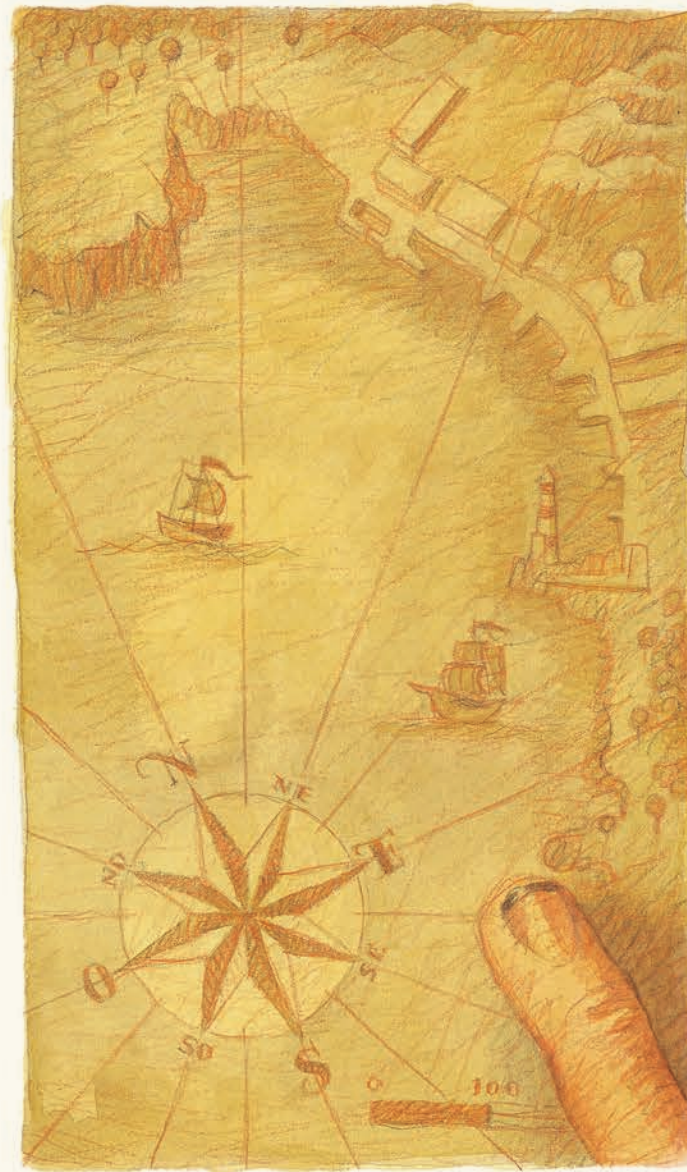


When I was a child, my father was away.
He came home only once a year, for two weeks.
He smelled of the sea, my father. That's because he was a pirate.

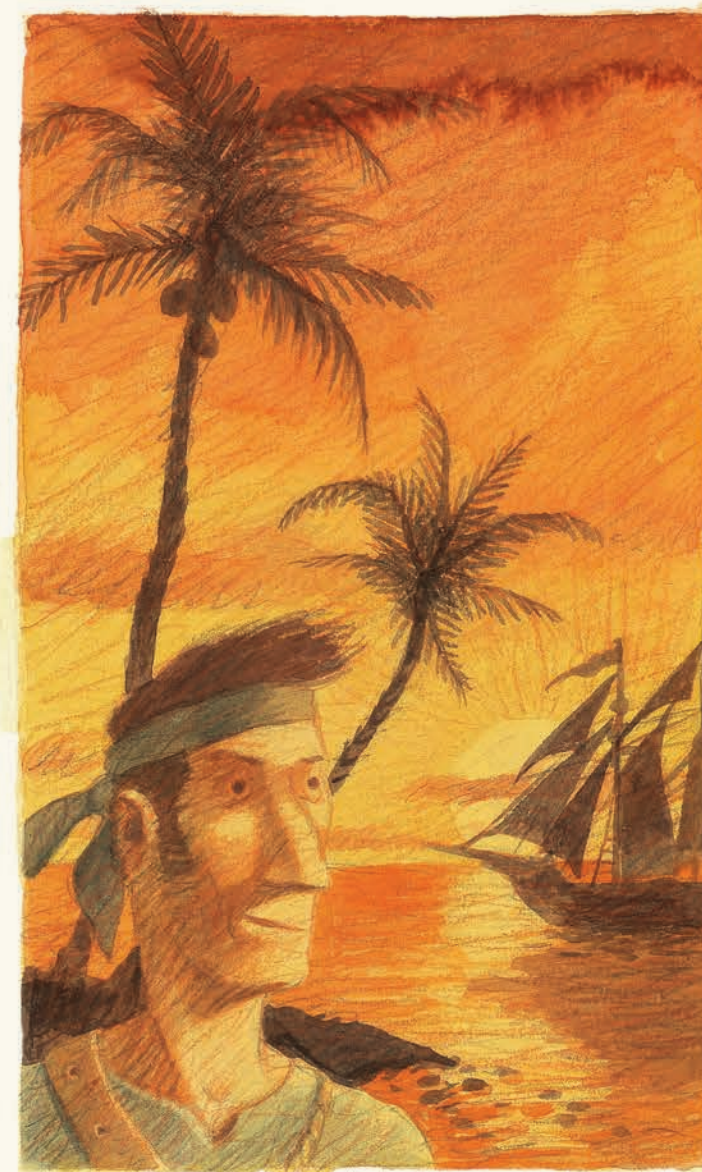
A **great** pirate.



After he arrived, my father took me on his knee,
opened a large map that smelled of dust,
and showed me all the places where he had been.
And for every place, he told me of a ship that had been attacked,
and how many times they decided to save the lives of sailors
in exchange for all the treasure they had.

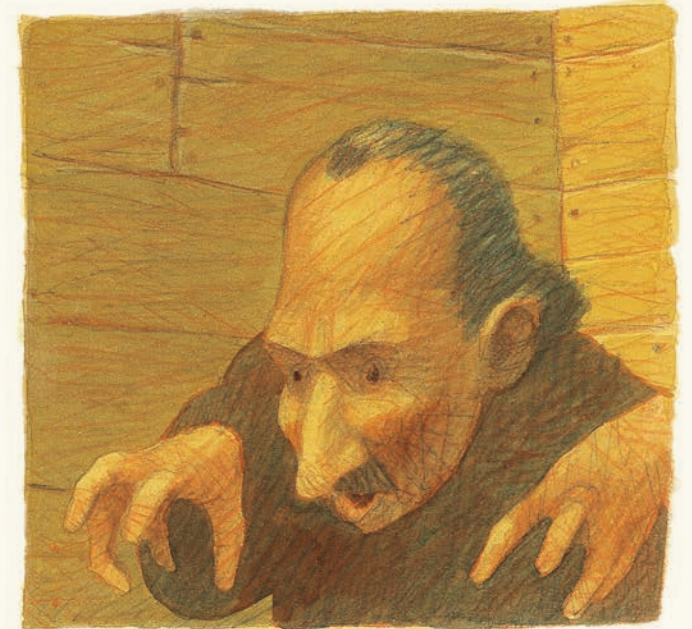


At home, however, we never had treasure.
“Papa, please bring home some treasure?” I asked him.
And he began to laugh:
“Why, the treasure’s in a safe place
that only I and The Tattooed One know about!”



My father was part of a crew,

and I knew everyone's name.



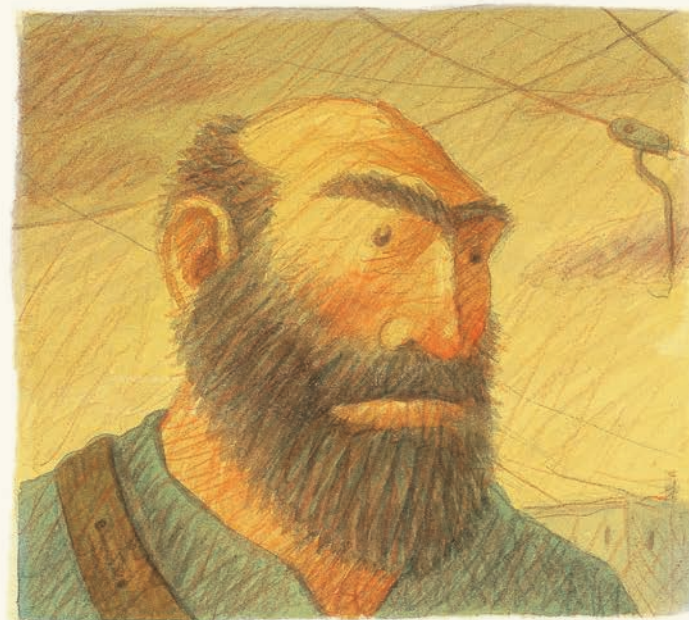
The Tattooed One was a pirate covered in tattoos who never said a word.

Dollar, the parrot, spoke for him instead.

Then there was **Tobacco**, who cooked well and told some spine-tingling ghost stories;

The Beard who, they say, was already hairy when he was a child;

Shorty who was tall and was not afraid of anything.



And then there was **Figaro**, who played the accordion
and cried like a baby each full moon,



and **The Turk** who was as strong as a tree and had once fought a swordfish with
his bare hands (and still bore the scars), but also knew how to be delicate: he would
mend the sails when they were torn by the wind.
South-West Wind who was known to emit wind at night;
Sausage who smelled of wine, and on stormy nights, would produce sausages from
his mother country, which were oily and spicy.



My father always brought home a gift



for me.



For seven years,
I kept a Turkish pirate flag
that was sewn
especially for me.

Every year, when he returned, I asked my father to tell me of his

pirates and in the evening I fell asleep, listening to the story ...



... **The Tattooed One** had found a girlfriend but she wanted him to remove his tattoos;



Tobacco had seen a ghost on the bridge but it was a piece of cloth;



The Beard had shaved off his beard one night but the next morning it had grown back;



Shorty had met the Devil and had borrowed money;



Figaro had cut the hair of the king's son badly and was forced to flee for his life.

