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FOLK MYTHS AND LEGENDS

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THE CREATION OF THE EARTH

When the first historical king of Poland was baptized, Slavic people slowly began to give up on pagan beliefs and customs, but new, different but equally interesting ones were born.

In folk tradition there are numerous myths and legends about the Earth. They say it was originally transparent and only blackened by the curses of Cain who buried Abel's body. It was said that the Earth floats on the endless sea, wrapped with a viper so that it doesn't break and that it's huge and incomprehensible, so it takes hundreds of years to travel all over it. It was created from a big egg that rested on a tree that reached out to the sky.

Other legends say that the Earth rests on a pole and that it is supported by an animal - if it moves, then there is an earthquake.

The folk myth about the creation of the world involves the devil in the work of creation. Before the creation of the world, there was only the sky and the sea. God was swimming on that sea and at some point he encountered the thick foam in which the devil lived. God asked who he was, and the devil said that he wanted to be taken to the boat for his answer. On the way, the devil said it would be good if the place they were riding on was harder. God commanded Satan to go down into the sea and take a handful of soil in the name of God.

THE CREATION OF THE EARTH

The devil, however, out of mischief while taking up the sand, said: 'I take you in my name!' When he returned to the surface, he had no sand in his hand, so he had to repeat the action, now according to God's will.

The Creator took the sand brought by the devil, sprinkled it on water, and then it became the land on which they both lay - God towards the east and the devil towards the west. Devil, thinking that God was sleeping, tried to push him into the water, but in vain, because the Earth grew under God and it spread to the east. Seeing this, the devil began to run away westward and further south and northward, so the Earth expanded in different directions. When God woke up he went to Heaven and the devil wanted to go behind him, but God threw him down to the underworld with lightning bolts. Another version of the myth says that God threw a grain of sand on two whales, the grain grew and turned into a mountain and then into the ground.

THE CREATION OF THE CARPATHIANS

A long time ago, the Secret Kingdom of Giants was a close neighbour of the Cracow land. Giants ruled it. There were seventy seven of them. They were ruled by the biggest of them who was called the king. Each of the giants had magic in himself. From the earth large rocks materialized, when one said "yes" and gaps appeared when they said "no".

In the Kingdom of Giants they had all the wealth and prosperity. But one day, when all the giants gathered on a meeting, one of them said;

- We should enlarge our kingdom. Let us occupy Cracow land!

- Do you want to do it, brothers? - the king asked.

- Yes! - seventy seven giants yelled at the time.

At the same moment from Earth up fired the seventy seven rocks, so high that their peaks hid in clouds. But immediately a penalty for the fact that they wanted to seize foreign countries fell on giants. In the blink of an eye they lost their magic, started shrinking and in the end turned into atrocious snakes. Their kingdom was supposed to be as extensive as far a snake's eyesight could see . Soon the entire former Kingdom of Giants was covered with forest which is there to this day. And wonderful peaks are taller than trees. Years later people called them the Carpathian Mountains, although hardly anyone remembers how they came into existence.

