Sorcova (Robert, Romania)

In Romania, on the 1st of January, children are seen practicing one of our most treasured traditions, Sorcova. The word Sorcova cannot be translated in English, however, I will explain what it means. Sorcova represents a decorated twig, usually full of bright and colorful flowers, which the children use to visit homes of relatives, friends, or simply neighbors.

They take this decorated twig and use it to seemingly act as a magic wand, to gently tap the back of other persons whilst reciting a melodic song. The song itself speaks about being happy, living until old age, health, strength, and rejuvenation. In other words, the children who recite the song can bring good fortune, health, and all the things mentioned before to the person who they tap.

The song is said to also ward away curses. In return, tradition says they must receive either coins or treats, such as candy or cookies. Now, the word Sorcova, from a linguistic perspective, comes from the Bulgarian word surov, which means freshly green, which correlates perfectly with our decorated twig ripped straight from a tree.

We, as Romanian citizens, however, are not sure when this tradition started to occur, however, we are thankful for it because it gives children a way to ask for pocket money in a nicer manner.