and Artistic Participation  
in Hybrid Environment, No 101086391.

# Content

## Note of Authors

## Introduction

### I. Theoretical Context

### II. Methodology

### III. Micro-moments of Christmas

1. *Odbicie w szklanej kuli/Reflection in a glass ball*
2. *Choinka w rogu pokoju/ Christmas Tree in the Corner of the Room*
3. *Choinka z książek/Christmas Tree from Books*
4. *Śnieżna burza i zamrożone serca/Snowstorm and Frozen Hearts*
5. *Światelka i krople deszczu/Lights and Raindrops*
6. *Gwiazda nad stołem/Star Above the Table*
7. *Pierwszy śnieg/First Snow*
8. *Malarka Zima/Painter Winter*
9. *Anioł na szczycie choinki/The angel on the top*
10. *Gwiazdki bez świadków/Stars without witnesses*
11. *Światło w zamglonym oknie/Light in a foggy window*
12. *Zapach sprzed lat/The scent of years ago*
13. *Świetlne piksele/Light pixels*
14. *Melodia pomiędzy krokami/Melody between steps*
15. *Odbicie na szkle/Reflection on the glass*
16. *Niespodziewany gość/An unexpected guest*
17. *Przesyłka bez duszy/A shipment without a soul*
18. *Lekcja smaku i pamięci/A lesson in taste and memory*
19. *Cienie wśród pikseli/Shadows among the pixels*
20. *Iskra w bezimiennym tłumie/A spark in a nameless crowd*
21. *Kolęda z sieci/A Christmas carol from the net*
22. *Szept zapisany w oczach/A whisper written in the eyes*
23. *Sekret pod choinką/Sekret pod choinką*

### IV. Transcending Educational Understanding of Micro-Moments

### V. The Metaverse Exhibition

## Conclusion

## References



## Notes on Author

**Elżbieta Perzycka-Borowska** is a Professor at the University of Szczecin and at the Polish University Abroad in London. Holding a PhD in Social Sciences, she specializes in teaching and learning, cultural theory, visual communication, digital information, educational technology, digital competence, and artificial intelligence. Her research integrates theoretical frameworks with practical applications, focusing on how emerging digital tools can enhance learning processes and promote cultural understanding.

A recognized scholar in her field, Professor Perzycka-Borowska has coordinated and collaborated on numerous international research projects. Notably, she served as the coordinator of the SIT project within the MSCA-FP7 program, was a partner on the TICASS project (MSCA–Horizon 2020), and is currently a partner in the CAPHE project (Horizon Europe). These initiatives exemplify her commitment to bridging the gap between innovative digital strategies and effective, ethically grounded educational practices.

### Contact Information

Email: [elzbieta.perzycka-borowska@usz.edu.pl](mailto:elzbieta.perzycka-borowska@usz.edu.pl); [elzbieta.perzycka@puno.ac.uk](mailto:elzbieta.perzycka@puno.ac.uk)

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7829-3806>





# Introduction

This book weaves together three seemingly distant yet, in practice, deeply interconnected perspectives: haiku, short stories, and images generated with artificial intelligence (AI). At first glance, these elements belong to different realms poetry with its conciseness and suggestive power, prose with its narrative depth, and AI-generated visuals with their technological modernity. Yet, they converge in an organic and complementary way, revealing new dimensions of meaning.

The common denominator of these explorations is the festive atmosphere, deeply rooted in Christmas motifs and winter landscapes, which serves as a starting point for broader reflections on the role of education in the era of new media. The reader is invited to embark on a multifaceted intellectual and sensory journey, where tradition meets digital innovation, and where short literary forms intertwine with dynamic, algorithmic imagery. Through this interplay, the book opens up a space for contemplation on cultural transformations, the fluidity of meaning, and the continuous search for human connection in an age of accelerating technological mediation.

In contemporary society, where information flows rapidly and digital tools reshape the ways we communicate and learn, even the smallest “micro-events” (Geertz, 1973; Pink, 2015) can serve as keys to understanding deeper educational and social processes. Haiku, with its brevity and precision, provides a lens through which we can grasp these fleeting moments those ephemeral yet profound instants that often escape our conscious awareness. Short stories, through their narrative structure, offer a way to embed these moments within a broader interpretative framework, providing them with continuity and coherence. Meanwhile, AI-generated images products of machine learning algorithms trained on vast databases of human creativity add

a visual layer of interpretation, translating abstract emotions into symbolic representations.

Together, these elements form a transdisciplinary composition, underscoring the need for critical reflection on education, cultural heritage, and interpersonal relationships. They also pose fundamental questions:

How do we construct meaning in a world where the boundaries between reality and simulation are increasingly blurred?

What is the role of memory and imagination in shaping personal and collective identities?

How do digital tools and artificial intelligence transform our perception of time, space, and human connection?

The book's structure invites a gradual immersion into its scenes and situations. Each section contains poetic or narrative forms accompanied by corresponding images, along with a reflective commentary. This commentary acts as a subtle moral thread, weaving together seemingly simple moments with universal meanings. It highlights the values, attitudes, and ideas embedded in everyday experiences, encouraging the reader to reflect on what shapes learning, cultural heritage, and human connection.

The texts have been crafted in the spirit of haiku marked by simplicity, attentiveness to context, and symbolic depth while maintaining an educational dimension. AI-generated images do not merely illustrate the narratives, they speak in their own voice, inviting the reader to explore shifting visual landscapes and uncover layered meanings.

This book, therefore, is a polyphonic dialogue between theory and practice, tradition and technology, poetry and image, education and visual culture. The reader becomes an active participant in the interpretative process questioning the nature of contemporary celebrations, the ways digital tools reshape our perception of holiday time, and the meaning of passing values between generations. Yet, the goal is not to offer definitive answers but to create a space for critical reflection and creative, multi-perspective engagement with reality.

In this light, the Christmas season depicted in the book becomes a space for reflection—on the human condition, on the role of memory, communication, and interpretation in a world where the boundaries between the real and the virtual, text and image, tradition and modernity are becoming increasingly blurred. The book thus invites the reader to consider what ultimately defines our humanity and how education can help us navigate the world with greater understanding.

As I worked on this book and analyzed the gathered material, I gradually realized that traditional interpretative frameworks do not fully capture the complexity and multidimensionality of contemporary holiday practices. While I could have drawn from visual anthropology, media studies, semiotics, or discourse analysis, it was only through combining different forms of expression, haiku poetry, AI-generated images, reflective commentaries (morals), and short narrative forms that I could perceive the subtle tensions, contrasts, and coexistence of multiple perspectives. This led me to seek a research approach that transcends the boundaries of a single discipline and methodological convention.

This experience, emerging directly from my cognitive explorations and interpretative experiments, led me to develop a new analytical framework, which I term “transmedia analysis of micro-meanings.” This concept arises from my observation that to understand the cultural significance of Christmas in the era of new media, we must pay attention to small, often overlooked elements of communication and their interactions across multiple forms of expression and media. These micro-meanings short, condensed units of interpretation, become transmedia as they emerge and are read at the intersection of text, image, memory, technology, and narrative. They serve as keys to understanding how traditions are reinterpreted and renewed.

In the past, I saw technology as foreign, even hostile to “true” traditions. Now, I understand that technology is merely another actor in this intricate network of relationships, one that expands our communicative possibilities while also challenging our understanding of intimacy, warmth, and memory.

In this sense, transmedia analysis of micro-meanings is not just a method but a way of seeing a flexible, multi-perspective tool that helps reveal the delicate cultural processes at play, not only in holiday traditions but also in broader contexts. I deliberately name and conceptualize this approach to emphasize the essence of my work, a synthesis of insights drawn from various areas of the humanities, reconfigured into a framework that better responds to my interpretation of today's mediatised world. Through this method, I did not remain a neutral observer but engaged deeply with different manifestations of holiday culture, allowing them to shape my emotions, imagination, and thinking.

I have learned to see seemingly trivial details in a new light the taste of the Christmas wafer, the glow of pixels on a screen, the sound of a carol through headphones, the whisper of an old man in a library, a child with a phone by the Christmas tree, or the expression of someone unexpectedly knocking at the door. Each of these small elements carries "micro-meanings" tiny yet powerful carriers of cultural, emotional, and social significance. Juxtaposing them in a transmedia space has revealed how fragments of meaning come together to form a multi-dimensional narrative of Christmas not a static ritual, but a performance in constant reinterpretation, where each of us plays a role.

Moreover, I have also developed a critical distance from my own notions of authenticity. Before conducting this research, I might have believed that the "true" Christmas was the one from my childhood, filled with the scent of gingerbread and pine. That is what I thought just a year ago (Perzycka, Parchimowicz, 2023). Now, I realize that these idealized memories are just as much a part of the contemporary, transmedia cultural landscape as artificial Christmas trees, virtual greeting cards, plastic nativity scenes, or video calls with loved ones. Authenticity, I have come to understand, is fluid shaped by context, motivation, and form of expression.

# I

## **Theoretical Context**



The theoretical framework of this publication emerges from multiple interwoven research domains. Central to this discussion is the concept of micro-meanings subtle, often overlooked fragments of experience that, once noticed and interpreted, reveal deeper cultural, social, and educational mechanisms. The micro-meanings I refer to can be understood as moments of tension, interaction, or creative reflection, where the interplay of tradition and modernity, emotions and technology becomes visible.

Drawing from Clifford Geertz's interpretative anthropology (1973) and Sarah Pink's sensory and visual research perspective (2015), these moments serve as a rich source of reflection on the meanings embedded in social practices, rituals, and traditions including those associated with Christmas.

Firstly, my theoretical framework draws upon reflections on education in the context of the information society and visual culture (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001; Jenkins, 2006; Livingstone, 2009). In contemporary educational spaces whether in schools, homes, or public domains images generated by artificial intelligence coexist with traditional decorations, and education itself becomes a process of interpreting and negotiating meanings.

Micro-meanings such as a child's fleeting gaze at a screen, an adult's reaction to a digital illustration, or a subtle emotional shift triggered by visual stimuli reveal how knowledge, competencies, and the ability to decode meanings are shaped within a complex network of media, cultural codes, and symbols. From this perspective, education is not merely the transmission of content but an ongoing negotiation between human and technology, between the recipient and the cultural text, both of which remain in constant reinterpretation.

Secondly, my reflections are anchored in theories of new media and visual communication (Manovich, 2001; Buckingham, 2007). The significance of micro-meanings in this field becomes even more apparent when analyzed as points of convergence between: 1) a smartphone screen and a holiday dinner table, 2) a haiku on paper and a digitally generated image, 3) an intimate reading experience and the global circulation of visual content.

In an era dominated by images and data, a crucial question emerges: What does media literacy mean today? How do we create, negotiate, and critically interpret meanings in a world of algorithmically mediated narratives?

Micro-meanings serve as focal points through which we can observe the dynamic flows of information and emotions, allowing us to see how, within a single ephemeral moment, various symbols collide family memories, global Christmas narratives, and algorithmic transformations of traditional imagery.

Thirdly, my approach is informed by pedagogical reflections at the intersection of cultural theory, anthropology, and interpretative practices (Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2011; Sierp & Törnquist-Plewa, 2016). Here, haiku, short stories, and AI-generated images are not merely aesthetic forms but pathways to deeper self-understanding and genealogies of memory.

These fragmentary, ephemeral moments, a childhood memory reflected in a glass bauble, flickering lights among pixels, a mother's whisper near a laptop become gateways to questions of identity and cultural participation. On one hand, from a humanistic perspective, they allow us to celebrate humanity, cultivate memory, and observe human relationships in their most delicate form. On the other hand, from a posthumanism perspective, the same micro-meanings reveal a network of relationships extending beyond the human, where technologies, algorithms, artificial intelligence, and material objects co-create meaning, shape interpretation, and influence the learning process.

In a humanistic framework, the Christmas season depicted in haiku, short stories, and AI-generated visualizations appears as a moment of strengthened human bonds, bridging family, friendships, and intergenerational connections. Read through this lens, micro-meanings celebrate tradition, emphasizing the role of memory, spirituality, and emotional resonance while encouraging the search for meanings embedded in cultural heritage.

Traditional interpretations of Christmas are deeply rooted in anthropocentric and theocentric narratives, where the human as the



central subject of divine intervention occupies a privileged place in the story of salvation. This perspective highlights human uniqueness and a special relationship with the sacred, focusing primarily on memories and values (cf. Milbank, 2006; Ward, 2005).

However, engaging with a posthumanism perspective expands this reflection, challenging anthropocentric assumptions. From this standpoint, micro-meanings are no longer limited to human interactions they also encompass relations between humans and non-humans, including digital networks, artificial intelligence, material objects, and data flows.

Drawing inspiration from Donna Haraway (1991), Karen Barad (2007), and Rosi Braidotti (2013), posthumanism emphasizes the fluidity of identity and the interdependence of subjects and objects. In this view, Christmas ceases to be merely a culmination of human traditions and becomes an intricate network of hybrid relationships involving people, images, interfaces, collective memory, and algorithms. In this context, my haiku and literary experiments function as a creative and cognitive laboratory. By experimenting with form, incorporating technological motifs, and referencing local landscapes, I seek to capture brief moments (micro-meanings) that reflect posthumanist sensitivity. These haiku and stories move away from anthropocentric assumptions, creating situations where the protagonists are not exclusively human and where meaning is not solely anchored in human interpretation.

This perspective not only reframes the significance of Christmas but also broadens the horizon of educational and cultural inquiry. Education, understood in this broad framework, becomes a process of continuous negotiation not only between humans of different competencies but also between images, technological objects, non-human beings, and the environment. Together, these elements co-create holiday experiences and invite reflection on the future of these traditions.

By integrating humanistic and posthumanist approaches through the lens of micro-meanings, this book constructs an interpretative space where tradition meets technology, where attentiveness to small

details merges with an awareness of the complexity of networks connecting human and non-human cultural actors. This perspective fosters critical thinking about education and visual communication, encouraging a deeper recognition of subtleties in everyday cultural practices, particularly those associated with Christmas.

## **II**

# **Methodology**



Let us imagine a research space where literary miniatures, AI-generated images, and short reflective commentaries intertwine into a cohesive rhythm of interpretation. This is not a typical scientific laboratory filled with test tubes and chemical reagents, nor a confined room limited to a single research method. On the contrary, this environment can be described as a transmedia research field a space where the meanings of Christmas cultural practices are interpreted through multiple media and forms of expression, and where analysis is not constrained by a single cultural code or mode of communication.

In this study, my role oscillates between that of a creator, researcher, and guide (Ellis & Bochner, 2000; Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2011), leading the reader to spaces where meanings emerge and transform in diverse configurations. This transmedia approach to the study of Christmas cultural practices stems from the recognition that contemporary holidays are no longer confined to a single medium. Instead, they unfold at the intersection of texts, images, algorithms, memories, and global narratives.

I begin with my own experiences and memories of the holiday season, using them as a foundation for crafting haiku and short narratives. In this way, literary texts become a source of interpretation, a tool not only for understanding myself but also for decoding the cultural and emotional codes that permeate the festive atmosphere. My aim is to capture the seemingly invisible—the micro-meanings, each composed of a poetic haiku in two languages, an AI-generated image, a reflective commentary (moral), and a short story. These four elements interlock like pieces of a puzzle, opening a space for interpretation and dialogue among the author, the reader, and the technological tools that co-create meanings.

The essence of transmedia analysis of micro-meanings lies in ensuring that none of these elements is examined in isolation. Haiku, AI-generated imagery, reflective commentary, and narrative mutually comment on and expand interpretative possibilities, revealing the complexity of contemporary rituals, particularly those related to Christmas.

My research material consists of 23 micro-meanings, a series of recurrent sequences, each of which includes:

**Haiku** – Presented in two language versions (Polish and English), allowing for cultural, linguistic, and interpretative contrasts while reflecting the transcultural nature of the phenomenon. Haiku, by its very nature, is minimalist and rooted in the “here and now” (Bashō, Buson, Issa, in Ueda, 1991), capturing subtle micro-meanings in their most essential form. Writing haiku in both Polish my native language, rich with personal resonance and English a bridge for transcultural dialogue (Spivak, 1993; Venuti, 1995) creates an opportunity for multilingual interpretation (Cronin, 2003) and boundary-crossing reflection.

**Reflective Commentary (Moral)** – A brief interpretative note that suggests values, tensions, or ideas emerging from the juxtaposition of text and image. This meta-commentary serves as yet another medium of transmedia reflection, capturing the spark that ignites at the intersection of traditional poetic language and synthetic visuality. Inspired by hermeneutics (Ricoeur, 1971; Gadamer, 1975) and cultural interpretation, I view the moral not as a definitive explanation but an invitation for the reader to engage in their own exploration.

**AI-generated Image** – A visual response from an algorithm to poetic prompts, incorporating Christmas symbolism, nature, and technology. These images are not mere illustrations but algorithmic translations of poetic phrases into pixel-based compositions. The process itself becomes both an artistic experiment and a methodological gesture (Floridi & Sanders, 2004; Knox, 2020), introducing a non-human perspective into Christmas representations.

**Short Story (Narrative Prose)** – A narrative extension that deepens impressions and meanings, providing a literary frame for analysis while inviting the reader to immerse themselves in the lived experience of Christmas cultural practices. Drawing from narrative research traditions (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Riessman, 2008), short prose becomes a vehicle for exploring identity, experience, and socio-cultural relationships. In this way, the short story like haiku, AI-generated images, and reflective commentary becomes a carrier of

meaning and an actor in the multi-agent interpretative network, revealing Christmas not as an abstract collection of symbols but as a living phenomenon embedded in daily practices and interactions (Czarniawska, 2004).

search process itself resembled a multi-layered collage a composition where each layer overlapped another, revealing new relationships and tonal shifts. The elements of poetry, AI imagery, short narratives, and reflective commentaries were like fragments of colored paper or translucent films, each contributing new textures and meanings.

From this perspective, methodology is not merely a set of tools but a relational and process-oriented construction leading toward deeper understanding. It encourages a departure from anthropocentric frameworks, inviting a multi-perspectival approach that considers the human, non-human, linguistic, visual, and symbolic dimensions of Christmas practices.

This transmedia analysis of micro-meanings offers a new lens through which Christmas can be understood not as a static tradition but as a continuously evolving network of meanings. By engaging in this multi-perspectival interpretation, I invite readers to actively participate in the process of meaning-making, thereby expanding their reflection on education, visual culture, and the human position within a complex network of relationships with objects, images, data, and history.





## **III**

### **Micro-meanings Inspired by Christmas**



# 1

Dziecko z komórką  
zamknięte w blasku bombki  
gdzie są rodzice?

Child with a cell phone  
locked in the glow of a bauble  
where are the parents?



Fig 1.

Source: DALL-E, OpenAI, May 2024.

**The glow of a screen or a beautiful ornament  
cannot replace the warmth of a human gaze.  
True light is born when a family finds itself  
in simple gestures of closeness.**

## Reflection in the Glass Bauble

In a small room filled with the scent of pine needles and the quiet crackling of the fireplace, a tall Christmas tree stood in the corner. Its branches were adorned with baubles some matte, others gleaming like tiny mirrors, reflecting the twinkling lights and fragmented glimpses of the room.

Near the tree, nestled against a cushion, sat a young boy, no older than nine, holding a smartphone in his hands. His eyes, almost motionless, were fixed on the screen, where vibrant images of games, colorful characters, and flickering lights changed rapidly before him.

If one were to look closely at one of the shiny baubles, a reflection would emerge a figure trapped within the glass shell. The boy's image was encased inside, curled up, detached from his surroundings. The reflection was sharp, as if the child existed in a separate dimension: just him and the phone, a world behind glass, with emptiness surrounding him. His eyes wandered across the screen, searching perhaps for company, guidance, or something that would reassure him that he was not alone.

Where were his parents? Faint voices echoed from behind the walls maybe from the kitchen, maybe from their phones—absorbed in their own affairs. There was a silence of absence in this house. Though the adults were under the same roof, their thoughts drifted far beyond the boundaries of shared time. Every gleaming ornament on the tree, though beautiful, became a symbol of distance the cool surface of the glass enclosing the boy in a world of solitude.

A dim light flickered and grew brighter, casting a shadow in the reflection a slender figure appeared in the bauble. It was his grandmother, standing quietly in the doorway. She had paused, watching her grandson. Her gaze filled with concern, mixed with sudden realization. In that moment, she understood the child had been waiting all along. Waiting for something more than the glow of a screen.

In a world devoid of a parent's touch, even the brightest Christmas lights could feel cold.

Silently, the woman stepped into the room and sat beside him. She gently took the phone from his hands and embraced him. The boy looked up at her, surprised but grateful. Moments later, his grandfather joined them. The three of them sat together, close to the tree. The glow of the baubles now became a soft, warm backdrop rather than the only source of companionship.

They called the boy's parents into the room, reminding them not with words, but with presence that time shared, conversations exchanged, and genuine togetherness were gifts that mattered far more than any decoration or device. In that moment, they all remembered what it meant to be a family.

## 2

błyszczą choinka  
stojąc w rogu pokoju  
pachnie piernikiem

the Christmas tree is shining  
standing in the corner of the room  
smells like gingerbread



Fig 2.

Source: DALL-E, OpenAI, May 2024.

**The most wonderful holidays do not depend on grandeur,  
but on love and imagination, which have the power  
to create miracles.**

## The Christmas Tree in the Corner of the Room

In a small cottage on the edge of the forest lived a boy named Antek. It was a simple, modest home, and Antek's family did not have much. As Christmas approached, the boy dreamed of a beautiful, grand tree, like the ones he had seen in the town square adorned with golden baubles and twinkling lights.

However, at home, there was no money for decorations, or even for a tree. His mother told him that this year, they would have to celebrate without one. Though saddened, Antek chose not to complain. He believed that somehow, he could find a way.

One cold winter morning, Antek went into the forest to gather pinecones for the fire. As he walked, he noticed a small, crooked pine growing on the edge of a clearing. It was tiny and slightly misshapen, but something about it made Antek feel that this tree was waiting for him. With great care, he dug it out of the frozen earth and carried it home.

He placed it in the corner of the room and looked at its thin, grayish branches. They seemed bare and a little sad.

“Don't worry, little tree,” he whispered. “Together, we'll make you the most beautiful of all.”

Determined, Antek began searching for decorations. From an old sweater, he made small red bows. Using baking paper, he cut out delicate stars. On the very top, he placed a star made of cardboard. But his greatest pride was the gingerbread cookies he had baked with his grandmother sweet, fragrant, and decorated with icing.

That evening, when the tree was finally ready, Antek lit a few candles on the table. Their soft glow reflected off the red bows, making even the humblest tree shine like a royal Christmas tree. The whole room filled with the warm scent of gingerbread and pine.

Then, something extraordinary happened.

The little tree's branches gently quivered, and its needles sparkled in the golden light. From deep within the tree, a soft, melodic hum

began to rise as if the tree itself wanted to express its gratitude for the love and care Antek had given it.

As the family gathered around the table, they felt a magic they had never experienced before. The tree, though small, brought them more joy than the grandest riches.



### 3

choinka z książek  
strony snują opowieść -  
bombki na sznurkach

a Christmas tree made of books  
pages tell a story -  
baubles on strings

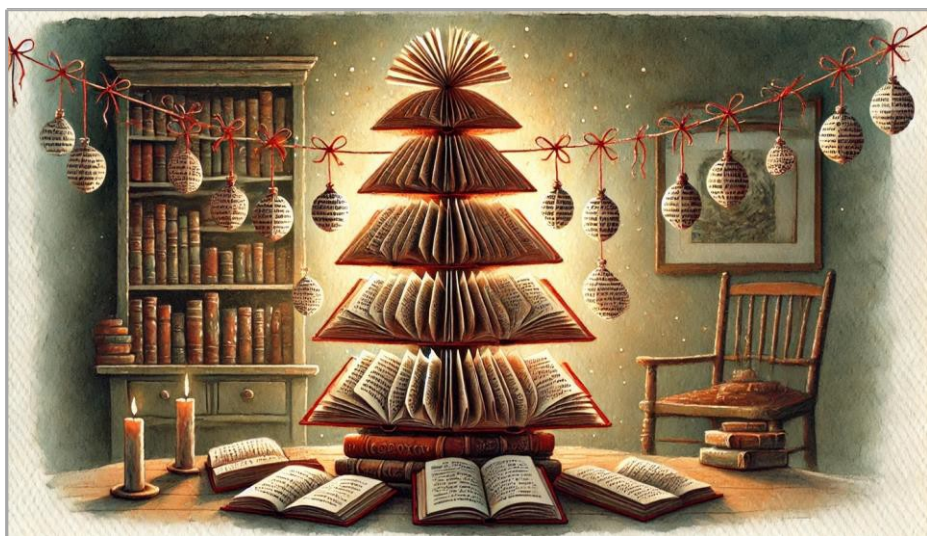


Fig 3.

Source: DALL-E, OpenAI, May 2024.

**Every story, no matter how small, holds the power  
to brighten someone's life if only it is told.**

## The Christmas Tree of Books

Long ago, in a small town where winter painted frost flowers on the windows, lived a girl named Klara who loved books. While other children ran through the snow, she would sit by the fireplace, lost in the pages of her favorite stories, traveling to worlds filled with magic and adventure.

As Christmas approached, Klara noticed that her tiny cottage was too humble to hold a real Christmas tree. She sighed, feeling a pang of sadness. But then her eyes wandered to her bookshelf, filled with treasured volumes, and an idea began to form.

With careful hands, she stacked one book atop another, arranging them into the shape of a tree. She placed the largest at the bottom, gradually making her way to the smallest at the top, until she had created a towering cone of stories. She draped a ribbon around it and placed a golden bookmark as the star on top.

But then something unexpected happened.

As soon as she stepped back to admire her creation, the open pages began to glow softly. Dainty, shimmering letters lifted off the printed words, floating into the air like delicate snowflakes. The letters danced and swirled, casting a gentle glow around the room.

Curious, Klara reached out and touched one.

At that moment, a voice echoed through the air the voice of a long-forgotten tale. The tree of books had come to life, releasing stories into the world. Old fairy tales, lost myths, and whispered legends rose into the night like constellations forming in the sky.

The mysterious glow spilling from Klara's cottage soon caught the attention of the townspeople, who gathered outside in awe. One by one, they stepped into her home, their eyes widening as they watched words weave through the air, turning into whispers of wonder.

Each person who gazed upon the book tree heard a story that spoke directly to their heart.

An elderly woman recalled a childhood tale that had once given her strength in difficult times.

A young boy listened to a fable about courage, and suddenly, he felt brave enough to try learning how to write.

A weary traveler heard a legend of hope and felt warmth return to his spirit.

And Klara? She finally understood something profound: words have the power to bring people together.

At the top of the tree of books, a delicate string hung from its peak. Upon it were fragments of sentences from all the books that made up the tree. Inspired, the townspeople began adding their own words favorite quotes, dreams, wishes. They wrote messages of kindness, wisdom, and hope, watching as the letters shimmered and merged with the glowing stories around them.

As the days passed, the tree became more than a symbol of Christmas it became a symbol of unity, of shared stories, of the magic that lives in words. And in that little town, every Christmas after that, people would gather once more, adding new pages to the tree, ensuring that no tale no memory was ever truly forgotten. Because every story, no matter how small, has the power to bring light into someone's life, if only it is told.

# 4

płatki na włosach  
zostawia śnieżna burza  
mroząc też serca

flakes on hair  
leaves snow storm  
freezing hearts too



Fig 4.

Source: DALL-E, OpenAI, May 2024.

**Even the coldest heart can melt  
when it finds the warmth to embrace it.**

## The Snowstorm and Frozen Hearts

In a distant kingdom where winters stretched almost endlessly, there lived a young girl named Lila. She resided on the edge of a great forest, and her days were spent tending to the plants in her tiny greenhouse the only green oasis in a world of ice. Lila had a warm heart, but the kingdom she called home was known for something else its people carried hearts of ice.

Long ago, during a great snowstorm, the Ice Queen fell from the sky. Cold and alone, she robbed the people of their warmth, turning their hearts into crystal-hard frost. From that day forward, love became a thing to be feared, for the people believed that if the ice within them ever cracked, they would become fragile and defenseless.

One winter morning, as Lila wandered into the forest searching for herbs to warm her greenhouse, she felt icy snowflakes settling in her hair. But these were no ordinary snowflakes each flake was shaped like a tiny star, and as they landed on her skin, they whispered sorrowful stories of frozen hearts and forgotten love.

Before she could react, the storm intensified, swirling around her with a howling wind. Lila took shelter beneath a great fir tree, but the storm carried voices that echoed in her mind.

“The Queen’s heart is the key,” they whispered.

She suddenly understood to end this eternal winter, she had to find the Ice Queen and melt the frost within her heart.

Following the whispers of the snow, Lila traveled through the frozen land, her determination growing stronger with every step. Finally, she reached a palace of shimmering glass, where the Ice Queen sat upon her throne of frost. She was breathtakingly beautiful, but her eyes were as cold and lifeless as the frozen sea.

Lila did not flinch. She reached into her satchel and pulled out a small seed, one she had kept since childhood. Stepping forward, she spoke softly but firmly:

“This seed comes from a land where warmth and love still flourish. If you allow me to plant it, I promise it will warm your heart.”

The Ice Queen laughed a sharp, crystalline sound—but hidden within her laughter was something Lila alone could hear: longing. A deep, unspoken ache.

For a moment, there was silence.

Then, slowly, the Queen nodded.

Lila knelt upon the icy floor and gently pressed the seed into the frozen ground. Then, she began to sing a song of spring, her voice soft yet unwavering.

The snowflakes that once froze everything they touched now began to melt. The great palace of ice shimmered, as if breathing for the first time in centuries. And at that moment, the Queen's heart stirred with warmth a warmth she had not felt in an eternity.

As the ice within the Queen began to melt, so too did the frozen hearts of the kingdom's people. For the first time in generations, warmth returned to their souls. They began to remember what it meant to love, to trust, to embrace.

No longer afraid of breaking, they finally opened their hearts to one another, to kindness, to the warmth that had been missing for so long.

And as for Lila, she returned to her small greenhouse, where the first bloom of spring had already begun to grow proof that even in the coldest winter, warmth can always find a way to return.

# 5

światelka w oknach  
mrugają w kroplach deszczu  
oraz na bombkach

the lights in the windows  
twinkle in the raindrops  
and on the baubles



Fig 5.

Source: DALL-E, OpenAI, May 2024.

**Beauty does not depend on perfect conditions,  
but on our ability  
to find light in every situation.**

## Lights and Raindrops

In a small town where winters were more often rainy than snowy, the residents still tried to celebrate Christmas with full hearts. One year, on Christmas Eve, the rain had been falling steadily since morning, discouraging people from venturing outside. Raindrops drummed against the rooftops and formed puddles in the streets, stealing the winter charm of the holiday season.

In one of the houses at the end of the street, a young girl named Zosia sat by the window, watching the rain with a smile. She traced patterns on the glass with her finger, observing how the twinkling lights of the Christmas tree reflected in the raindrops clinging to the windowpane. The lights seemed to dance in the rain, their reflections shimmering on the ornaments hanging from the tree.

“The rain is ruining Christmas,” sighed her older sister, Ania, who sat nearby with her nose buried in a book. “No snow, no magic.”

But Zosia saw things differently.

“Look!” she exclaimed, pointing at the window. “Rain can sparkle too if you give it a chance.”

Inspired by her discovery, she ran around the house, gathering fairy lights, candles, and anything that shimmered. She hung them in the windows, along doorframes, and on the balcony railing. Soon, the tiny lights reflected in the puddles and raindrops, casting a soft, golden glow that spread across the street.

When the neighbors noticed how Zosia and Ania’s house illuminated the dark, rainy street, they decided to join in. One by one, windows and porches lit up, and soon the entire street shimmered, the rain catching and scattering the light in every direction.

People stepped outside onto their porches, exchanging holiday wishes and warm smiles. Children ran through the puddles, their laughter filling the night as they caught raindrops on their tongues, as if they were snowflakes.

Ania looked at Zosia with admiration.

“You were right,” she said. “Rain can be beautiful too. Sometimes, you just have to look at it differently.”



From that year on, rainy Christmases in the town became just as special as snowy ones. Families decorated their homes together, and the glow of lights in the raindrops became a cherished reminder that magic is not found in perfect conditions, but in the way we choose to see the world.

## 6

gwiazda nad stołem  
zachęca do spotkania  
całej rodziny

the star above the table  
encourages a meeting  
of the whole family



Fig 6.

Source: DALL-E, OpenAI, May 2024.

**What binds a family together  
is not a place or objects,  
but the strength of memories  
and the willingness to reunite,  
whenever someone takes the first step.**

## The Star Above the Table

In a mountain valley, where winter always wrapped everything in a blanket of white, stood an old house, long abandoned. Once, it had been filled with laughter and conversation, but over time, the family that once lived there had scattered across the world. The house remained silent, its walls holding onto memories that had faded with the years.

Yet, one thing remained a great wooden star hanging above the dining table. Hand-carved, its arms bore symbols of love, peace, and unity.

Each year, on the eve of Christmas, the star would begin to glow with a warm, golden light, as if trying to remind the world of the love that once flourished beneath it. But no one was there to see it until one extraordinary winter.

That year, the youngest member of the family, a girl named Hania, convinced her parents to return to the old house for Christmas.

“Grandmother always said this house was full of magic,” she told them. “Maybe we’ll feel a little of it too?”

When the family arrived, the house felt cold and empty. Dust had settled over the furniture, and silence filled every corner. But Hania was undeterred. She walked into the dining room and began dusting off the old wooden table, brushing her fingers across its worn surface.

Then, her eyes wandered upward to the star.

It hung perfectly still, as if waiting for something important.

“It’s just a star,” her father said.

But Hania felt differently.

She lit a few candles, their flames flickering against the darkened walls. Then, she began to sing, her soft voice filling the empty house. One by one, her parents joined in, and the candlelight danced across the carved wooden star, casting long shadows across the room.

The Light That Called Them Back

As night fell, something miraculous happened.

The star above the table began to glow, its golden light spreading through the windows and out into the valley. The warm radiance

traveled across the snowy hills, as if calling out to voices long forgotten.

And then, one by one, they began to return.

Relatives some from nearby villages, others from distant towns were drawn back, guided by a silent force they could not explain. Some had not spoken in years, others had thought they might never return. But now, they were home again.

As the long-lost family members gathered around the table, Hania noticed something—the star shone brightest when they all held hands.

The room, once filled with silence, overflowed with conversation. Laughter returned, and the young and old shared stories of the past and dreams for the future.

The wooden star above the table was no longer just a decoration. It had become a symbol of unity, a reminder that a home is not built from walls and beams, but from the love and presence of family.

And so, in that old house, under the glow of a star that had never truly faded, Christmas found its way back not through tradition alone, but through the first step of a young girl who believed in the power of coming home.

7

padający śnieg  
przykrywa pierzyną świat -  
nosy przy szybie

falling snow  
covers the world with a blanket -  
noses against the window



Fig 7.

Source: DALL-E, OpenAI, May 2024.

**Magic often hides in the smallest things  
in falling snowflakes,  
in our imagination, and in the belief  
that every day can bring something extraordinary.**

## The First Snow

In a small house on the edge of the village, two siblings, Jaś and Hania, stood by the window, their noses almost pressed against the glass. Evening was falling, and the glow of the lamps cast soft reflections on the frosty pane. Outside, the first snow had begun to fall gentle at first, then heavier, until everything around them seemed to sink into a thick, white blanket.

“Snow is like magic,” Hania whispered, her breath misting up the window. “I always feel like the world changes when it falls.”

Jaś nodded, but his gaze was fixed on something in the distance. He was watching tiny points of light the lanterns in the village square, now appearing as if they were floating in a milky haze.

“Do you remember Grandma’s stories?” Jaś asked. “She used to say that snow is a blanket sent by the Winter Fairy, so the world can sleep through the cold months.”

Hania smiled. “Do you think the fairy is real?”

At that moment, something caught their attention.

Amid the swirling snowflakes, they noticed a figure—tall and slender, wrapped in a pale coat, with a long scarf that fluttered in the wind. She moved so lightly that she seemed to be floating just above the ground.

“It’s her!” Hania gasped. “It must be the Winter Fairy!”

Jaś threw open the window, and a rush of cold air swept into the room, carrying the crisp scent of fresh snow. The woman turned her gaze toward them and smiled softly before lifting her hand in a graceful motion. At that very moment, the snowfall intensified, wrapping the village in a thick, silvery-white embrace.

The next morning, Jaś and Hania woke up early and ran outside. The world looked as if it had been pulled straight from a fairytale trees sagged under the weight of snow, rooftops glistened in the golden morning sun, and the fields had transformed into an endless white sea.

But something unexpected awaited them.

In the untouched snow in front of their house, they discovered a delicate pattern, almost like a feather, as if someone had left them a hidden message.

Hania turned to Jaś. “Do you think it was really her?”

Jaś shrugged, but his eyes sparkled with excitement.

“Maybe... or maybe snow just reminds us that the world is full of magic if we choose to believe in it.”

## 8

zima maluje  
obrazy na szybach  
mroząc nam nosy

winter paints  
pictures on windows  
freezing our noses



Fig 8.

Source: DALL-E, OpenAI, May 2024.

**Even in the coldest moments,  
beauty and warmth can be found,  
if we look at the world with a heart  
open to life's smallest miracles.**



## The Winter Painter

In a small town where winters were long and bitterly cold, children had long whispered stories about the mysterious Winter Painter. It was said that every night, when the world fell asleep, she would appear in the dark corners of villages, painting delicate frost patterns on the windows of every home. Her brush was the icy wind, and her paints were the frozen crystals of winter.

No one had ever seen her until one night, when a little girl named Zosia decided to stay awake and watch.

Wrapped in a blanket, a cup of hot cocoa warming her hands, she sat by the window, waiting for the first signs of winter's magic.

Hours passed, and sleep slowly began to creep in when, suddenly, a whisper of cold air brushed against her cheek. Zosia's eyes fluttered open.

Before her, delicate patterns began to form on the windowpane sprigs of fir, tiny flowers, and intricate spirals, all dancing in the moonlight.

"Who's there?" Zosia whispered.

In the dim glow of the room, she noticed a slender figure standing in the corner draped in a white coat, with hair like icicles and eyes as deep and frozen as a winter lake.

"Are you the one who paints the frost?" Zosia asked, her voice barely above a whisper.

The woman nodded. "Yes, I paint the beauty of winter to remind people that even in the cold and darkness, there is something extraordinary to be found."

"But why do your paintings feel so cold?" Zosia asked, rubbing her nose. "They freeze my face when I look at them."

The Painter's smile grew gentle, yet mysterious. "Sometimes, you must feel the cold to truly appreciate the warmth in your heart. "My paintings exist to show that beauty is born from contrast from the glow of candlelight against icy windows, from the bite of frost on your nose and the softness of a warm blanket."

Zosia thought for a moment, then asked, “Can you teach me to paint like you?”

The Winter Painter knelt beside her, gently placing a cold but gentle hand over Zosia’s own.

“Anyone can be a painter of winter,” said softly, “if they learn to see beauty in the smallest things. Close your eyes, take a deep breath, and imagine the most wonderful winter landscape. The rest will come from your heart.”

The next morning, when Zosia’s parents came to wake her, they noticed something astonishing.

Every window in the house was covered with breathtaking frost patterns even more intricate and beautiful than ever before.

And there, tucked beneath her blanket, with rosy cheeks warmed from sleep, Zosia smiled in her dreams, as if she had finally learned the Painter’s secret.

## 9

anioł na szczycie  
spogląda na świat z wysoka –  
pokój ogrzewa

the angel on the top  
looks at the world from above –  
the room is warmed



Fig 9.

Source: DALL-E, OpenAI, May 2024.

**Even the simplest symbol,  
rising above everyday worries,  
can remind us of what truly matters  
that forgiveness, shared memories, and the warmth of love  
are stronger than any differences.**

## The Angel on the Christmas Tree

In a snow-covered valley, nestled between dark forests and towering peaks, stood an old house. It was not grand its roof creaked beneath the weight of snow, and its windows grew cloudy with frost. But inside, a warm light flickered, not only from the hearth but also from the hearts of those who lived there.

For generations, this had been a family home, where each year, during the winter solstice, a Christmas tree was placed in the highest part of the modest living room. It was never extravagant decorated with hand-painted ornaments, pinecones dusted in white paint, and simple ribbons. But no matter how modest the tree, one tradition remained unbroken. At its very peak, a small wooden angel was always placed.

The angel was tiny, yet it possessed something indescribable a quiet serenity, gentle features, and a subtle shimmer on its delicate wings. And every year, the moment it was set atop the tree, something in the house seemed to shift. The air grew lighter, the evening softer, as if the angel's watchful presence reached every person gathered below.

That year, however, the house was filled with tension. The two grown children of the family a brother and sister had not spoken to each other in months. They had both returned home for the holidays, but their conversations were strained, their glances carefully avoided. Their parents, though hopeful, feared that the Christmas spirit would be lost to the silence that had settled between them.

As night fell, their mother opened an old wooden box in the sideboard. Inside lay the small angel, passed down from their grandmother its intricate carvings worn with time, its paint faded but still beautiful.

With quiet reverence, she climbed onto a small stool and placed the angel on top of the tree. A simple act, yet it carried more weight than words could say.

As the family watched, the angel gazed down upon them, its still, wooden eyes reflecting the glow of the twinkling Christmas lights.

Though motionless and silent, its presence seemed to embrace the room, resting gently over unspoken words and buried hurts.

The First Step Toward Reconciliation

For a long moment, no one spoke.

Then, something subtle yet profound happened.

The sister, who had kept her gaze lowered all evening, finally lifted her head and looked across the room at her brother. Surprised, he met her eyes.

And in that single glance, the past unfolded before them memories of Christmases spent together, of decorating the tree side by side, of laughing as an overloaded branch snapped, sending golden glitter scattering across the floor and onto their sweaters.

They remembered the joy of shared moments, the warmth of family traditions, and suddenly, their months of silence seemed small and fragile compared to the bond they had once shared.

The room held its breath, but this time, the silence was not cold. It felt like a soft blanket, the kind that warms cold hands and tired hearts.

The brother smiled slightly. The sister lowered her gaze, but in her heart, she felt a quiet relief. Their mother and father, standing nearby, gently took each other's hands, feeling that the peace they had longed for had arrived not through words, but through something deeper.

That night, memories, love, and unspoken reconciliation filled the old house once more.

The angel at the top of the tree, though it never spoke a word, had helped them understand what truly mattered. That the highest point in a home is not just a place for decoration, but a symbol of what rises above disagreements, distance, and fear. And beneath its quiet presence, people draw closer to one another until even the world outside, frozen in winter's grasp, somehow feels a little less cold.

## 10

Lampki migoczą  
niczym gwiazdy wśród gałęzi  
brakuje ludzi

The lights twinkle  
like stars among the branches  
there are no people



Fig 10.

Source: DALL-E, OpenAI, May 2024.

**Even the brightest lights lose their meaning  
when there is no one to share their glow  
true celebration is born only where  
people find their way back to one another.**

## Stars Without Witnesses

In the very center of town stood a building that once pulsed with life. It was the old firehouse, where every Christmas had once been celebrated with laughter, warmth, and the shared joy of the entire community.

Wooden tables overflowed with holiday dishes, children weaved between chairs, and the elderly sat together, recounting stories from the past, their voices mingling with the soft glow of fairy lights strung across fir branches and woven into the wooden beams of the hall.

But this year, things had changed.

Many of the townspeople had left some to visit family, others in search of work, and still others had set off to explore the world. Those who remained had shut themselves inside their homes, lacking the energy or will to organize a communal gathering.

The firehouse stood empty, yet its windows were still draped with delicate strings of lights, twinkling softly as if hoping to entice someone to step inside. Their glow was warm, gentle, and yet filled with longing longing for voices, for laughter, for the sound of carols once sung beneath their quiet shimmer.

A traveler stopped outside the building, a worn leather bag slung over his shoulder.

He wasn't from this town.

Curious, he wondered why a place so beautifully decorated stood so completely abandoned. Approaching the window, he peered inside.

In the dim light, he saw the tiny golden reflections of the fairy lights, glistening like stars woven into the branches of wreaths and garlands. But something was missing.

There were no steaming dishes on the tables.

There were no voices filling the air.

There were no people gathered in the chairs, leaning in to share stories and laughter.

Everything was prepared, waiting as if for guests who never arrived.

The man sighed, feeling an unfamiliar weight settle in his chest.

For the first time, he felt a deep sadness, not only for the empty hall but for something within himself.

He thought of his own home of his parents, whom he saw too rarely, of his friends, whose voices had grown distant over time.

And then, he understood.

No decoration no matter how beautiful could replace the presence of another human being. Without community, even the most festive place becomes nothing more than an empty stage a story left untold, missing the people who give it meaning. Adjusting the collar of his coat, the traveler turned and walked on.

But something had changed.

As he continued on his journey, one thought stayed with him that when he returned home, he would call his family and his friends. Because he would not allow their bonds to fade into silence.



# 11

dziecięcy śmiech -  
prezenty pod choinką  
dorośli marzą

children's laughter -  
presents under the tree  
adults dream



Fig 11.

Source: DALL-E, OpenAI, May 2024.

**Sometimes, a single gentle light,  
passing through the cold and time,  
is enough to guide those  
who have lost their way in the darkness.**

## The Light in the Misty Window

Somewhere on the outskirts of a small town, surrounded by snow-covered fields and towering fir trees, stood an old house with oak doors and a steeply pitched roof. The night was cold and windless, the snow crunching beneath the feet of the few passersby. But in one of the windows of this house, behind a frost-covered pane, a single candle flickered, its flame weak yet unwavering.

On this very evening, after a long absence, Piotr was returning to town. He carried a small bag on his shoulder, but the true weight he bore was the burden of old memories and regret. Years ago, in anger, he had left his family home, convinced that he could build a life on his own terms, far from past arguments and disappointments. But the longer he remained away, the more he felt something inside him freezing over perhaps it was the absence of family warmth, or perhaps the void left by the things he had never tried to mend.

Standing at the edge of the snowy road, his eyes caught the light in the window. He knew this house belonged to his family. He also knew that his father and mother might have long since given up hope of his return.

And yet, every year, at the same time, that single candle was placed in the window a silent invitation that had never been withdrawn.

With hesitation, Piotr took a step forward. Each step along the snow-covered street felt both heavier and lighter, as if he were shedding layers of pride and uncertainty. When he finally reached the front door, his heart pounded so loudly that it seemed to echo against the icicles hanging from the eaves.

He hesitated, then knocked.

Footsteps echoed inside. The door creaked open, and in the glow of the candlelight, Piotr saw his mother's face lined with age, yet calm and filled with warmth. His father stood just behind her, leaning against the doorway.

Neither of them spoke.

But in that moment, they all understood, time had passed, old wounds had been left unspoken, but they were not beyond healing.

His mother raised her hand slightly, as if reaching for the invisible thread connecting them all, while his father nodded silently, stepping aside to welcome him inside.

The house was dimly lit. One candle was enough to guide the way through the shadows.

In this simple act a flame trembling on the windowsill lay all the hope that homecomings were still possible, that stories of family, memory, and forgiveness never lose their meaning.

The warmth spreading through the room came not just from the fireplace, but from the unspoken willingness to be close once again.

## 12

szopka z plastiku  
z ładnymi figurkami-  
Czy pamiętasz sianko?

plastic Nativity Scene  
with pretty figurines-  
Do you remember hay?

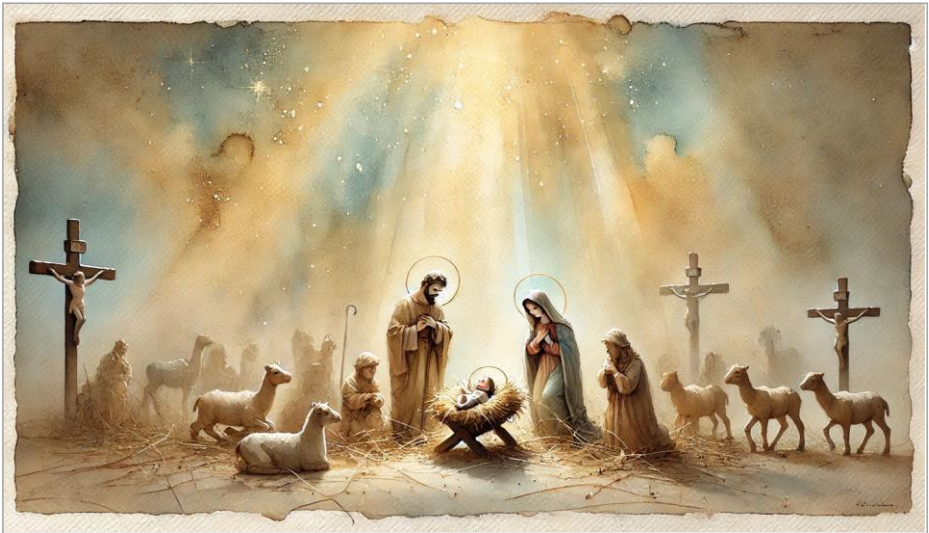


Fig 12.

Source: DALL-E, OpenAI, May 2024.

**In the glow of modern decorations,  
it is easy to forget the roots and simple gestures  
that once gave meaning to the holidays.  
Sometimes, a handful of hay and a memory  
are enough to rekindle the true warmth of tradition.**

## The Scent of Years Past

In an old house at the edge of the village, where the only paths were those left by deer in the snow, stood a small nativity scene. Once, long ago, it had been a carefully arranged tableau, where people, animals, and the aura of a sacred birth merged in the scent of hay and wood. Every figure the Holy Family, the shepherds, the sheep had been hand-carved from linden wood, and the hay had been gathered from nearby meadows, dried and stored for this very occasion.

But this year, things had changed. A new trend had taken over the house. The parents had brought home a nativity scene from the city, a plastic one shiny, flawless, and factory-made. The figures, perfectly painted and free of cracks or imperfections, carried no scent of the forest, no touch of the craftsman's hands. It was an ornament, beautiful but cold, stripped of the warmth it once held. The tiny Mary, Joseph, and Child looked as though they had stepped out of a catalog perfect, pristine, untouched by time.

Pola, the family's youngest, studied the gleaming figurines with curiosity. She had only ever heard stories about the old nativity scene from her grandmother, who always said, "Remember the hay, child, for in it lies the scent of a life once lived."

Now, her grandmother sat quietly in the corner of the room, watching the new display with a trace of sadness. After a while, she approached Pola and asked: "Do you feel anything special when you look at this nativity scene?"

Pola took a deep breath, but all she could smell was the sweet aroma of holiday cakes drifting in from the kitchen. She turned to her grandmother with a puzzled expression.

Then, the elderly woman opened the wooden sideboard, taking out a small cloth pouch. With careful hands, she scattered a handful of hay around the plastic figures.

Suddenly, the corner of the room filled with the delicate fragrance of dried grass.

Pola closed her eyes.

And just like that, she was no longer in a modern living room. She imagined a simpler time a wooden table, hand-carved figures, and a family gathered in quiet reverence.

Her eyes widened. She placed a small hand over her heart and whispered, “Now I feel something... warm, kind, happy.”

Her grandmother smiled gently.

“It’s not just about the object, my dear. It’s about memories, about history, about what ties our Christmas to the people who came before us.”

That night, when everyone else had fallen asleep, the grandmother sat by the nativity scene, her fingers grazing the strands of hay. She closed her eyes and listened, reaching beyond the silence of the room. And for a brief moment, she could almost hear the distant carols of her childhood the echoes of voices long gone, the warmth of wooden figures that no longer remained.

The story, once lost in time, had been brought back not through sight, but through scent, through touch, through the fragile yet enduring essence of hay.

# 13

migoczą lampki  
za szybą laptop świeci –  
ile kliknięć trwa cud?

lights flicker  
behind the glass the laptop shines –  
how many clicks does the miracle take?



Fig 13.

Source: DALL-E, OpenAI, May 2024.

**Technology has the power to connect  
even the most distant hearts.  
The true miracle lies in the fact  
that amidst the glow of pixels and fairy lights,  
we still find our way back to one another.**

## Luminous Pixels

Outside the window, Christmas lights twinkled, lightly dusted with snow. Inside a small apartment, an open laptop rested on the table, its screen reflecting the glow of the colorful decorations, transforming them into a cascade of luminous pixels.

A young man, Peter, sat before the screen, his shoulders slightly hunched. This would be his first Christmas Eve away from his family. For months, he had been living abroad, working to save for a home he dreamed of sharing with his fiancée. He had promised his parents he would call them on Christmas Eve, and he had also promised his beloved that, though hundreds of kilometers separated them, technology would bridge the distance. A few clicks, and their faces would appear before him, allowing them to exchange at least a few warm words.

Peter stared at the lights outside. He remembered how, as a child, he would press his nose against the cold glass, gazing at the festive decorations outside his home. Back then, the miracle of Christmas lay in its simplicity a shared table, the breaking of wafer, the glow of familiar smiles. Now, though he had the tools to see his loved ones in real-time, he couldn't shake the feeling that something was missing.

At last, he pressed the key and connected the call. His parents' faces appeared on the screen a little older than he remembered them. In another window, his fiancée, dressed in a festive outfit, her eyes shimmering with longing.

They talked, they smiled, they exchanged warm wishes. They showed one another their homes, the Christmas decorations, the dishes on their tables though the smells and tastes remained out of reach.

As the minutes passed, Peter realized that the true miracle was not in the technology itself, but in people's willingness to reach beyond distance to express love despite separation. Though he could not physically embrace his parents, and though the taste of Christmas Eve borscht with dumplings remained distant, he still felt a surge of emotion as he listened to their voices.



This was the real magic not in the screen, not in the pixels, but in the simple words “We miss you,” “Take care,” “I love you” words powerful enough to break through the cold and emptiness of foreign lands.

When the call ended, the lights outside still flickered, their glow unchanged. But inside his heart, warmth had settled.

Peter understood that no number of clicks could replace true presence, but he also knew that, when there was no other way, technology could bring back at least a fragment of the magic of being together.

# 14

kolęda w słuchawkach  
na ruchliwym deptaku -  
ludzie bez słów

Christmas carol in headphones  
on a busy promenade -  
people without words



Fig 14.

Source: DALL-E, OpenAI, May 2024.

**Music and decorations may enchant us,  
but the true warmth of the holidays is born  
where people stop passing each other in silence  
and share even a single kind word.**

## A Melody Between Footsteps

On the eve of Christmas, the street running through the center of the city was filled with people. The glow of the streetlights reflected on the damp sidewalks, while storefronts blinked with neon signs, luring passersby with promises of last-minute gifts. Yet, despite the crowds and movement, an unusual silence lingered not because no one was there, but because everyone was wrapped in their own world. Strangers passed one another without a word, as if the act of stopping, even just to exchange glances, had become something to be avoided.

Among them walked a young man, Adam, earphones in his ears, drowning out the city's hum. He had just pressed play on a carol, a melody so simple, yet deeply familiar one that had filled his home in childhood when he and his family sang together by the Christmas tree.

Now, he walked alone, late, burdened with bags and gifts. Around him, dozens, if not hundreds of people moved past, yet no one asked where he was going, nor where he had come from. No one returned his quiet smile.

The carol washed over him like a tide of memories. He recalled a winter evening long ago, when an elderly woman had approached him, asking for help finding an address. They had exchanged only a few words, yet in that brief interaction, the city had seemed less anonymous, less distant.

Now, however, the world around him felt isolated heads bent toward phone screens, minds burdened by lists, errands, obligations.

From the corner of his eye, Adam noticed an elderly man standing by a stone wall, looking lost. He hesitated for a moment. Should he remove his headphones and ask if the man needed help?

Would it disrupt the moment, take him away from the comfort of his private world, the cocoon of music and nostalgia?

But the melody that had once connected him to warmth and home suddenly felt hollow if he remained in it alone.

He took off his earphones, walked over, and asked with quiet sincerity:

“Can I help you?”

The elderly man looked at him with unexpected gratitude. He explained that he had lost his way, looking for the bus stop. Adam pointed him in the right direction, and the man thanked him with a warm smile.

In that brief exchange, in those few simple words, something had shifted. The emptiness of the busy street softened, replaced by a quiet moment of connection.

Sometimes, the true magic of the season is not in listening to a favorite melody, but in having the courage to step out of our own world to break the silence with a single kind word among a sea of unfamiliar faces.

# 15

ekran i człowiek  
wymieniają spojrzenia –  
gdzie jest wigilia?

the screen and the man  
exchange glances –  
where is Christmas Eve?



Fig 15.

Source: DALL-E, OpenAI, May 2024.

**Neither a glass screen  
nor a million pixels  
can replace the glow of true presence.  
Christmas Eve lives where  
the warmth of hearts and memories  
bind us together despite the distance.**

## Reflection on Glass

Krzysztof sat at a table covered with a white tablecloth. Silence filled the room, though beyond the window, the muffled hum of the city still lingered. His modest apartment was carefully arranged for the evening, the table set with traditional dishes borscht, dumplings, fried carp, and wafer. Everything had been prepared with care, yet something was missing.

His family was far away, scattered across different cities and countries, and though he was an adult, a part of him still longed for the warmth of a shared Christmas Eve table.

Across from him, on the other side of the table, sat an open laptop, its dark screen waiting. Soon, his loved ones would appear on the other side of the glass. They had agreed to a video call, a way to bridge the distance, to share a moment together, even if only virtually.

Krzysztof stared at the screen, the screen stared back at him.

It was a strange exchange of gazes human, yet somehow artificial. A thought unsettled him: in just a few moments, he would see familiar faces, but none of them would truly sit in the empty chairs, none would break wafer in his hands, none would laugh in response to the rustling of the tree branches nearby.

One by one, the small icons appeared his parents, his siblings, a few relatives from abroad. Smiles, waving hands each in their own world, in different time zones.

They talked about the dishes they had prepared, about their evening plans, about Christmases past carols once sung together, the scent of fir branches in childhood homes.

But something felt distant. The thickness of true warmth, the closeness of sitting shoulder to shoulder, the quiet comfort of shared presence all of it was absent. There was only the smooth, cold surface of a screen, a polished barrier between hearts longing for touch.

Krzysztof suddenly understood no image on glass, no digital gaze, could fill the space left empty in his heart.

After a moment, he lowered his eyes, reached for the wafer, and broke it alone, whispering his wishes into the silence of the room.

Through his headphones, he could still hear the voices of his loved ones, yet at the same time, he felt that a part of this ritual was unfolding only in his memory.

Tonight, his main dish was not on the table it was the recollections of past Christmases and the hope for future gatherings, for a time when they would all sit together in person once more.

When the call ended, Krzysztof closed the laptop.

Outside, the city lights flickered, mirroring the stars above.

A deep, quiet loneliness pressed against his heart, not as a sharp pain, but as a cold, lingering ache.

Christmas Eve was more than just a shared meal, more than words and images on a screen. It was also about what we nurture within ourselves memory, longing, love, and the quiet belief that one day, they would once again sit together in real presence, breaking bread and exchanging glances from true eyes, not reflections on glass.

# 16

rodzina online  
smartfon nuci kolędę –  
puka ktoś do drzwi

online family  
smartphone humming a Christmas carol –  
someone knocks on the door



Fig 16.

Source: DALL-E, OpenAI, May 2024.

**Even when we are connected by voices and images,  
true warmth is born in the presence of someone close.  
Sometimes, a single unexpected gesture can fill a home  
with a feeling no screen could ever replace.**



## The Unexpected Guest

In a small apartment, illuminated only by the warm glow of the Christmas tree lights, Mrs. Maria was just finishing a video call with her family. Her daughter, son-in-law, and grandchildren were spending Christmas far away, across the ocean. Thanks to modern technology, they could see each other and exchange holiday wishes their colorful faces flickering on the smartphone screen, while the children sang a carol into the tiny microphone.

It was heartwarming and touching, yet in the quiet four walls of her home, the digital singing felt somehow distant, softened by the silence that filled the room.

As the call ended, Mrs. Maria sighed, placing the phone gently on the table. She sorted through old holiday postcards, handwritten letters, and photographs from years gone by, when her family would gather around a single table. Now, she was alone her husband had passed away years ago, her children had moved abroad for work. Memories of warm Christmases from the past were all that remained.

She hummed softly, repeating the carol her grandchildren had just sung on the screen.

Suddenly, there was a knock at the door.

It was unusual few people visited her, especially at this late hour, especially on Christmas Eve. A little uneasy, she walked over and cracked the door open. Standing on the threshold was her neighbor from across the hall, a woman with whom she had only exchanged a few polite words in passing. In her hands, she held a small basket filled with gingerbread cookies and oranges, and in her hesitant expression, there was a silent question was she intruding?

“Good evening,” the neighbor said softly. “I thought... maybe you were alone tonight, and I just wanted to... well, to stop by and wish you a Merry Christmas. And maybe... talk for a while?”

Surprised, Mrs. Maria stepped aside, motioning for her to come in. And in that moment, something in the apartment shifted.

A conversation began to flow about Christmases past, the taste of homemade gingerbread, and how difficult it had become to truly find

time for others. The video call with her family had been precious, but the warmth of a real person sitting beside her, the sound of shared laughter, and the presence of someone who had taken the time to knock on her door made the evening feel full in a different way.

Two women, once just acquaintances, now shared cookies and memories, creating a small but meaningful piece of the family connection they both had been missing.

The smartphone lay forgotten on the table, its artificial glow fading, replaced by the quiet comfort of real presence.

Outside, the snow began to fall gently, while the Christmas lights twinkled, reflecting in the eyes of two neighbors who, by the end of the night, were no longer just neighbors, but companions of the evening.

# 17

zdobią ekrany  
e-maile z życzeniami -  
sklep wciąż otwarty

screens are decorated with  
e-mails with wishes -  
the shop is still open



Fig 17.

Source: DALL-E, OpenAI, May 2024.

**Beautiful images and ready-made phrases  
can never replace a sincere word,  
the scent of paper, or the trace of a pen.  
True wishes are born where,  
instead of clicking,  
one chooses to truly remember.**

## A Soulless Delivery

On the evening before Christmas, the city sparkled with colorful lights, and the screens of phones and computers flashed constantly with incoming holiday messages.

“Merry Christmas!” appeared on countless displays, in the form of digital greeting cards, emails, and even animated GIFs. Some of them were beautiful, almost picturesque dancing reindeer, twinkling snowflakes, shimmering ornaments.

And yet, each one felt predictable, devoid of a personal touch, like a product from a mass-production factory of politeness.

In one corner of the town square, there stood a small shop, curiously still open despite the late hour, despite the holiday spirit that had closed most doors, inviting people instead to enjoy their time at home.

The shop belonged to Mr. Marek, an elderly merchant with a warm, gentle face. It was not a large store, nor a modern supermarket, but a humble stall filled with small trinkets and sweets. Wooden figurines lay on the shelves, alongside hand-painted candlesticks, while in the drawers sat old-fashioned stationery and holiday cards, the kind that once carried handwritten messages of love and care.

Now, they were gathering dust, as few people reached for them anymore.

From behind his counter, Mr. Marek watched the passersby.

They moved hurriedly, their faces illuminated not by the glow of Christmas candles, but by the cold light of their smartphone screens. No one sang carols, no groups of friends chatted joyfully. Instead, all he could hear was the hurried rhythm of footsteps and the constant pinging of notifications.

From time to time, someone rushed into the shop, grabbing a last-minute trinket, slipping it into a gift bag without a word before hurrying back out.

They were busy, preoccupied, and distant.

Suddenly, a knock sounded at the door.

A young woman, Kasia, stepped inside. She looked tired, her posture slightly slumped, her fingers clutching her phone. As she glanced around the shop, her uncertainty was evident.

“Good evening,” she said softly. “I’m looking for something... different.”

Mr. Marek thought for a moment. “Perhaps a Christmas card?” he suggested.

Kasia hesitated. “A card?”

She let out a nervous laugh.

“But everyone sends emails and messages now.”

Yet, even as she spoke, something in her tone betrayed doubt.

“My best friend lives far away,” she continued. “She told me she’s feeling lonely this year. I sent her money for a present, messaged her some cheerful GIFs, but... it all feels so impersonal.”

The shopkeeper nodded knowingly, then reached into a drawer, pulling out a simple, paper Christmas card.

It had a hand-painted fir tree and tiny snowflakes carefully drawn around its edges.

“Try writing something from the heart,” he said. “A memory, a story something only the two of you share.”

Kasia hesitated, then picked up a pen.

At first, she wrote just a few words. Then, a few more.

And with each line, she felt something shift as though, beyond the smooth, artificial surface of her phone, a real connection was beginning to form.

When she finally left the shop, Mr. Marek noticed a small smile on her face.

Though his store remained open, and though screens across the city continued to flash with digital greetings, that one handwritten card had become something rare a true message of sincerity, a bridge of memory and care.

In a world of commercial noise, endless shopping hours, and constant sales, the moment between a merchant and a customer revealed a quiet truth:

Clicking “send” is not enough to warm someone’s heart.

Sometimes, it takes a written word, a spoken voice, or simply being there instead of just sending another identical email, lost among the thousands that decorate digital screens.

# 18

zapach piernika  
w ustach dziecka opłatek  
uczą o świętach

the smell of gingerbread  
a wafer in a child's mouth  
teaching about holidays



Fig 18.

Source: DALL-E, OpenAI, May 2024.

**The flavors and scents of Christmas  
are not just a delight for the senses,  
but a quiet lesson that memories, love, and tradition  
intertwine in the simplest gestures,  
giving meaning to our togetherness.**

## A Lesson in Taste and Memory

In a small kitchen, bathed in soft, golden light, the gentle crackle of the fire and the hum of the oven filled the space. At a wooden table, a grandmother stood, bent over a bowl of gingerbread dough, her hands moving with quiet precision. The rich aroma of spices cinnamon, cloves, ginger filled the air, seeping into the walls, the furniture, even the thick curtains that framed the window. In one hand, she held a wooden spoon, in the other, a piece of wafer, waiting for the evening's Christmas Eve supper.

A young boy, her grandson, ran into the kitchen, his cheeks rosy from the cold. It was the first year he truly understood that Christmas was not just about presents, but held within it a secret something important, yet difficult to explain.

He watched his grandmother as she shaped the gingerbread cookies some into reindeer, others into stars, even tiny angels. He felt that the scent of the spices was more than just the smell of sweets it was an invitation to something deeper, something from the past.

His grandmother, noticing his curiosity, broke off a small piece of wafer and handed it to him. The boy accepted it carefully, aware that this was no ordinary treat.

The wafer was thin, delicate, and slightly crisp. Its flavor was simple, almost neutral, yet within its subtlety lay something profound.

His grandmother smiled as she explained, "This white wafer is a symbol of meeting, of forgiveness, of sharing not just food, but also our hearts and time."

The boy took a deep breath, his senses filled with the warmth of gingerbread and the fragility of the wafer.

"It smells like gingerbread, but it tastes like Christmas," he whispered, trying to piece together the meaning of both.

His grandmother nodded gently. "Yes, my dear. The scent of gingerbread reminds us of warmth, of home, of those who were here before us and whom we carry in our hearts. And the opłatek teaches us that Christmas is about more than just food it is about sharing



kindness, hope, and love. That is why the lessons of Christmas are not just spoken but tasted, smelled, and felt in the smallest gestures.”

The boy nodded, feeling the delicate texture of the wafer on his tongue, the comforting aroma of gingerbread in the air.

That evening, as the family gathered around the Christmas Eve table, he thought about his grandmother’s words.

Each person broke off a piece of wafer, exchanging warm wishes, their voices soft with sincerity.

Outside, stars shimmered in the cold night sky, and the air carried the fragrance of freshly baked gingerbread.

It was an invisible thread, connecting past and present, generations old and new, weaving together a moment in which the world, if only for a while, felt simpler, warmer, and whole.

## 19

*Cicha noc w sieci -  
martwe profile mrugają  
w grudniowych danych*

*Silent Night on the net -  
dead profiles blink  
in december data*



Fig 19.

Source: DALL-E, OpenAI, May 2024.

**Virtual traces can never replace human presence.  
Data may last in the memory of servers,  
but they cannot awaken warmth like conversation and togetherness.  
True Christmas is born where we look into each other's eyes,  
not just at flickering pixels.**

## Shadows Among Pixels

On a cold December evening, as the lights of holiday decorations twinkled outside, Antoni sat alone in his dimly lit room, the only glow coming from his computer screen. The scent of pine needles filled the air, and from the kitchen, the aroma of mulled wine he had prepared to make the night feel less empty drifted toward him.

Once, at this very hour, his family would gather they would sing carols with his grandparents, laugh, and reminisce about old stories. But now, Antoni was alone. His loved ones were scattered across the world, some lost in the distractions of their own lives, others gone forever.

He logged into an old social media site, one that hardly anyone visited anymore. The profiles of friends long disconnected from his life appeared on the screen untouched, unupdated, frozen in time. Photographs from a decade ago, outdated bios written in a past era of the internet, remnants of once vibrant conversations.

He clicked through the pages, coming across names that felt both familiar and distant. Some of these people were no longer alive, others had simply disappeared.

Christmas was meant to bring warmth, yet instead, he felt only a growing sense of nostalgia.

“Silent night in the digital world,” he thought, staring at the still profile pictures.

No messages, no responses. The ghostly traces of past interactions flickered only because the servers kept them alive. Hidden somewhere in the cold algorithms of the site, his presence had momentarily revived their existence. The December site statistics would record a brief surge of activity, a momentary pulse in an otherwise dormant archive of memories.

He wondered what had become of these people. Once, their profiles had been filled with emotions, conversations, plans for the future, family gatherings, and laughter shared in photographs.

Now, all of it was just a digital imprint of time passed.

He couldn't talk to them.

He couldn't smell the holiday poppy seed cake, nor could he hear the sound of real laughter.

There were only images and data.

Antoni closed the laptop.

He walked to the window, looking out at the snow-covered streets where the glow of streetlights reflected off the icy pavement. In the distance, he saw a lone figure walking slowly through the night.

For the first time that evening, he felt something shift inside him.

He realized he had to reach out to those who were still here.

Not through a message sent into the void of a forgotten platform, but through a real call, a handwritten letter, a face-to-face meeting.

He reached for his phone, ready to call a friend, a relative someone who, just like him, might be sitting alone in a quiet room, staring at the flickering light of a screen.

## 20

ciepła dłoń w dłoni –  
w bezimiennym tłumie  
iskrzy się nadzieja

warm hand in hand –  
in the nameless crowd  
hope sparks



Fig 20.

Source: DALL-E, OpenAI, May 2024.

**In a crowd full of anonymous faces,  
a single act of kindness  
can spark a glimmer of hope,  
reminding us that within each of us  
lies the capacity for compassion and understanding.**

## A Spark in a Nameless Crowd

Christmas lights glittered above the passersby, while neon storefronts glimmered on the wet pavement. Despite the glow, the atmosphere in the crowd felt cold and impersonal. Hundreds, perhaps thousands of strangers walked by in silence, absorbed in their own thoughts and concerns.

Amid this anonymous stream of people walked Anna. She had long felt like an outsider here the city was just a temporary stop, a place to work and remain unseen. She missed the simple “good morning” uttered by neighbors in her hometown or the exchange of warm smiles in the small village square. Here, everyone seemed hidden behind an invisible shield of indifference.

Suddenly, at the edge of the sidewalk, Anna noticed a small child, no more than a few years old, standing alone with tear-filled eyes. People passed by without reaction, perhaps assuming a parent was nearby, or else too lost in their own worries to intervene. Anna’s heart beat faster. Approaching him, she crouched down so she could look into his eyes.

“Are you lost?” she asked gently. The child gave a hesitant nod, struggling not to cry. Anna extended her hand. The boy, first tentative, then more trusting, took it. In that warm touch so simple and natural lay a promise of safety. For just an instant, the moment lit them both up, like a tiny spark in the dark. Among a sea of unfamiliar faces, two people found a common ground: compassion and care.

A few moments later, a worried figure emerged from the crowd the child’s mother, looking around anxiously for her son. The relief and gratitude in her eyes shone the instant she saw him with Anna. She thanked her in a trembling voice, took the boy’s hand, and they both slipped away into the still-surgings current of people.

Anna stood there alone, yet something within her had changed. The city, though still brimming with strangers, felt just a bit less cold. She remembered that even in the largest crowd, there is room for kindness one only needs to look beyond the veil of indifference, to make a simple gesture. The moment when two hands one large and one small briefly met had filled Anna with a renewed sense of hope.

## 21

pod sztuczną sosną  
serwery grają kolędę –  
świętują ludzie

under the fake pine  
servers play a Christmas carol –  
people celebrate



Fig 21.

Source: DALL-E, OpenAI, May 2024.

Technology can connect us with the whole world,  
but true closeness is created by moments  
when we can look away from the screens  
and see the people next to us.  
Then even an artificial tree can become  
a backdrop for truly human holidays.

## A Spark in the Nameless Crowd

Above the heads of passersby, Christmas lights flickered, their glow reflected in the damp pavement, blending with the neon signs of shop windows. Despite this brilliance, the atmosphere among the crowd felt cold and impersonal. Hundreds, perhaps thousands, of strangers passed one another in silence, lost in their thoughts, immersed in their own concerns.

Amid this sea of unfamiliar faces, Anna walked alone. She had long felt like an outsider here the city was merely a temporary stop, a place of work and anonymous existence. She missed the simple “good morning” exchanged between neighbors in her hometown, the friendly smiles shared in the small village square. Here, everyone seemed hidden behind an invisible wall of indifference.

As she moved along the sidewalk, something caught her eye. A small child, no older than four or five, stood alone, wide-eyed, fighting back tears.

People walked past without stopping perhaps assuming the child’s parent was nearby, perhaps too absorbed in their own worries to notice.

Anna’s heartbeat quickened.

She stepped forward, crouching down to meet the child’s gaze.

“Are you lost?” she asked softly.

The child hesitated, then nodded, struggling to hold back a sob.

Anna extended her hand.

At first, the boy hesitated his tiny fingers curled close to his chest. Then, slowly, with growing trust, he reached out and grasped her hand.

In that simple, warm touch, there was an unspoken promise of safety.

For a fleeting moment, the world around them faded the busy streets, the hurried footsteps, the overwhelming rush of holiday shopping.

In the midst of an unfeeling crowd, two people had found a shared moment of connection compassion and care.



Moments later, a frantic figure emerged from the crowd the child's mother, her face filled with anxious desperation as she searched for her son.

The instant her eyes landed on him standing there, safe beside Anna relief washed over her.

Her voice trembled as she thanked Anna, taking her son's small hand into hers, holding it tightly as if she would never let go. Then, just as quickly, they disappeared into the flowing stream of people, swallowed once more by the city's relentless motion.

Anna stood still for a moment, alone once more.

Yet, something inside her had shifted.

The city, though still vast and filled with strangers, no longer felt as cold.

She had been reminded that even in the densest crowd, there is always room for kindness a space to break through the veil of indifference.

And sometimes, all it takes is a single gesture.

That brief moment, when a large hand and a small hand intertwined for just a second, had sparked something new inside her.

A quiet hope.

szept w bibliotece –  
w źrenicach starca książka  
mówi o świętach

a whisper in the library –  
in the pupils of the old man a book  
speaks of the holidays

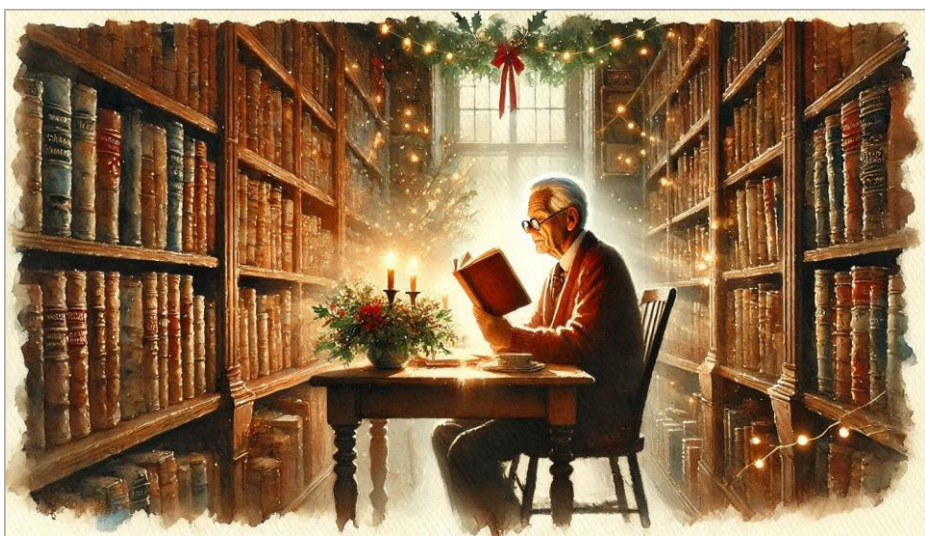


Fig 22.

Source: DALL-E, OpenAI, May 2024.

**Books, like silent witnesses of bygone times,  
hold the treasures of tradition and emotion.  
Only by reading them with attention and an open heart  
can we revive lost rituals  
and give the holidays a depth that bridges the past and present.**

## A Whisper Written in the Eyes

The old library, with its towering shelves and the flickering glow of dim lightbulbs, was a place where time seemed to flow differently. Despite the winter outside and the approaching holidays, a hush filled the air as if every sound had transformed into words on a page, waiting for an attentive reader to bring them to life.

In one of the quiet corners, nestled between narrow aisles of bookshelves, an elderly man sat on a low stool. His frail shoulders were wrapped in a woolen scarf, and his weathered face held a peaceful expression. Behind thick glasses, his eyes reflected the world, while his fingers gently turned the fragile, yellowed pages of an old book on winter traditions. The book's brown cloth cover was worn, its edges slightly frayed, carrying the touch of countless hands before his own. Each page rustled softly, as if whispering forgotten stories to those willing to listen.

A young student entered the library, her steps hesitant, her presence subdued. The cold from outside lingered on her skin, and though she had come to find books for a research project, she couldn't ignore the faint emptiness in her heart.

For years, she had drifted away from family traditions caught up in the rush of responsibilities, the endless cycle of work and study. Christmas, once so vivid and warm, had become just another date on the calendar. Now, as the season approached, a quiet longing stirred within her a yearning for the scent of oranges, for the songs once sung without hesitation, for the warmth of something she could no longer quite name.

As she passed the elderly man, she heard a soft whisper.

At first, she thought it was just the rustling of pages. But no the old man, leaning over his book, was murmuring words, reciting fragments of poems and winter hymns, verses about the solstice and the festive fire kindled in human hearts.

Noticing her curiosity, he smiled and pointed to a page. There, in faded ink, was an illustration of a Christmas tree, its branches heavy

with the scent of the forest, and a gathering of families sharing a holiday feast.

“You know,” he said softly, his voice carrying the weight of experience, “Christmas is like a ritual written in a book. You can read about it, but it only truly comes to life in our eyes, in our memories, in the way we carry it within us.”

The student met his gaze, and in his clouded yet luminous eyes, she saw something she hadn't even realized she had been searching for the quiet richness of Christmases past, the magic of shared meals, carols, small gifts, and heartfelt wishes.

Leaving the library, she carried not only the books she had come for, but also a delicate spark of inspiration a whisper of memory, a reminder that traditions live not in ink, but in the hearts of those who choose to remember them.

## 23

w świątecznej ciszy  
dziecko pyta swą matkę:  
“co jest miłością?”

in the silence of Christmas  
a child asks his mother:  
„what is love?”



**Fig 23.**

Source: DALL-E, OpenAI, May 2024.

**Love does not need grand words or gestures.  
It lives in simple actions, in memory, care, and tenderness,  
weaving our lives into a single story.**

## The Secret Beneath the Christmas Tree

In a small cottage, wrapped in the soft white embrace of snow, Christmas Eve had arrived. The gentle glow of the tree lights, the warm flicker of the fireplace, and the fragrant scent of oranges filled the room with quiet magic.

In this hushed, peaceful moment, a mother and her child sat together on the soft rug, close to the Christmas tree. The child, nose pressed against the fragrant pine branches, suddenly turned and gazed at the mother, asking a question that seemed deeper than any other.

“What is love?”

The mother smiled, slightly taken aback by the child's solemn tone. The room, filled only with the soft crackling of the fire, seemed to pause, listening.

She gently took the child's small hand in hers, as if holding something fragile and precious.

“Love,” she whispered, “is what makes people want to be good to one another. It's the warmth I feel in my heart when I think of you, even when you're in another room. It's the desire to protect you, to care for you, to delight in your smile, and to comfort you when you are sad.”

The child furrowed their brow, trying to grasp the invisible force their mother described. They looked around the room:

The Christmas wafer lay on the table, waiting to be shared among family members, a symbol of forgiveness and togetherness.

Presents rested on the windowsill not extravagant, but thoughtfully chosen, each one reflecting a wish, a need, or a dream of a loved one.

The tree lights twinkled softly, as if to remind them that love is woven into the simplest gestures.

“Can love be seen?” the child asked.

The mother gently rubbed their hand and pointed to a small note stuck to the door.

Written on it were the words: “Remember to call Grandma.”

“Love is also remembering others,” she said. “That little note is not just a reminder it’s a sign of care, of thinking about someone who matters. You don’t have to see love to feel it. You see it in my eyes when I talk to you, in the way I bake your favorite gingerbread cookies, in the way your father set aside his work today just to be with us.

“Love is everywhere someone cares for another in a smile, in a shared memory, in a quiet song, in the touch of a hand.

“It is the most precious gift we can give each other, not just at Christmas, but every day.”





## **IV**

### **Not Only an Educational (Mis)Understanding of “Micro- Meanings”**



Before attempting to answer the question posed, let me recall the central research problem that underpinned this entire project: *How does the combination of text, image, and authorial commentary help to reveal multi-subject, transmedia, and posthumanism ways of understanding Christmas, previously so strongly rooted in anthropocentric narratives?*

My “micro-meanings” repetitive sequences combining haiku (in both Polish and English), AI-generated images, a reflective moral, and a short story became a laboratory in which I could explore how various forms of expression influence the reinterpretation of holiday practices. In this laboratory, the goal was not to confirm known truths but to search for new perspectives. It turned out that pairing the literary minimalism of haiku with the algorithmic visualizations of artificial intelligence and my own commentaries not only broadens the range of interpretations but, above all, opens a space for a multi-subject, transmedia, and posthumanism reflection on the holidays.

First, by placing the traditional elements of Christmas in the context of technologically transformed images and bilingual texts, I have shown that the holidays need not be solely a “human” time focused on family, faith, and local tradition. Algorithmic imagery and multilingualism introduce new actors into this symbolic scene, allowing us to see the holiday as a multi-subject phenomenon created by people, machines, various cultures, and systems of meaning. This multiplicity of subjects implies that no one can reduce the complex phenomenon of Christmas to a single, universal meaning.

Second, the transmedia of the chosen forms moving from literary text to image, from the dual languages of poetic haiku to prose, from personal commentary to the reader’s multi-layered interpretations, turns Christmas into a sort of multi-channel transmission, in which each means of expression intersects with and highlights the others. Thanks to this transmediality, new meanings emerge: AI-generated images may reveal metaphors that words alone do not articulate directly, while the short story and moral add direction to the interpretations, encouraging critical reflection on the role of the audience in the process of creating meaning.

Third, the posthumanism perspective, which serves as the lens for this entire process, makes it possible to move beyond an anthropocentric view of Christmas. By including non-human actors (technology, algorithms) in the interpretation, I question the assumption that humans alone occupy the central place in holiday culture. Shifting the focus to the relationships between people and non-human elements (e.g., AI-generated images) reveals Christmas as a complex network of connections, in which what is human is only one part of a multifaceted system of meanings and values.

Thus, returning to the research problem, I can conclude that the combination of text, image, and authorial commentary is more than a mere formal experiment. It is a tool that shows Christmas need not be analyzed solely as a monolithic, anthropocentric tradition. In the context of multi-subjectivity, transmedia, and posthumanism sensitivity, it becomes a space for negotiating meanings, generating new interpretations, and dismantling old hierarchies. Consequently, Christmas emerges as a dynamic, polyphonic realm of culture, in which the reader, author, technologies, and diverse cultural contexts together create fresh, sometimes surprising perspectives on understanding this exceptional time.

I will pause over each of these elements to take a closer look at how they interact with one another. I will try to discern recurring motifs as well as differences that might indicate possible directions of interpretation. I am especially interested in those moments where poetic metaphors collide with the visual forms generated by algorithms, creating a new quality of experience. It is precisely in such instances that the subtle tensions between the traditional image of Christmas and its reinterpretations in the digital era become visible. Equally important is the fact that each of the 23 sequences of “micro-meanings” is constructed according to a similar pattern; the repetitiveness of this structure may influence our perception by revealing patterns, thematic returns, or suggestions of a dialogue between individual episodes—distant in form and time but close in terms of certain key ideas.

At the same time, I remember that my aim is not simply to describe or reconstruct meanings. Rather, it is a shared search for possible interpretations together with the reader. I have already emphasized that the audience is not a passive observer but an active co-creator of meaning. Therefore, in analyzing specific “micro-meanings,” I do not intend to formulate categorical conclusions. Instead, I will point to various clues, pose questions, and suggest potential paths of understanding that may arise at the intersection of texts, images, and reflective morals. Occasionally, I will try to confront them with narratives that extend beyond the mood of the haiku itself, in order to broaden the context to include wider cultural and symbolic frameworks.

Such an analysis will also be an attempt to capture the multi-subjectivity and posthumanism sensitivity I outlined earlier. I will consider which “micro-meanings” include non-human actors in the holiday narrative algorithms, data, the environment, or material objects marked by their own agency. This approach allows me to see Christmas not as a static tradition but as a dynamic practice, susceptible to cultural, technological, and ecological modifications.

Finally, in examining these multi-layered constellations of meanings, I would like to consider how each element of the “micro-meanings” can shape the educational process. I do not refer to standard school education but rather to the development of interpretive sensitivity, critical thinking, and cultural competence, which are so important in a world where images, data, and relations between humans and non-humans are becoming increasingly complex.

Now that the theoretical and methodological foundations have been laid, it is time to delve into concrete examples, into these micro-worlds composed of individual images and phrases. I hope this journey will help us better understand how the assumptions and intentions of my work are realized in practice. Perhaps we will discover just how multidimensional the interpretation of Christmas can become in the context of the interplay between human and non-human actors, old and new media, memory and algorithms, spirituality and the reflections cast by screens.

# 1

In the first set of micro-meanings, the starting point is a scene showing a child with a cell phone, enclosed in the glow of a Christmas bauble, alongside the question: “Where are the parents?”

The poetic haiku expresses a striking contrast: a child and technology, the delicate glow of the bauble and the cool, enclosed space of the screen. The traditional image of a child by the Christmas tree associated with family warmth and togetherness is replaced by a vision of loneliness amid the glitter of holiday decorations. The visual motif I imagine here (even though there is no direct AI-generated image in the material presented, I can assume the image might emphasize isolation, reflection in the glass bauble, and the cool shine of the screen) amplifies the sense of separation. A bauble, once a symbol of community, now reflects a child glued to their cell phone, becoming a metaphor for estrangement from family, real interaction, and the world beyond the screen.

The moral a brief reflective commentary reminds us that the glow of ornaments and screens cannot replace a human gaze. It draws attention to a value that goes beyond material or visual stimuli. This is a clear reference to the cultural and social meaning of Christmas, which understood traditionally focuses on the presence of people. That simple message underscores that human relationships, touch, conversation, and attentiveness form the foundation of the Christmas experience.

The short story expands on this scene by bringing us into a specific home situation. The Christmas tree, the beautiful baubles, the scent of pine needles, and the warmth of a fireplace evoke an ideal setting, yet these are merely decorations there are no parents in the background, busy with their own affairs. On the one hand, there is the traditional Christmas aura; on the other, there is a child trapped in a digital world, seeking attention from the screen rather than from loved ones. This collision leads us to reflect on the state of family relationships in the era of new technologies. The educational potential of this “micro-meaning” emerges precisely here: it teaches us to notice the difference

between being near someone and genuinely being together between merely living under one roof and truly sharing time and emotions.

From a posthumanism perspective, this is not just about people objects and technologies also come into play. The phone becomes an actor, taking on the role of the child's companion. The bauble, an aesthetic Christmas artifact, turns into a medium reflecting not the warmth of family life but emptiness and separation. Thus, multi-subjectivity is evident: the child, the phone, the holiday ornament, and the space of the home work together to create messages that highlight the changing, often non-obvious nature of contemporary Christmas.

In this first "micro-meaning," transmediality and multilingualism (haiku in two languages) also draw attention. Shifting between poetry, the moral, and the story allows us to see Christmas from various angles: poetic, narrative, and reflective. Readers can move from individual words to symbolic images and on to a fully developed narrative, seeking coherence or consciously embracing ambiguity. Such an approach activates an educational process: it teaches critical thinking about relationships, encourages interpretation, and invites questions instead of imposing a single, pre-defined meaning.

This is how the assumptions of the research problem materialize. Traditional Christmas, seemingly intact in this first example (there is a tree, baubles, a home), is confronted with modern technology and a lack of adult attentiveness. This unexpected combination reveals new ways of understanding the holiday: not only as a family ritual but also as a space where technology and the human desire for closeness come together. Consequently, we see a multi-subject, transmedia experience, in which the phone's screen and the bauble's gleam collectively shape the narrative, enabling us to perceive the complexity and fragility of holiday relationships in the digital age.

## 2

In the haiku, we read about a Christmas tree sparkling in the corner of the room, smelling of gingerbread. This short text conveys a sense of simplicity and intimacy: the tree is not in a place of honor in

the center of the room but tucked away in a corner humble yet radiating warmth. In the English version, the same image is repeated a tree, light, and the aroma of gingerbread which lets the reader compare the subtle differences between languages and observe the shared universality of holiday scents and glow, while also recalling the transcultural nature of the message.

The moral emphasizes that “the most wonderful Christmas does not depend on extravagance but on love and imagination.” Thus, it lifts us from a purely aesthetic level to one of values and interpretation. It is not about how expensive the decorations or lavish the gifts are but how much feeling and effort we invest in creating the holiday atmosphere. The moral clearly counters the consumerist, materialistic vision of Christmas, reminding us that it is people their intentions and relationships with one another who shape the value of this time.

The story of Antek builds on these insights. The boy lives in modest circumstances his family cannot afford decorations or a Christmas tree. Nevertheless, he does not give up on his dreams: he goes into the forest and finds a small, somewhat imperfect pine. With great care and creativity, he transforms it into a tree which may not appear as grand as the ornate, city-sold ones, but instead possesses genuine magic. Homemade decorations (ribbons from an old sweater, paper stars, gingerbread baked with his grandmother) create an atmosphere of closeness, engagement, and imagination. In this story, nature (the pine tree found at the forest’s edge) becomes an integral part of the holiday rather than a commodity purchased in a store.

In this “micro-meaning,” we discern a logic founded on a shared set of values: the small, crooked tree becomes the bearer of warmth, gratitude, and the quiet magic that arises from simple gestures. Its beauty is not born of opulence but of the symbolic space created, where each element expresses care and inventiveness. The fairytale-like, subtly magical finale when the tree starts to glow and sing reinforces the message that outward perfection does not adorn Christmas; rather, the mutual love and effort poured into brightening the world with one’s own ingenuity do.

From a posthumanism perspective, we can view this scene as a relationship between humans, the tree, and everyday objects



(ribbons, gingerbread, paper stars). Here, the Christmas tree is not just an “inanimate” object it symbolically responds to Antek’s efforts. It comes to life, shines, and sings as if reciprocating the love and attention he invested in it. This realization makes us see that Christmas, in this story, is no longer anthropocentric: its meaning is generated in a network of relations between humans, nature, simple materials, and the significance attributed to them. The forest-found tree, handmade ornaments, and family-baked gingerbread together weave a narrative of a celebration unfettered by wealth. The resulting landscape of values is one in which nature, craft, taste, and fragrance all become actors shaping the holiday atmosphere.

From an educational standpoint, this is a lesson in creativity and empathy. Amid modest surroundings, the boy can create something beautiful, transforming scarcity into an opportunity to develop imagination and appreciation for simple gestures. The audience learns that the tradition of Christmas is malleable and that its value lies not so much in adhering to a prescribed model but in the ability to reinterpret, adapt to one’s circumstances, and most of all, in the willingness to share joy with others.

Thus, in the second “micro-meaning,” we reach another dimension of multi-subject, transmedia, and posthumanism understanding of Christmas. Text (haiku, prose), imagery (envisioning a small tree and humble decorations), the moral, and collective reflection merge into a narrative that encourages us to discard stereotypes about what the “perfect” holiday should be. Instead, it demonstrates that relationships, feelings, creativity, and the ability to see the extraordinary in simplicity form the key to creating Christmas magic.

### 3

Moving on to the analysis of the third “micro-meaning,” we examine a moment in which the Christmas tree a traditional holiday symbol transforms into a structure made of books. The mere idea presented in the haiku, which serves as a starting point, already suggests an unconventional approach to holiday themes. In three short

lines, we encounter the image of a Christmas tree constructed from books, from which “pages spin a tale, and ornaments hang on strings.” Symbolically, we shift from the physical, natural matter of a tree toward cultural objects, texts, and narratives.

The moral introduces the idea of the power of storytelling: “Even the smallest story can brighten someone’s life if only it is told.” This message directs our attention to the role of literature, narrative, and the written word in shaping social bonds, maintaining tradition, and transmitting values. Here, the focus moves away from the material trappings of Christmas toward the culture of storytelling, memory, and the shared experience awakened by words.

The story expands on this concept by introducing a girl named Klara, who cannot afford a traditional Christmas tree. Instead, she creates a tree out of books, stacking them into a conical shape. At this moment, nature is replaced by culture. Instead of pine needles, the scent of the forest, and conventional ornaments, we have paper, letters, and stories. Books become a new form of holiday environment, offering meaning and beauty where material means are lacking. This act of creation can be read as resisting materialism Christmas magic does not require wealth but imagination and openness to new ways of experiencing tradition.

The instant in the story when the letters come alive, drifting like glowing snowflakes, reminds us of the potential to cross boundaries between what is real and what is imagined. The stories begin to “flow out” of the books, filling the room and drawing in townspeople. At this point, the individual dimension (Klara’s desire to feel the holiday spirit despite poverty) converges with the communal dimension (the townspeople gather and listen to stories). The book-tree becomes a hub of a new community brought to life by narratives people come to listen to, share their own stories, and recall memories. Cultural objects (books), literature, and the spoken word engage many participants: the girl, the townspeople, and the reader as well.

From a posthumanism perspective, it is worth noting that it is not solely humans who generate the magic here. Rather, the material of books (paper, print), the ideas contained in the texts, the air-carrying

voices, and the space of the home collectively bring this enchantment to life. The stories outgrow the confines of their pages, taking on an almost physical presence. Culture (books, fairy tales, legends) intertwines with the holiday setting, becoming a living actor in this ritual. As a result, the boundaries between what is human and nonhuman, material and immaterial, traditional and innovative begin to blur. In this “micro-meaning,” Christmas transcends the simple formula of “tree + ornaments,” revealing that tradition can be reinterpreted, reshaped, and enriched with inventive new forms.

Transmediality manifests here in the transition from words to the imagined image of a book-tree, from haiku to prose, and to the moral. Readers may interpret this “micro-world” on various levels: as a metaphor of poverty transformed into spiritual wealth, as a reminder that stories hold the key to community, or as an indication that contemporary Christmas need not adhere to rigid formulas. From an educational perspective, it is a lesson in creativity, sensitivity to literary culture, and the ability to forge bonds through storytelling. The townspeople do not need expensive decorations only the power of stories that warm hearts and minds.

Finally, examining this “micro-meaning” in light of the earlier research question, we see that combining text, image (though here the AI-generated depiction of the book-tree is not described, we can imagine a visual interpretation), moral, and narrative reveals dimensions of Christmas we might not have considered had we limited ourselves to a classic, anthropocentric vision of the season. The presence of culture in the form of books becomes an equivalent of nature (the tree), and storytelling replaces ornaments and gifts. The participation of multiple actors (author, reader, townspeople, books, letters, and the sounds of the stories) presents Christmas as an interplay of values and experiences that transcends mere materiality and ritual. Thus, through this example, the holiday is reinterpreted as a multi-subject and transmedia phenomenon, showing that even a simple innovation like a tree made of books can imbue it with new depth and the power to unite people.

## 4

The fourth “micro-meaning” comprises a haiku about a snowstorm and freezing hearts, a reflective moral on the possibility of thawing even the coldest heart, and a story about a kingdom whose inhabitants have lost their capacity for love in the icy cold. Altogether, this set broadens our perspective on both Christmas and winter, bringing a fairytale allegory to the fore while addressing universal themes about human emotions, relationships, and inner warmth.

In the haiku, short and evocative, we see an image of snowflakes settling on hair, along with a mention of hearts freezing. This juxtaposition of physical cold snowflakes and frost and the metaphorical chill of emotions is characteristic of haiku, where a momentary, miniature image carries substantial symbolic weight. We can interpret these lines literally (a wintry scene, frosty weather) or metaphorically (inner cold, lack of love, indifference). The English version mirrors this structure, demonstrating the trans-cultural capacity of haiku to convey emotion and mood.

The moral points out that even the coldest heart can thaw if it finds the right warmth. This is a message brimming with educational and humanistic potential: it reminds us that interpersonal relationships, kindness, and understanding can overcome even deeply entrenched indifference or hostility. Thus, the moral enriches the haiku’s natural observation with reflections on human feelings and the need for love and forgiveness.

The story of Lilia and the ice-bound kingdom ruled by the evil Snow Queen completes this picture, forming an allegorical tale about transformation, thaw, and renewed life. The Queen has deprived people of emotional warmth, turning their hearts to ice and creating an atmosphere of cold and hostility. Lilia, a warm-hearted heroine, symbolizes hope, empathy, and the power to resist an emotional regime of ice. Her action planting a seed and singing about spring serves not only as a symbol of the atmospheric thaw but as a metaphor for the rebirth of feelings, the return of empathy, and the capacity to

love. In this “micro-meaning,” the contrast between cold and warmth, isolation and connection, stagnation and transformation is clear.

Within the context of the research problem posed earlier, this “micro-meaning” introduces a new dimension: although technology and modernity are less prominent in this particular text, they could be interpreted as another factor shaping the symbolism. In the previous micro-meanings, we encountered algorithmic images, smartphones, and laptops; here, the fairytale world while seemingly detached from reality can function as a metaphor for a more complex system of cultural relations and transformations. Just as cold symbolizes a lack of interpersonal bonds, so the warmth of love can be seen as a value the recipient (the reader) is encouraged to safeguard, regardless of the technological and ecological contexts of the present day.

On an educational and cultural level, this “micro-meaning” can be read as a lesson on the need for understanding, for breaking down the icy barriers between people. In an era of globalization, migration, cultural differences, and technologically mediated relationships, returning to the simple message that “the Queen’s heart is key” that social and emotional transformation lies in empathy and caring for one another holds particular relevance.

Interestingly, though this example feels detached from typical holiday routines (it is more a tale of winter and the thawing of hearts), its connection with the haiku, moral, and narrative combines to form a transmedia space for reflecting on the holiday season. Christmas here is no longer merely about consumption and decorations but rather a symbolic stage on which transformation can occur. Instead of focusing on consumption or purely family ties, we have a universal story of revived feelings and community, which in an era of technology and climate change (winter as a metaphor for coldness in relationships and the environment) is increasingly vital. This fairytale narrative, like the previous examples, illustrates how combining text, image (imagined, inspired by the haiku and tale), and commentary can reveal a multi-subject, posthumanism understanding of Christmas. Here, Christmas becomes a time when, even in the coldest kingdom, hearts can thaw if someone is willing to plant the seed of love and dare to believe in renewal.

## 5

The fifth “micro-meaning” brings us to a world where the holiday atmosphere collides with less idealized weather conditions rain that, at first glance, does not fit the classic picture of a white, snowy Christmas. The haiku depicts twinkling lights and baubles reflected not in winter snowflakes but in raindrops. Although this may appear a minor adjustment to the scenery, it carries a significant implication: beauty and the holiday spirit can emerge under unexpected circumstances, provided we look at the world with greater attentiveness and openness.

The moral reinforces this intuition, reminding us that beauty does not depend on “perfect conditions” but on our ability to find light and value in every situation. This concise commentary introduces an educational and cultural element: it encourages us to reinterpret holiday symbols and experiences, sensitizes us to the flexibility of our expectations regarding what “should” happen during Christmas. In doing so, it suggests that we can understand the holiday not as a fixed, final pattern (snow, a Christmas tree, and a family gathered around the table) but rather as a dynamic process of shaping meaning in which weather, technology, social context, and our own attitudes together influence our emotional experiences.

The story of Zosia and Ania explores this theme further. A rainy day that might otherwise spoil the holiday mood is turned into an opportunity to discover a new kind of magic. Rain instead of snow is not an obstacle but a challenge to the imagination: as Zosia watches the reflection of the Christmas tree lights in the raindrops on the window, she finds beauty where others see its absence. Inspired by this vision, she begins to create her own holiday atmosphere, brightening the rainy night with lights and decorations; her actions spark a chain reaction in the community. People, intrigued by this novel aesthetic and mood, step outside, begin talking to each other, smiling, and sharing time together.

In this “micro-meaning,” the role of the individual specifically, the child in creating an educational and cultural moment is apparent. By

remaining open and willing to break from convention (in this case, the stereotype that only snow can serve as a beautiful Christmas backdrop), Zosia becomes the catalyst for social change. This is an important motif: education understood outside institutional frameworks can occur through ordinary actions and initiatives that bring meaning even under seemingly unfavorable conditions. Here, the weather (rain) and material elements (lights, decorations) interact with human ingenuity and the willingness to reinterpret tradition.

From a posthumanism standpoint, we can note that in this scene, the natural environment (rain, puddles), human emotions, and technology (lights, decorations) collectively form a landscape of meaning. The interplay of people and their surroundings creates a new quality a community that does not rely on perfect circumstances but on an ability to recognize potential in whatever is given here and now. Transmediality arises in the way the haiku and moral translate into an image we can envision: flickering lights, rain, gleaming baubles, as well as the narrative about Zosia and Ania. These varied forms and perspectives reinforce the message that Christmas and its meanings can be constructed in many ways, using multiple media text, imagination, and visual aesthetics.

Consistent with the research problem posed earlier, we see that the juxtaposition of text, image, and commentary opens us to a multi-subject understanding of Christmas. The holiday becomes a transmedia dialogue between our expectations, reality, and our capacity to reinterpret tradition. Through the example of a rainy Christmas, we learn to notice light and magic in unexpected situations, discovering that the meaning of Christmas transcends any single, established pattern and can evolve in surprising directions.

## 6

The sixth “micro-meaning” introduces us to a setting in which the central motif is a star hanging above the table a symbol that not only adorns but also becomes the key to understanding the worth of family bonds and shared history. In the haiku, the star invites the entire

family to gather. This simple image suggests that what unites people is not dependent on cultural or linguistic boundaries but on deeply rooted needs for togetherness.

The moral reminds us that the ties holding a family together do not reside in any specific place or object but in “the power of memories and the willingness to meet again.” This commentary distills from the star’s metaphor a symbolic and ethical importance: decorations or traditions alone are insufficient if there is no true desire to understand another person. On an educational and cultural level, it serves as a reminder of the need to nurture relationships, memory, and mutual care.

The short story develops this idea by portraying an old house in a mountain valley that once was home to a family, now enveloped in a chilly silence. A large, hand-carved star hanging above the table turns out to be the last witness to past gatherings and the warmth that once filled this place. With the arrival of the youngest member of the family, Hania, renewal begins. Lighting candles, singing carols, and the presence of the star send out a signal across the valley, summoning scattered family members. Consequently, the star becomes a catalyst for their return, both physical and emotional. They come from various directions, drawn by nostalgia and the invisible force of shared memories.

The transmediality of this “micro-meaning” emerges through the way the haiku, moral, and story interact to form a narrative about a family community built over layers of time and recollection. The reader can imagine the image: a star above an empty table in a house filled with silence. Then the written word poetry and prose brings this scene to life: the star becomes not just a decoration but a vehicle calling forth the family’s old energy. From an educational standpoint, the core lesson is to recognize the values that unify a group of people, even if they have not seen each other in a long while. While technology and modernity play a less prominent role in this fragment, they still spark questions about the extent to which contemporary means of communication might replace or enrich symbolic gestures and traditions.

From a posthumanism and multi-subject perspective, it is crucial to note that the relationship between humans and symbols (the star,



the table, the house) holds the key to understanding Christmas here. Reality is not limited to people alone objects (the hand-carved star), memories, space, and time also shape the narrative. The star acts like a cultural actor, calling people to reconnect. In this “micro-meaning,” Christmas turns out to be not so much a fixed set of practices as a dynamic process of re-engaging people and objects in a network of reciprocal influence. This is Christmas not as a conventional ritual but rather as a moment where humans and the material world jointly reconstruct meaning, unity, and the continuity of family memory.

## 7

The seventh “micro-meaning” invites us to contemplate the first snowfall as a threshold moment, transforming an ordinary landscape into something mysterious and almost fairy-tale-like. The haiku depicts falling snow covering the world in a blanket, while two children Jaś and Hania press their noses to the window, mesmerized by this sudden change in reality. The succinct, evocative poetry conveys the intensity of a moment when what is commonplace becomes extraordinary.

The moral underscores that “magic often lies in the smallest things in falling snowflakes, in our imagination, and in the belief that any day can bring something remarkable.” This message highlights the educational and cultural dimension of this “micro-meaning,” encouraging an openness to wonder and the ability to see marvels in seemingly ordinary phenomena of nature and everyday life. It is a lesson in attentiveness and tenderness toward the world—values especially important in our era of digital stimuli, where it is easy to overlook the subtle beauty around us.

The story about Jaś and Hania expands on this idea in a brief narrative form. The children gaze at the first snowflakes as if glimpsing a promise of magic; their attention lingers on details like the glow of streetlights forming a milky haze in the winter landscape. They recall their grandmother’s stories about a winter fairy who blankets the earth in snow so nature can rest and regain strength. This

element of family tradition and oral storytelling interweaves nature with narrative and culture with the environment. Myth and imagination serve as a bridge connecting past and present, children and adults, daily life and the realm of wonder.

In the story's climax, Hania and Jaś spot a slender figure a woman with a long scarf fluttering in the wind seemingly hovering above the ground. Could it really be the winter fairy? The text leaves this question open, giving the reader room for personal interpretation. Perhaps it is simply an illusion, a product of the children's imagination fueled by their grandmother's legends. Or maybe reality and magic do indeed overlap, suggesting that Christmas and winter can awaken in us the ability to perceive the extraordinary in ordinary occurrences.

With regard to the overarching research question how combining text, image, and authorial commentary reveals multi-subject, transmedia, and posthumanism ways of understanding Christmas this "micro-meaning" broadens the interpretive context to include the themes of nature and imagination. The first snowfall is not merely an aesthetic condition for a holiday backdrop; it is an integral part of a story uniting humans, legends, and the environment. The children's viewpoint, combined with memories of their grandmother's words, spotlights an intergenerational exchange of cultural knowledge. The natural world becomes an actor that shapes human experience snowflakes alter perceptions of space and foster a specific emotional atmosphere; combined with narratives and symbols (the fairy, the grandmother's tales), they expand our understanding of the holiday season.

In its educational and cultural dimension, this "micro-meaning" offers a lesson in the value of believing in the extraordinary, the significance of oral tradition that imparts meaning to seasonal changes, and the idea that the holidays can be experienced not just through rituals but also through a readiness to spot subtle magic in fleeting, everyday moments.

The transmedia aspect emerges from the capacity to convey this experience poetically, visually, and narratively: the haiku sketches the moment, the moral highlights underlying values, and the story provides a fuller context, intertwining children's imagination with the

natural phenomenon of the first snowfall. Readers can move among these interpretive layers, drawing distinct meanings and perspectives from each.

Lastly, from a posthumanism standpoint, this “micro-meaning” reminds us that humans are not solitary agents in the world; rather, they exist in relationship with nature, the seasons, the landscape, and stories that extend beyond purely human action. Christmas becomes a time when nature and culture interweave anew. The first snowfall is a moment that ignites imagination, a reminder that the world can be full of surprises if we are prepared to notice them.

## 8

The eighth “micro-meaning” highlights the phenomenon of nature painting wintry scenes. The haiku evokes “winter painting pictures on the windows,” while also “freezing our noses,” simultaneously conveying the chill in the air and suggesting an inherent aesthetic, artistic potential in the natural world. In the poem’s concise language, a contrast emerges between physical discomfort and the subtle beauty hidden in wintry moments.

The moral reminds us that even during the coldest times, beauty and warmth can be found if we look at the world with an open heart. This is an educational and cultural prompt, urging sensitivity to the small wonders of nature and the need to transcend our complaints about the cold to focus on the play of light, icy patterns, and the dreamlike aura that winter paints on our windows. In this way, the moral shapes our interpretation: nature is not merely a backdrop or an obstacle but a fully fledged actor capable of creating symbolic imagery that we can read as metaphors for human-environment relations.

In the story of *The Winter Painter*, a girl named Zosia sets out to capture the moment when a mysterious artist conjures her icy artworks. This fairy-tale figure *The Winter Painter* possesses a creative agency typically attributed to humans: painting patterns on windows, using cold winds and ice crystals as her palette. Zosia’s encounter with

The Winter Painter becomes a lesson. The artist explains that sometimes we need to feel the cold in order to appreciate the warmth. It is a message reminding us that opposites and contrasts (frost and warmth, emptiness and richly drawn patterns) are part of a larger whole, in which we can learn sensitivity and a deeper gratitude for beauty through direct interaction with nature.

Regarding the research question, this series haiku, moral, and story presents another dimension of a multi-subject, posthumanism perspective on Christmas. It is not a solely human-centric view but one that revolves around our connections with nature, weather conditions, and their non-human agency. Rather than focusing on anthropocentric Christmas narratives confined to family gatherings, gifts, or culinary traditions, we see an interpretation in which the winter landscape participates in creating meaning. As winter paints patterns on windows, it shapes a space for reflection, letting us notice aspects of the world previously overlooked. Thus, Christmas ceases to be exclusively a human ritual; it gains a more complex dimension, incorporating nature's aesthetic and symbolic role.

The transmediality becomes evident in the progression from the concise, understated haiku to the moral that introduces a guiding, educational note, and finally to the expanded story giving the metaphor of winter patterns a concrete narrative backdrop. Through this approach, readers can move seamlessly across different interpretive levels from aesthetic contemplation of icy designs on the glass, through ethical and educational prompts to see beauty in adversity, and on to a fairy-tale narrative in which nature teaches a child a new way of viewing the world.

Hence, this “micro-meaning” is further evidence that combining multiple forms of communication poetry, visual suggestions, reflective morals, and storytelling reveals new, multi-layered ways of interpreting the holiday season. It encourages us to perceive Christmas not only as the climax of human customs but also as a moment where nature, technology, imagination, and the senses converge, forming an interpretive space that transcends traditional boundaries and hierarchies.

## 9

The ninth “micro-meaning” centers on an angel placed at the top of the Christmas tree a modest yet evocative symbol that completes the holiday décor while also serving as a reference point for a family’s values and collective memory. The haiku expresses a simple but potent metaphor: the angel looks down from on high and “warms the room.”

The moral underscores the power of modest symbols which, rising above everyday cares, remind us what truly matters. In this way, the angel becomes not just an ornament but also a sign of forgiveness, shared memories, and heartfelt feelings that transcend any differences or conflicts. This brief commentary shifts our focus from the object (an angel on the tree) to the values the symbol evokes: unity, reconciliation, and familial closeness.

The short story expands on this idea, depicting a home where a dispersed family gathers. Initially, the atmosphere is tense there is a frosty silence, and family members who have not spoken in a long time struggle to find common ground. Only when the mother places a small, wooden angel an heirloom from their ancestors on the top of the tree does the ice between estranged siblings begin to thaw. Watching the family from above, the angel becomes a quiet witness and catalyst for change. Held within its unmoving gaze and the gentle glow of the fairy lights is the memory of bygone years, old moments of laughter, and shared Christmas tree decorating. By conjuring those collective experiences and family values that have withstood the test of time and strife, the siblings see each other from a new perspective. Consequently, the small wooden angel becomes the medium of reconciliation, and its symbolic presence prompts reflection on the importance of human relationships.

In light of the research question, this “micro-meaning” reveals how the combination of text, image, and moral highlights a posthumanism sensitivity and the transmedia nature of Christmas. Although here technology or non-human actors do not occupy center stage, the material object (the angel) and human memory still complement each other. The object possesses “cultural agency” it is not

merely a decoration but an actor in the scenario of reconciliation, reminding us of how fragile and precious human bonds can be. From this posthumanism vantage point, the relationship between human and object generates new insights into Christmas as a time for healing and returning to fundamental values.

Transmedia becomes apparent in the move from the concise haiku, through the reflective moral, to the more developed narrative, providing specific context and a storyline. Through these different layers, the reader can view the scene poetically, morally, and narratively. From an educational standpoint, this “micro-meaning” proposes that we can read Christmas not only through the lens of rituals and decorations but also through the subtle connections among people and objects, through memory and family history. It is a reminder that often the most profound changes and reconciliations arise from simple symbols and modest gestures, and that Christmas offers an opportunity to imbue them with renewed power and meaning.

## 10

The tenth “micro-meaning” places us in a situation where the glow of Christmas lights and ornaments resonates with silence because there are no people present to share that light. The haiku references lights twinkling like stars among the branches but notes that “people are missing.” This straightforward image highlights a profound absence: even the most beautiful holiday stage loses its significance if there is no one with whom to share joy and community.

The moral underscores this idea, reminding us that even the brightest lights lose their meaning when we have no one to share their glow with. True festivity arises only where people find one another. This message returns us to humanistic values centered on relationships, gatherings, and conversation as the core of holiday experiences. Without interaction and closeness, decorations and lights remain a hollow display attractive, yet lacking deeper purpose.

The story about an old community hall, once vibrant during the holidays, amplifies the message of the haiku and moral. The hall stands empty, though its windows still glow with lights, as if waiting for an audience, for the people who once frequented it. Town residents moving away, fewer get-togethers, and a lack of energy to host communal celebrations all illustrate the breakdown of togetherness. The decorations remain set, the stage adorned, but the characters who might bring this space to life with laughter, song, and conversation are gone. A passerby peeking through the window senses the melancholy of the scene and thinks of his own home, family, and friends. Realizing that without people any ornament is devoid of meaning becomes the impetus to maintain closer bonds with loved ones.

In terms of the research question of how the combination of text, image, and authorial commentary reveals multi-subject, transmedia, and posthumanism ways of understanding Christmas, this tenth “micro-meaning” emphasizes the crucial role of human presence and social relationships. In many of the earlier “micro-meanings,” we encountered algorithms, technology, nature, and objects as actors contributing to the meaning of the holiday season. Yet here we are reminded that without human interaction, even the most dazzling objects and decorations remain unrealized potential.

Transmedia is evident in the transition from the brevity of the haiku, through the moral clarifying its significance, to the narrative depth of the story. These three elements create a multifaceted interpretive field: the poetic scene and thoughtful commentary pave the way for the story of the empty community hall to resonate fully. Readers may interpret this sequence aesthetically, as a melancholy moment, or in an educational and cultural sense as a cautionary note that Christmas without people, without authentic connections, reduces to an empty ritual.

From a posthumanism, multi-subject sensitivity standpoint, this “micro-meaning” reminds us of humanity’s role in shaping holiday experiences. While previous examples illustrated how non-human elements (nature, objects, technologies) can co-create meaning, here we return to the anthropocentric truth that even the most inventive forms

of expression are meaningless without living relationships and the exchange of emotions. Striking a balance between perspectives, acknowledging the importance of both objects and people reinforces that studying Christmas is not about choosing between anthropocentrism and posthumanism; rather, it involves capturing the dynamic interplay among many actors and layers of meaning.

Consequently, the tenth “micro-meaning” emphasizes that the holidays are a process of collaboratively creating reality. Without people’s participation, decorations and lights are mere potential, unable to be fully realized. This example serves as a reminder to cherish relationships, to converse and gather, so that ornaments, twinkling lights, and the holiday scene can achieve their full, human dimension.

## 11

The eleventh “micro-meaning” highlights the subtle contrast between the spontaneous joy of children and the longing felt by adults. The haiku depicts a holiday scene: children’s laughter, gifts under the tree, and, in the background, the dreams of the grown-ups. On the one hand, we see simple, carefree delight in the youngest family members’ immediate gratification tied to tangible presents. On the other hand, adults are immersed in contemplation, yearning for something unspoken and harder to attain, perhaps to revisit lost moments, to see people who have gone, or to reclaim feelings that once seemed as natural as a child’s laughter.

The moral reminds us that sometimes a single, delicate light can show the way to those who have lost their bearings. This brief commentary steers the haiku’s interpretation toward viewing the holiday season as a time when even small signals, such as a recognition of someone’s presence, a warm glance, or a simple gesture, can guide adults back to purpose and tranquility. The educational and cultural significance of this moral lies in revealing that Christmas magic is not limited to material gifts or the carefree joy of



children but can also manifest in subtle, often fleeting signs of hope, forgiveness, or a willingness to rebuild connections.

The story about Piotr's return home, where a single candle glows in the window, completes this "micro-meaning." His homecoming and that gentle flame stand as tangible expressions of the values outlined in the moral. The candle appears not only as a symbol of family memory and tradition but also as an invitation to renew relationships and let go of old grudges. In this sense, the children's laughter and presents described in the haiku can be seen as a starting point: children find joy here and now, their world simple and immediate, whereas adults require something deeper a sign that it is possible to regain the relationships that once seemed unquestionable.

From the standpoint of the research question, this "micro-meaning" again broadens the scope of how we interpret Christmas by including themes of returning home, togetherness, and reconciliation. Combining poetry, a moral, and a narrative shows that Christmas is not only a time for giving and receiving but also an opportunity to reflect on the past, on losses, and the hope of restoring ties. This transmediality from the succinct haiku, through the commentary on values, to a story featuring specific characters provides the reader with interpretive tools at several levels.

A posthumanism and multi-subject sensitivity is present here in a quieter way, through the interplay between people and material signs (a candle, a window, a table, a Christmas tree). While there is no explicit focus on non-human actors, one can still see that the symbolic significance of objects (the candle, the home, gifts) co-creates the atmosphere and helps people find their way back to one another. Thus, even in this "micro-meaning," Christmas appears not as a static ritual but as a dynamic meeting ground of various perspectives. Ultimately, it is a reminder that while children's laughter and adult dreams differ in nature, they can converge within the holiday setting if only we recognize the gentle light that points the way toward mutual understanding and closeness.

The twelfth “micro-meaning” centers on juxtaposing traditional, modest forms of a Christmas symbol with their contemporary, more commercialized versions, far removed from old customs. The haiku depicts a plastic nativity scene with pretty figurines, while simultaneously asking, “Do you remember the straw?” This clash between modern, gleaming decorations and the question about a simple, organic element straw implies a longing for the original essence of Christmas.

The moral emphasizes that in the glow of today’s ornaments, it is easy to forget the roots and simple gestures that once shaped the meaning of the holiday season. Tradition, subtly embodied in natural materials (wood, straw) and in the old, hand-carved figures, carried with it an authentic charge of meaning: scent, memory, and history. This message has a distinctly educational and cultural dimension, reminding us of the value of preserving and carefully reading old rituals, which can be easily lost in the rush and commerce of the modern Christmas season.

The short story “A Scent from Years Past” develops this idea in the form of a narrative about a granddaughter and grandmother who compare a plastic, perfectly crafted nativity scene with old memories of hand-carved figures and the smell of straw. Initially intrigued by the shiny new decorations, the granddaughter thanks to her grandmother discovers that in the ordinary straw and memories of past Christmas practices lies an elusive yet profound sense of meaning. This sensory and emotional return to simplicity symbolizes the process of rediscovering values that come not from the perfection of form or commercial aesthetics but from human experiences, memories, stories, and quiet contemplation.

In the context of the research problem regarding the revelation of multi-subject, transmedial, and posthumanist ways of understanding Christmas, the twelfth “micro-meaning” directs our attention to the role of memory, scent, touch, and objects of natural origin. Although this scene lacks a strong emphasis on non-human actors in

a technological or environmental sense, objects such as straw and wooden figurines gain agency by influencing emotions, memories, and, thus, shaping the interpretation of Christmas.

Its transmedial quality becomes evident in the combination of a concise poetic observation (the haiku), a moral that reminds us of the value of simple gestures, and a story that provides context, bringing out the emotions and the relationships between the characters. In this way, the reader can move from the brief question “Do you remember the straw?” to a broader narrative about how memories and small family rituals permeate contemporary, globalized, and increasingly standardized holiday imagery.

The educational and cultural value lies in realizing that we can interpret Christmas not only through the prism of new decorations, technology, and intense aesthetics but also by drawing on memory and history: old nativity figurines, the smell of straw, silence, and focus. From a posthumanist perspective, these items though simple and modest co-create the story of Christmas, reminding us that human identity and the spiritual dimension of tradition are shaped through interaction with the material environment, with memory, and with the significance we assign to everyday objects.

Thus, the twelfth “micro-meaning” shows that Christmas is a time not only of consumption and visual perfection but also of reflection on the very origins of the tradition. It creates space to ask where the deepest emotions come from and what truly gives the Christmas season its meaning often hidden in small objects, scents, and recollections that no amount of meticulously crafted plastic scenery can replace.

## 13

The thirteenth “micro-meaning” plunges us into a context where traditional holiday experiences are set against modern technologies here, we encounter pixels, screens, digital connections, and attempts to build community across distances. The haiku depicts twinkling lights behind a window, a laptop glowing in the background, and

a provocative question: “How many clicks does a miracle take?” This reflection addresses the subtle tension between the seeming ease of communication just a few clicks to connect with loved ones and the elusive feeling of genuine closeness once guaranteed by tangible, real life contact.

The moral underscores that technology can bring very distant hearts together, but the real miracle lies in the fact that, in the glow of pixels and Christmas lights, we still manage to find each other. This commentary sets an axiological tone: while digital tools can eliminate geographical distance, only our willingness to express feelings and nurture relationships imbues those tools with deeper meaning. Technology thus remains a neutral actor it is up to people to transform remote interaction into genuine community.

The story of Peter, who spends Christmas Eve far from his family, extends this concept through narrative. Peter sits down at his laptop and connects with loved ones on-screen, virtually sharing smiles and well wishes. Even though he can see his parents’ faces, hear their voices, and even watch them enjoying holiday dishes at their table, he nonetheless experiences a certain emptiness: the lack of physical presence, the taste of the food, a direct gaze. This absence does not entirely negate the Christmas magic but rather serves as a reminder that, while technology can bridge thousands of miles, it cannot replace living presence. Peter realizes that the miracle of Christmas lies in love and remembrance, and clicks are merely tools enabling contact true warmth, however, arises from his own and his loved ones’ willingness to maintain an emotional bond.

Within the research question’s framework, the thirteenth “micro-meaning” highlights the aspect of transmediality and multi-subjectivity. Here, Christmas does not play out solely in the human-to-human sphere but also through a relationship with technology. Algorithms, pixels, networks, and devices create the infrastructure that makes interaction possible across distances. Yet from a posthumanist perspective, technology does not replace human presence so much as it complements the holiday landscape as another medium for conveying meaning and emotion. The coexistence of people and technology shapes a unique interpretive scene in which the holiday

season can be seen as an ongoing process of negotiating closeness, intimacy, and warmth in a globalized, digital world.

Educationally and culturally, it conveys the lesson that awareness is crucial in using technology. In the era of fast internet connections and video calls, we must remember that a few clicks do not guarantee an authentic encounter. Emotional involvement, an awareness of what connects us, and the ability to sustain relationships remain essential. By weaving together the haiku, the moral, and Peter's story, readers learn that modern Christmas is neither threatened nor saved by technology it is simply a medium requiring a humanistic reflection in order to transform screen presence into a genuine miracle of togetherness.

Thus, the thirteenth "micro-meaning" once again broadens the definition of Christmas, portraying it as a multi-subject, transmedial phenomenon in which humans, communication technologies, memories, and emotions interact, creating meanings that surpass boundaries of time and space.

## 14

The fourteenth "micro-meaning" leads us into the dynamics of a contemporary city and its anonymous crowds, juxtaposing Christmas music with the everyday indifference of people passing each other without a word. The haiku paints a scene: a carol playing through headphones on a busy pedestrian street where everyone remains nameless and silent. This image is a reminder that even the most beautiful holiday sounds lose their unifying potential if not accompanied by openness to another human being. The haiku speaks to a universal experience highlighting the difference between immersing ourselves in a private world (headphones, personal music) and the challenge of building relationships in public spaces.

The moral underscores that decorations and music may delight us, but the true warmth of Christmas emerges when people stop merely passing each other by, break through their anonymity, and share even a single kind word. This message has a distinctly educational and

social dimension: it reminds us that visual and musical culture, as well as ceremonies and aesthetics, are insufficient for creating the essence of Christmas. At its core is interaction exchanging glances, offering small acts of help, and a willingness to pause and show care.

The story of Adam, who listens to carols through his headphones while navigating a crowd, depicts this scenario on a larger narrative canvas. Weighted down by bags and presents, Adam moves among dozens of people who like him are focused on their own concerns. When he notices an elderly man who seems lost, he faces a choice: remove his headphones and ask if the man needs help, or not. This simple gesture turns out to be pivotal, taking off his headphones symbolizes leaving his private bubble and opening up to another person. Offering help, though minor, restores a sense of community and warmth to the city. The story shows how just one small act of kindness can overcome indifference and introduce a bit of Christmas magic into an otherwise anonymous environment.

From the standpoint of the research problem, this “micro-meaning” once again casts Christmas as a field of negotiation among culture, media (including music), technology (headphones, portable audio devices), and human interaction. Although modern surroundings give us access to personal soundtracks and make the world more individualized, they also prompt reflection on the need for shared experiences musical sounds become a private affair, whereas the true exchange of holiday warmth requires dialogue and attention to others. In a posthumanist sense, the urban-technological environment is a multi-subject arena where people, devices, sounds, and architecture collectively create Christmas reality. Nevertheless, it hinges upon human decisions, whether they allow themselves to break free from isolation and restore the communal dimension of the holiday.

Transmedia and the multiplicity of interpretive layers become apparent in moving from the succinct haiku to the reflective moral and then to the story that adds narrative and psychological depth.

Together, they form a space for deeper consideration, a carol playing through headphones is not enough to feel community. You need to take the headphones off, meet a stranger’s gaze, ask if they need help.

Only then does Christmas gain a genuinely humanistic, educational significance, and the bustling pedestrian street becomes a place where people do more than merely brush past one another they unite in spontaneous acts of kindness.

## 15

The fifteenth “micro-meaning” takes up the topic of a virtual encounter with loved ones, confronting us with the question of where the limits of digital presence lie and the role of face-to-face contact in celebrating the holiday. The haiku shows a screen and a person exchanging glances while simultaneously asking, “Where is Christmas Eve?” This brief image succinctly expresses the tension between technology’s ability to bring people together across distances and the intangible essence of celebrating together, which demands more than pixelated shapes on a monitor.

The moral reminds us that neither a glass screen nor a million pixels can replace the glow of real presence. It points to the value of authentic gathering gestures, touch, shared warmth, and the depth of relationships. Culturally and educationally significant, this message prompts us to reflect on our dependence on technology and the assumption that “connecting” online automatically recreates the full Christmas atmosphere. In truth, digital transmission can only mimic certain aspects of contact, leaving an emotional void.

The story of Krzysztof, who sits alone at a table with traditional dishes and a laptop, drives this point home. While his family connects with him by video, laughing, chatting, and sharing memories, the sense of a cozy family hearth is missing. There is no breaking of *opłatek* (traditional Christmas wafer), no physical closeness. Krzysztof realizes that technological tools offer only a visual and auditory substitute, rather than full participation in the Christmas Eve ritual. Real Christmas Eve unfolds in the realm of live experiences, of touch, smell, and that shared silence in the same room not just in a data stream. People, screens, and technological infrastructure all serve as

actors in the holiday setting, but it's up to the individual to decide whether a virtual presence suffices or if they feel the absence of genuine closeness. Here, Christmas becomes a proving ground for negotiated meanings can images and voices flowing through the web make us feel "together"?

Thanks to its transmediality, the reader can interpret this "micro-meaning" on several levels: the haiku introduces the subject and a question, the moral provides an ethical and value-based framework, and the narrative builds a story in which the reader can identify with the protagonist's emotional state. We thus learn that technology, though valuable and helpful, cannot substitute for the full range of human relationships. This is a lesson in recognizing the boundaries of digital connectivity and seeking ways to preserve the holiday's essence rooted in real contact, shared experiences, and the creation of memories that are more than a sum of pixels on a screen.

## 16

The sixteenth "micro-meaning" unfolds in a setting where contact with family takes place through technology online, via a smartphone streaming a Christmas carol. The haiku contrasts this digital transmission of a holiday song with the sound of someone knocking at the door. This contrast draws attention to the difference between virtual, remote presence and the physical act of another person stepping into our space. In the haiku, we see a sort of opposition: an "online" family engaged in virtual caroling versus someone knocking, signifying a real, unfiltered presence.

The moral reminds us that even if we connect through voices and images on the internet, true warmth is born only in a direct encounter with a loved one. It speaks of a "feeling that no screen can replace," pointing out that while technology can be useful, it cannot fully replicate what is most precious in human relationships: touch, face-to-face eye contact, and the exchange of energy that occurs when people are physically together. Thus, the moral serves an educational and



cultural purpose, reminding us of the irreplaceable value of in-person contact.

The story of Mrs. Maria, who has just ended a video call with faraway family members, completes the picture. Although she saw her children and grandchildren on the screen and heard digital carols in her home, she finds herself alone once she hangs up. Despite the residual holiday atmosphere, she misses real presence the shared meal, chats at the table, the squeeze of a hand. At that moment, there is a knock at her door: it is a neighbor, a woman who was not previously a close acquaintance. Her unexpected gesture arriving with a basket of gingerbread, well-wishes, and a desire to chat infuses the home with genuine warmth. They become more than silent neighbors: they forge a semblance of family, based not on biological ties but on a willingness to share time and attention.

Regarding the research problem, the sixteenth “micro-meaning” shows how a transmedial combination of poetry (haiku), moral, and narrative reveals the complex landscape of today’s Christmas. On one hand, we have the internet, screens, and digital communication a wide array of technical possibilities for connecting people across distances. On the other, there is the simple, direct contact with someone next door who crosses our threshold, embodying the values referenced by poetry and reflection: authentic warmth, expressed through small gestures and conversation.

From a posthumanist standpoint, the network, smartphone, and pixels form an infrastructure of meaning, but it is human readiness to step beyond the virtual comfort zone that makes Christmas feel complete.

In educational and cultural terms, it is a reminder that even in an era of widespread digital connectivity, we must not lose our sensitivity to the real people around us. Transmediality allows us to experience this lesson on multiple levels aesthetic (poetry), ethical (the moral), and narrative (the story). Consequently, Christmas emerges as a space for negotiating between virtual presence and real encounters. A knock at the door can symbolize the transition from the digital age to a time when we appreciate a simple, human gesture something so basic yet so valuable, especially as technology increasingly permeates our world.

The seventeenth “micro-meaning” addresses holiday greetings and interpersonal relationships in an era of constant commercialization and technology-dominated communication. The haiku shows screens displaying emailed best wishes and notes that “the store is still open” hinting that Christmas well wishes have been molded into a marketing logic that no longer requires face-to-face meetings or personal reflection. One senses in the haiku a dissonance between the simplified formula of electronic greetings and the need for something more genuine.

The moral emphasizes that beautiful images and prewritten phrases cannot replace a heartfelt word, the smell of paper, or the personal touch of a pen. This reflection highlights the tension between the convenience and speed of digital greetings and the culturally ingrained value of authentic memory and individual effort. The moral points to the fact that genuine relationships demand more than minimal gestures clicks or mass emails. This has an educational and axiological dimension: it reminds us that Christmas is an opportunity to reconsider how we communicate with others and what we might cultivate for richer, more enduring relationships.

The story “A Soulless Delivery” introduces a scene at a small shop where one can still purchase something other than digital greeting templates. Passersby, rushed and disconnected from each other, stare at their phone screens while the city glitters with colorful lights and device notifications. Kasia’s arrival at the shop represents a shift in attitude from sending out mass virtual greetings toward making a personal, handwritten gesture. She returns to a simple method—a paper card—on which she pens her words to a friend by hand. Though small, this act carries enormous symbolic power, it stands as proof of genuine care, a moment spent choosing the right words, and conveying emotions in a form that cannot be reduced to just another email in someone’s inbox.

In the context of the research problem, the seventeenth “micro-meaning” portrays the transmedial, multi-subject nature of Christmas

in a world overwhelmed by digital communication and consumerist frenzy. Electronic cards, screens, servers, and cities brimming with advertisements are among the actors shaping people's experiences. Yet, it is the individual in this case, Kasia who decides whether to yield to the automatic superficial gestures or search for a more genuine form of expression. A posthumanist sensitivity here involves recognizing the relationships among humans, technology, and objects paper, a pen, modest gifts that gain agency by enabling a deeper renewal of meaning.

Educationally and culturally, this "micro-meaning" draws attention to how we communicate during the holiday season. The convenience of visually appealing e-greetings can easily replace the slower, less efficient but more personal ritual of writing letters. Yet both the moral and the story remind us that while such gestures are more time-consuming and labor-intensive, they carry a greater power to connect us on an emotional, more intimate level a connection we are likely to remember.

Thus, the seventeenth "micro-meaning" reiterates that Christmas is a time of negotiating values and communication methods. By juxtaposing poetry, a moral, and a narrative, we see that to give holiday encounters deeper meaning, it is worth seeking authenticity something that can be easily blurred in the digital age. Restoring true warmth in relationships often depends on small, spontaneous acts of personal memory, care, and creative imagination.

## 18

The eighteenth "micro-meaning" focuses on the sensory and symbolic-cultural dimension of the holidays, reminding us that their essence is not limited to visual decorations or technological conveniences alone. The haiku presents the aroma of gingerbread and the taste of Christmas wafer in a child's mouth, emphasizing the role of flavor, scent, and touch in shaping the holiday experience.

The moral underlines that the tastes and aromas of Christmas provide not only pleasure for the palate but also a gentle lesson in how memories, love, and tradition intertwine in the simplest gestures.

Educationally and axiologically, it reminds us that Christmas is a time in which sensory experiences spiced aromas, the crispness of the wafer, the warmth of the kitchen bring generations together and allow us to appreciate how deeply our family and cultural heritage runs. The moral leads us to understand that, during the holiday season, what we sense and taste is just as important as what we see, even small rituals can carry profound meanings.

The story of a boy and his grandmother expands on this idea. In a kitchen fragrant with gingerbread, the child learns that Christmas is not merely a series of actions but emerges from memory, care, and the stories handed down within the family. The wafer the grandmother offers her grandson becomes a symbol of unity, of sharing not just food but also memories and values. The gingerbread's aroma and the taste of the wafer merge with the story the grandmother tells, through which the boy comes to realize that the meaning of Christmas is far richer than the ritual itself it is about forming identity, strengthening intergenerational bonds, and building cultural awareness.

In the context of the research problem, this "micro-meaning" shows that even without overt technological or posthumanist themes, holiday understanding can still be multi-subject and transmedial. This time, the emphasis falls on the relationships among people, food, and sensory experiences, in which seemingly neutral objects and substances (gingerbread, the wafer) also participate. These elements acquire symbolic power, co-creating the holiday experience. Aromas and flavors wordless though they may be become actors in a cultural drama, passing meaning directly into the recipient's memory and emotions.

The educational aspect of this example reveals how the holidays can serve as a lesson in attentiveness to the subtle stimuli that strengthen family bonds and traditions. The child learns that simple actions like sharing a wafer or tasting gingerbread can convey deep symbolic content. In a world often dominated by images and sounds, this "micro-meaning" reminds us of the role of the other senses in constructing holiday memories and cultural identity.

In this way, the eighteenth "micro-meaning" completes the portrait of Christmas as a multidimensional phenomenon encompassing not

only technology, images, words, or melodies, but also flavors, aromas, and gestures rooted in long-standing customs. Ultimately, it is the taste of gingerbread and the gentle aftertaste of the wafer combined with the grandmother's stories that help the boy grasp that the essence of Christmas lies in values arising among people, drawn from memory and passed from one generation to the next, anchored in experiences that no set of instructions or digital transmission can ever fully capture.

## 19

The nineteenth “micro-meaning” transports us into a landscape of memories and digital archives, where “Silent Night on the web” becomes a playful metaphor. The haiku speaks of “dead profiles” flickering in the December data a suggestion that the virtual world stores traces of human activity preserved on servers like digital monuments to the past, yet lacking living interaction and presence.

The moral reminds us that virtual traces cannot replace human presence even if data remains stored and accessible, it cannot evoke the warmth of conversation or the tenderness of a meeting. This commentary reflects a key thread in contemporary culture: the digitization of memory makes past contacts, events, and emotions accessible with a few clicks, yet they remain inert, stripped of current life and the possibility of genuine dialogue. The moral thus takes on an educational and axiological dimension, highlighting the limits of purely digital relationships and of confining memories to static, un updated profiles.

The story of Antoni develops this reflection further. On a December evening, surrounded by holiday decorations and the scent of pine needles, Antoni browses old, long-unvisited online profiles of friends with whom he once shared time and emotions. Now these profiles have become dusty windows onto the past: photos from years ago, out-of-date posts, and references to relationships that once were.

Christmas, a time meant to radiate warmth and closeness, here reveals nostalgia, emptiness, and longing. The memories Antoni finds in digital form cannot substitute for real contact. He realizes that he needs to go beyond the screen make a call, arrange a visit, write a personal letter to restore living connections and find renewed meaning in this December night.

In terms of the research problem, the nineteenth “micro-meaning” demonstrates another facet of the complexity of Christmas as a multi-subject, transmedial phenomenon. On the technological side, we have servers, data, and archives of digital memories but it is ultimately the individual’s choices that determine whether Christmas becomes an opportunity to renew bonds or remains a mere digital echo of past connections. From a posthumanist perspective, the digital infrastructure preserves fragments of human activity but cannot revive former feelings or interactions. Consequently, both material and immaterial elements (bits of data, old photos, broken links, forgotten accounts) take part in forming a distinct interpretive space, in which the meaning of Christmas is suspended between the present and the past, between what is alive and what is merely documented.

Educationally and culturally, this “micro-meaning” teaches us that although digital tools and archives do have value in preserving history, they do not guarantee genuine connection or the renewal of emotional ties. If Christmas is to be a time of true closeness, one must go beyond the cool glow of a monitor, beyond dormant profiles and static data. By deciding to call family and friends, Antoni enacts the message of the moral, it is necessary to take active steps toward meeting and conversation, so that the warmth of the holidays can become real not merely an entry on a server.

Hence, the nineteenth “micro -meaning” reminds us that even though we can interpret Christmas in the digital age with the help of algorithms, profiles, and online archives, it still requires human involvement, caring, and the willingness to overcome technological intermediaries. In a world full of stored data and inactive profiles, the responsibility falls on us to make the holidays meaningful and alive.

The twentieth “micro-meaning” centers on a small human gesture capable of lighting up an anonymous crowd and sparking hope. The haiku describes a warm hand in another’s amid a nameless throng, where a single simple act of kindness ignites the spark of possibility. The juxtaposition of a crowd countless strangers with one caring clasp of hands underscores that even in the most impersonal surroundings, there is room for compassion and empathy. A handshake is a gesture universally understood, transcending language and cultural barriers.

The moral reminds us that in a crowd full of anonymous faces, one modest act of kindness can spark a light of hope. Educationally and ethically, this reflection indicates that the holiday season (though the haiku does not explicitly mention Christmas, the context of the collection implies it) need not be confined to decorations, carols, or family rituals. The true essence of the holidays can be revealed in focusing on someone else, a willingness to break through day-to-day indifference. In a world where people frequently pass one another without even glancing up, a single gesture can remind us that each of us carries the capacity for empathy and understanding within.

The story of Anna, who notices a lost child in a crowded urban setting, brings these ideas to life through a concrete plot. On one hand, there is a busy street, with countless bowed heads, smartphone screens, and thoughtful passersby. On the other hand, there is a solitary child, whose tears and anxiety go unnoticed in a sea of anonymous faces. Yet when Anna removes the invisible barrier of indifference, approaches the child, and gently takes his hand, a brief but meaningful bond is created. A spark of hope is lit not only in the child’s heart but also in Anna’s, who discovers within herself the power of a gesture that can dispel the coldness of the big city. When the boy’s mother finds him, their exchange of glances and gratitude confirms the transformation of public space from one of anonymity to one of shared sympathy.

From the standpoint of the research problem, this story and “micro-meaning” deepen our view of the multi-subject and transmedial nature of holiday interpretations. While there is no

explicit mention of technology or nature here, the context of shifting social conditions is evident urban anonymity, hurried routines, fragmented relationships. A human gesture serves as the means of transferring holiday values into an everyday scenario. Poetry (the haiku), the moral, and the short story together form a narrative fabric through which the reader perceives the many dimensions of the holiday season. Christmas is not solely a domestic ritual; it can manifest in public spaces and interactions with strangers if people decide to act in a spirit of solidarity.

Educationally, this “micro-meaning” reminds us that the holidays can inspire us to recognize the human being in the person before us, even in a crowd of strangers. Amid haste and the distractions of the digital world, a simple handclasp becomes a symbol of transcending silence and indifference. The city, the crowd, the sense of estrangement none of these need imply a lack of warmth or significance. All it takes is a moment of readiness to stop, to look into the eyes of someone who needs help, and to reach out a helping hand.

Thus, the twentieth “micro-meaning” completes the image of the holidays as a time of potential transformation in social relations. Among seas of anonymity, one gesture can kindle a spark of hope, reminding us that Christmas regardless of whether it is a family gathering at home or chance encounters in the city can become a sphere where people rediscover compassion, empathy, and shared humanity.

## 21

The twenty-first “micro-meaning” focuses on the relationship between people and technology in the context of Christmas, posing the question of whether digital infrastructure, algorithms, and servers can fill the void once occupied by direct interaction. The haiku depicts an artificial Christmas tree beside which “servers play a carol,” while people celebrate. It suggests a contrast: on one hand, traditional holiday motifs (the tree, carols), and on the other, a technological



environment (servers, an artificial tree) that removes humans from their former privileged central position. Whether we like it or not, technology becomes an integral part of the Christmas experience.

The moral indicates that although technology can connect us with the entire world, true closeness arises in the moments when we can look away from our screens and notice the people around us. This educational and axiological message touches the core issue: modern day Christmas is an arena of negotiation between digital tools and the need for human contact. The moral does not advocate rejecting technology but rather using it wisely, with an awareness that no digital medium can replace attentive, physical, and emotional presence.

The story of Piotr and his family expands on these reflections. Although everyone is gathered in the same apartment, each person is engrossed in their own devices and online activities: Kasia is attending a virtual meeting, their mother browses the news, and their father is ordering products online. Technology connects them to the global network yet divides them in their home space. The artificial tree, perfect and sterile, glitters in the background, and an online radio streams a carol via servers but the depth of human interaction is missing.

Only when Piotr suggests sitting together to talk about Christmases past, the scent of a real spruce tree, and how Grandpa used to play carols, does a breakthrough occur. His gesture symbolizes a conscious return to more direct relationships, bridging the gap between the human and the digital. It is not about rejecting technology outright but about subordinating it to values that give the holiday meaning.

A posthumanist perspective underscores that the tree (now artificial rather than natural), servers, algorithms, communication tools, and humans all form a shared network of relationships and interactions. Christmas is no longer solely an anthropocentric event rooted in nature and local tradition but a fluid arrangement of humans, objects, and technological systems. Ultimately, however, it remains up to the individual to decide whether to be reduced to a passive recipient of digital signals or to use technology as a tool for strengthening relationships and recalling cherished values of the past.

The educational takeaway is clear, even in the digital age, Christmas can still be a time of bonding and reminiscence, provided we do not lose the ability to connect genuinely and face-to-face. The flawless sterility of an artificial tree and carols generated by servers can serve as background a complement rather than a substitute for real celebration. Thus, this “micro-meaning” teaches that a posthumanist holiday reality calls for critical consciousness, to notice the person beside us and value what makes our community truly alive.

## 22

The twenty-second “micro-meaning” reveals how crucial books can be in shaping and renewing Christmas meanings. They are silent witnesses to bygone times, carriers of traditions, rituals, and stories. The haiku conjures an image of whispered words in a library, of an old man with a book reflected in his eyes, where “one can speak of the holidays.” Through this poetic lens, a compact message emerges, books are not only sources of knowledge but also emotional links between past and present, between the words on the page and what awakens in our minds and hearts during reading.

The moral reminds us that books safeguard the treasures of tradition and emotion, and by reading them attentively and with an open heart, we can recreate lost rituals and give the holidays a depth connecting the past with the present. Educationally and axiologically, the comment points out that the holidays need not be reduced to customs devoid of context. Through recorded stories, one can once again “see” old ways of celebrating, recall the meaning behind carols, customs, and symbols that may not be immediately clear in today’s busy world.

The story of an old man in the library and a young student develops these notions further, shifting from the haiku’s symbolic image to a specific setting. The library bathed in silence and dim light appears to be a place where time flows differently. The old man is reading a book on winter rituals, softly repeating old songs and poems. He becomes a living bridge between literature and culture, between

written words and living memory. The student, weary of modern hustle and longing for holiday warmth, finds inspiration in meeting this reader and hearing what he reads an ember that allows her to rediscover what the holiday season means and to fill an emotional gap. The book, which “comes to life when someone opens it,” becomes a metaphor for the holidays as a ritual that must be practiced and interpreted with awareness if it is to gain true power.

Regarding the research problem, this “micro-meaning” moves technology and posthumanist relationships into the background, instead highlighting tradition, the past, and intergenerational exchange of meaning. Multi-subjectivity and transmediality manifest themselves in the interplay between humans (the old man and the student), cultural texts (the book), the place (the library), and the seasonal context (the upcoming holiday). Each of these elements contributes to how we understand Christmas.

Though the posthumanist perspective may be subtle here, it appears in the notion that objects (books) and spaces (the library) likewise shape cultural experience. Christmas does not solely reside within us but also within artifacts that preserve meaning, waiting for us to bring them to life through reading and interpretation.

From an educational viewpoint, it is a lesson in the importance of drawing consciously on written traditions and in appreciating the values hidden in texts that have accumulated new meanings over time. It is also a reminder that the holidays can be revived in our minds and hearts if we allow ourselves time for thoughtful reading and reflection on texts and on our own lives. In this way, the twenty-second “micro-meaning” proposes a more contemplative and literary angle on understanding the holiday season, restoring attention to its deeper, symbolic-cultural dimension. These aspects can survive in books and memory and can inspire us when we seek meaning and warmth in the cold winter.

## 23

The twenty-third “micro-meaning” addresses a fundamental question that arises in the hush of the holidays a child asks their

mother what love is. The haiku depicts a scenario in which the holiday atmosphere, silence, and a direct question form the starting point for deeper contemplation. Regardless of the language in which the poem is repeated, the child's query "What is love?" resonates with a universal human experience: the need to grasp the essential values and bonds that hold family, culture, and community together.

The moral reminds us that love does not require grand words or gestures, but consists of simple acts, care, and tenderness that weave our lives into a single story. This observation is clearly axiological and educational it shows that during the holidays, not only customs and traditions accumulate but, above all, interpersonal relationships. As the moral explains, love need not be defined with lofty concepts; it lies in everyday, gentle gestures: caring for each other, remembering those who came before us, and devoting time and attention to those we hold dear.

The story "A Secret Under the Christmas Tree" develops this idea by depicting a child and mother together by the tree in the quiet dimness of Christmas Eve. The child, drawn in by the holiday spirit, asks what love is. The mother explains with the simplest examples baking gingerbread with someone else's preferences in mind, taking the time to call Grandma, and so on showing that love is present wherever care and engagement are shown. This domestic scene reveals that the values handed down in the family and during the holiday season are not mere abstractions but living practices the child can witness and adopt.

From the perspective of the research problem, this final "micro-meaning" draws together the effort to understand Christmas as a phenomenon that is multi-subject, transmedial, and in some sense posthumanist. After examining technology, nature, objects, memory, and social tensions, we return to the heart of the matter: interpersonal relationships and the values that bind them. Love, in this context, becomes the key that crosses boundaries between generations, between material and symbolic realms, between what is present and what is remembered. Christmas becomes a time when the question of love reverberates intensely, and the answer is not a definition but the everyday practice of kindness, tenderness, and remembrance.

The transmediality of these final elements haiku, moral, and story rests in moving from a condensed poetic question to a reflection on values, and from there to a narrative that illustrates this reflection in a particular family setting. Educationally and culturally, it is a reminder that, even though we frequently invoke love in holiday wishes, it must be embodied in day-to-day life, in our gestures, words, and attitudes.

Ultimately, the twenty-third “micro-meaning” serves as a unifying frame for the entire set. After pondering technology, relationships, memories, objects, traditions, and culture, we come back to the most basic, simplest, and yet most crucial experience, love is made of small but significant acts that give meaning to our togetherness. The holidays allow us to see this truth more clearly, transforming it into the final moral and message of this entire reflection on this exceptional.



**V**

**The Metaverse Exhibition**





This book is not merely a compilation of literary and visual works; it also serves as a conduit to a newly emerging artistic realm. In an age where the borders between physical and digital spheres continue to dissolve, the Metaverse arises as a novel domain for creative and scholarly exploration. Conceptually, the Metaverse comprises interconnected virtual environments in which users can interact, craft content, and immerse themselves in art forms that extend well beyond traditional mediums. Unlike exhibitions confined to physical galleries, these online spaces facilitate multilayered engagement, transforming art and literature from static artifacts into dynamic, participatory experiences.

To complement the material presented in this volume, I have curated a virtual exhibition in Spatial, a platform that enables individuals to traverse digital galleries and engage with works in ways that merge technology, aesthetic design, and creative imagination. Titled “A Metaverse Journey Through Poetry and AI Image,” this exhibition transports the central themes of the book into a digital environment, where haiku and AI-generated imagery coalesce to exemplify the fluid dialogue between tradition and technological innovation.

Within this virtual setting, the haiku acquires an additional dimension: it converges with AI-driven visuals to produce layered meanings that extend beyond purely textual interpretation. Each poem is paired with an image generated by artificial intelligence, which not only complements the verse but also expands its thematic horizons, prompting visitors to probe the edges of language and representation. In navigating these poetic “micro-worlds,” viewers encounter a dynamic interplay of sound, movement, and user-driven interaction that reshapes the way we perceive both text and image.

From an academic perspective, this approach opens new avenues for studying how cultural heritage and storytelling adapt to contemporary digital platforms. It suggests that works of literature need no longer exist solely as two dimensional texts but may instead

function as transmedia experiences. The interplay of algorithmic aesthetics (via AI generated images) with concise poetic form underscores the capacity of digital media to deepen interpretive possibilities, thereby offering researchers and practitioners in the humanities a fresh lens on reader response theory, digital literacy, and the multimodal dissemination of literature.

One of the hallmark features of virtual galleries is their capacity to redefine audience engagement. Traditional gallery-goers passively view works, whereas in the Metaverse, audiences become interactors who determine the pacing and mode of their encounter with each exhibit. This sense of agency parallels trends in new media art, where the boundaries of authorship, spectator, and participant merge. Visitors to the “A Metaverse Journey Through Poetry and AI Image” exhibition can explore each haiku at their own tempo, zoom in on details, experiment with the viewpoint, and contextualize the works against the digital environment functions that amplify the sense of immersion and cognitive participation.

By highlighting the dynamic nature of user interactions, the exhibition also touches on broader academic dialogues around digital curation and experiential design. Scholars of media studies, visual culture, and digital humanities may find in this project a microcosm of how storytelling evolves when reframed as an interactive event. Similarly, educators who seek to incorporate emerging technologies into learning contexts can glean insights into how poetry, visual arts, and embodied virtual engagement converge to stimulate critical thinking and interpretive skills.

A core intention of this Metaverse exhibition is to challenge and expand the ways we construct and experience meaning. As the lines between the “real” and the “virtual” become more permeable, our sense of presence and engagement transforms accordingly. The intangible space of the Metaverse reveals potential for collaborative creativity, in which multiple users can gather synchronously, experiencing and even co-creating new interpretations in real time. This phenomenon invites reflection on phenomenology in the digital

realm, how do we perceive texture, form, and emotional resonance when physical embodiment is replaced or augmented by a virtual presence?

Moreover, the exhibition underscores the evolving conception of “authenticity” in digital art. While haiku roots itself in centuries of poetic tradition, AI-generated images symbolize a leap into contemporary methods of creativity an emblem of algorithmic aesthetics and machine learning. This merging of historical form with advanced software platforms places visitors at the intersection of cultural continuity and technological progress, urging them to ponder how tradition endures, adapts, or reinvents itself in these novel contexts.

## How to Join?

Link for Haiku Lobby: <https://www.spatial.io/s/Mr-Mikes-Virtual-Hangout-67b09ddf570c20fd0707a5f4>

Click the link: <https://www.spatial.io/s/A-Metaverse-Journey-Through-Poetry-and-AI-Image-67b0a2da570c20fd0707bc25?share=4527364204288697206>

Or scan the QR code below:



📍 The QR code will directly transport you to the virtual gallery. Simply use a smart-phone or tablet to scan the code and immediately step into the world of hybrid art.

🌟 I encourage you to immerse yourself in this unique space, where the boundaries between reality and imagination dissolve.

Once inside, you can navigate freely throughout the space, approaching each haiku-and-visual pair at your own pace. The architectural design of the gallery, combined with the interplay of text, image, and environment, sets the stage for an immersive, exploratory experience. Whether you choose to simply observe or take an active role in interpreting and discussing each piece, the platform fosters a social dimension often absent in conventional museums, with opportunities for real-time feedback and dialogue.

Ultimately, this fusion of poetry, AI-generated visuals, and interactive technologies situates the holiday of haiku in a broader ecosystem of digital metamorphosis encouraging us to consider how new media shape not just our artistic output but also our very modes of thought, communication, and collaboration. In so doing, it reaffirms that at the center of every technological shift lies the human capacity for wonder, interpretation, and collective participation. I invite you to step into this liminal territory, reflect on the interplay of tradition and innovation, and carry forward the insights gained in both scholarly investigation and personal exploration.

“Where words meet worlds, imagination unfolds.”

## Conclusion (Expanded)

The analysis of the 23 “micro-meanings” sequences composed of haiku (in both Polish and English), AI-generated imagery, reflective morals, and short narratives reveals a complex, multifaceted depiction of Christmas cultural practices in the era of new media. Each micro-meaning introduces a distinct scene, emotional context, or relational dynamic, thereby progressively broadening our understanding of Christmas from both a traditional standpoint and from posthumanism, transmedia, and multi-subject perspectives. This multilayered approach points to the ways in which holiday rituals and their associated symbols are shaped, challenged, and revitalized by contemporary media landscapes.

The collected micro-meanings affirm that Christmas is not merely a collection of preset rituals and symbols but rather a dynamic arena wherein meanings are continually negotiated, remixed, and reinterpreted. Diverse actors humans, objects, nature, technology, memory, cultural texts all feature prominently. From scenes of a child using a smartphone, to families reuniting, to Christmas trees made of books, digital connectivity, or encounters with strangers in crowded urban spaces, each scenario underscores the fluid and multifaceted nature of the holiday as a living cultural practice open to continuous redefinition.

This insight resonates with theoretical frameworks that view culture as a **network of relations** (human and non-human alike), highlighting how **rituals, artifacts, and technologies** intersect to construct social and symbolic realities. The emergent picture is that of an adaptive, evolving phenomenon rather than a static or monolithic tradition a view that aligns closely with **cultural anthropology** and **media studies** approaches to ritual transformation in a digitized, globalized age.

The structural design haiku, AI-generated image, moral, and short narrative creates a transmedia research environment. As readers traverse poetry (concise and metaphorical), images (visual representations inspired by textual motifs), moral statements (brief but value laden reflections), and more extended prose storytelling, they discover that holiday meanings manifest at the intersection of multiple media forms. Consequently, Christmas is not represented as a closed set of customs but as an open, evolving process in which old and new media, conventional practices, and innovative interpretations coalesce.

From a methodological standpoint, the incorporation of transmediality aligns with scholarship in multimodal discourse analysis and digital humanities. By juxtaposing linguistic, visual, and narrative elements, one can probe how each contributes to the construction of meaning. In doing so, these sequences offer a rich laboratory for exploring how texts, images, and reflexive commentaries can reframe cultural rituals, fostering new insights into the interplay of tradition and invention.

Within these micro-meanings, the human being is not the sole originator of meaning. Natural and artificial Christmas trees, AI-generated images, ordinary objects (straw, wafers, gingerbread, paper cards, laptops), as well as environmental elements (snow, forest, rain) and digital memory archives, all co-determine how the holiday is perceived. This expanded field of actors mirrors posthumanism theory, which stresses that agency is distributed among human and non-human entities alike, ranging from the ecological domain to technological infrastructures.

By weaving in these diverse agents, Christmas emerges as a relational phenomenon that binds people, technologies, natural forces, material objects, and historical narratives into one ecosystem of meaning-making. Such a perspective highlights that reinterpreting Christmas equates to reinterpreting our interconnections with a broad array of cultural co-creators a viewpoint also corroborated by actor-network theory and similar frameworks that decentralize the human subject in favor of a more networked understanding of cultural practices.

The morals embedded in each micro-meaning foreground values such as empathy, love, mindful attention to others, care for memory, and the ability to read subtle cultural signals. In a media-saturated world, these micro-meanings prompt a critical examination of how globalizing forces, digital communication, and consumerism can simultaneously threaten and revitalize deeper communal bonds and long-standing traditions.

This duality resonates with current debates in media ethics and critical cultural studies, while new media can erode certain habitual frameworks (by reshaping how we gather, communicate, and symbolize the holiday), it may also enable fresh forms of connection, innovation, and resilience. As these micro-meanings suggest, the symbolic discourse of Christmas is open for ongoing negotiation, bridging the virtual and the real, the commercial and the intimate, and the aesthetic and the ethical.

The overarching goal of this study was to discern how the set of 23 “micro-meanings” might contribute to a re-interpretation of Christmas practices in a milieu defined by digital technology and media hybridity. The analysis demonstrates that decomposing holiday experiences into a series of transmedia modules captures a process whereby Christmas transitions into a fluid, open structure of layered meanings. Readers gain the chance to compare traditional symbols (trees, cribs, carols) with their digital or commercial analogs and to juxtapose conventional visual standards with poetry, prose, and new media forms. As a result, Christmas becomes a critical site for exploring affective attachment, nostalgia, creativity, and reflection on the role of objects, the natural world, technology, and memory in constructing and sustaining cultural ritual.

The findings confirm that Christmas can serve as a laboratory for creative reinterpretation in the digital age an occasion not for discarding tradition, but for consciously negotiating and refreshing it. The micro-meanings encourage a recognition of Christmas as a multidimensional phenomenon where technological inventions and handwritten greetings, global connectivity and local memories, artificial trees and gingerbread scents, silent digital profiles and face-to-face encounters can all coexist. Each illustrates the ongoing potential

to merge heritage with novelty, forging new paths of communal experience.

From a methodological perspective, this transmedia approach offers more than insights into contemporary transformations of Christmas it can be broadly applied to analyze other cultural practices, religious and secular festivals, familial ceremonies, and other communal events. By incorporating diverse forms and channels of meaning poetic, visual, narrative, digital, and material scholars and practitioners alike can more fully appreciate how individuals renew and adapt their rituals in a rapidly shifting world.

In this sense, transmedia analysis of “micro-meanings” emerges as a versatile research tool, capable of detecting subtle cultural processes and unveiling the complexities of modern rites. Combined with a multi-subject perspective that recognizes humans, objects, environments, and technologies as co-creators of meaning, it enables us not only to reinterpret Christmas practices but also to achieve a more nuanced understanding of contemporary communication, consumption patterns, and identity formation. Such an integrated view calls attention to culture as a continuous process of invention, revealing how heritage endures even thrives when engaged in conversation with new media and shifting human needs.

In short, these 23 micro-meanings demonstrate the remarkable capacity of transmedia storytelling to illuminate how time-honored rituals survive, transform, and flourish within the fluid contexts of digital modernity.



# Bibliography

- Anderson, V. (2013). *Research methods in human resource management: Investigating a business issue* (3rd ed.). London: Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.
- Appadurai, A. (1996). *Modernity at large: Cultural dimensions of globalisation*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Barad, K. (2007). *Meeting the universe halfway: Quantum physics and the entanglement of matter and meaning*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Braidotti, R. (2013). *The posthuman*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.
- Buckingham, D. (2007). *Beyond technology: Children's learning in the age of digital culture*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Clandinin, D. J., & Connelly, F. M. (2000). *Narrative inquiry: Experience and story in qualitative research*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Czarniawska, B. (2004). *Narratives in social science research*. London: Sage Publications.
- Ellis, C., & Bochner, A. P. (2000). Autoetnografia, narracja osobista, refleksyjność: Badacz jako podmiot. W N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Red.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (2. wyd., s. 733–768). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Ellis, C., Adams, T. E., & Bochner, A. P. (2011). Autoethnography: An overview. *Historical Social Research*, 36(4), 273–290. <https://doi.org/10.12759/hsr.36.2011.4.273-290>
- Ellis, C., Adams, T. E., & Bochner, A. P. (2011). Autoetnografia: Przegląd. *Historical Social Research*, 36(4), 273–290. <https://doi.org/10.12759/hsr.36.2011.4.273-290>
- Ferrando, F. (2019). *Philosophical posthumanism*. Londyn: Bloomsbury Academic.
- Floridi, L., & Sanders, J. W. (2004). On the morality of artificial agents. *Minds and Machines*, 14(3), 349–379. <https://doi.org/10.1023/B:MIND.0000035461.63578.9d>
- Gadamer, H.-G. (1975). *Truth and method*. New York: Seabury Press.
- Geertz, C. (2005). *Interpretacja kultur: Wybrane eseje* (M. M. Piechaczek, Tłum.). Kraków: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego.
- Geertz, C. (2017). *The interpretation of cultures* (3rd ed.). New York: Basic Books.
- Hall, S. (1997). *Representation: Cultural representations and signifying practices*. London: Sage Publications.
- Haraway, D. J. (1991). *Simians, cyborgs, and women: The reinvention of nature*. New York: Routledge.
- Jenkins, H. (2006). *Convergence culture: Where old and new media collide*. New York: New York University Press.
- Jenkins, H. (2006). *Convergence culture: Where old and new media collide*. New York: New York University Press.
- Knox, J. (2020). Artificial intelligence and education in China. *Learning, Media and Technology*, 45(3), 298–311. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17439884.2020.1754236>

- Kress, G., & van Leeuwen, T. (2001). *Multimodal discourse: The modes and media of contemporary communication*. London: Arnold.
- Livingstone, S. (2009). *Children and the internet: Great expectations and challenging realities*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Manovich, L. (2001). *The language of new media*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Milbank, J. (2006). *Theology and social theory: Beyond secular reason* (2nd ed.). Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.
- Miller, S. J. (2015). *A queer literacy framework: Promoting (a)gender and (a)sexuality self-determination and justice*. New York: Routledge.
- Perzycka-Borowska, E., & Parchimowicz, M. (2023). *Hybrid touching the magic of Christmas through haiku whispers*. Londyn: PUNO Press.
- Pink, S. (2013). *Doing visual ethnography* (3rd ed.). London: SAGE Publications.
- Pink, S. (2015). *Doing sensory ethnography* (2nd ed.). New York: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Rajewsky, I. O. (2005). Intermediality, intertextuality, and remediation: A literary perspective on intermediality. *Intermedialités*, (6), 43–64. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1005505ar>
- Ricoeur, P. (1971). *Hermeneutics and the human sciences: Essays on language, action and interpretation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Riessman, C. K. (2008). *Narrative methods for the human sciences*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications.
- Ryan, M.-L. (2005). Introduction. W D. Herman, M. Jahn, & M.-L. Ryan (Red.), *The Routledge encyclopedia of narrative theory* (s. ix–xxii). London: Routledge.
- Ryan, M.-L., Emerson, L., & Robertson, B. (Red.). (2014). *The Johns Hopkins guide to digital media*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Sierp, A., & Törnquist-Plewa, B. (Eds.). (2016). *Disputed memory: Emotions and memory politics in Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe*. De Gruyter. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110453539>
- Spivak, G. C. (1993). *Outside in the teaching machine*. Nowy Jork: Routledge.
- Ueda, M. (1991). *Bashō and his interpreters: Selected hokku with commentary*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Venuti, L. (1995). *The translator's invisibility: A history of translation*. Londyn: Routledge.
- Ward, G. (2003). *True religion*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

