

Polonia Misteriosa

ROLE-PLAYING GAME



GAME IT



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

Polonia Misteriosa is a role-playing game developed by Philological School of Higher Education in Wrocław, Poland, under the project *GameIT: Gamestorming for Innovative Teaching*, which was carried out in the period of September 2017 till August 2020 under the Program Erasmus+ Strategic Partnerships

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Polonia Misteriosa

AN OVERVIEW OF THE GAME

This is a role-playing game set in the world of Polish legends and fairy tales. The aim of the game is to have fun with other players while exploring and re-creating this imaginary world. One of the players in each group takes the role of the Game Master, who will run and moderate the game for the rest of the players. Before the game begins, the Game Master may choose the characters who will provide a structure for the game; at the same time all players will participate in creating the story. The Game Master sets the scene, and reveals the general goal of the game (e.g. finding a treasure or fighting a powerful beast), while each character thinks of his/her personal goal in the game. As the game goes on, the Game Master describes, in some detail, the surroundings (places) to the players, the non-playing characters they meet and encounters with them. His/her job is to ask the characters what they are about to do or tell them to take a certain course of action. All his/her decisions are final – the players cannot question them or do things that are not allowed by the Game Master. **In the end, it is the Game Master's job to decide where or how the game will end and what the final challenge will be.**

A group of legendary playing characters [PCs] travels through Poland in order to achieve the goal set by the Game Master. In addition, **each of the characters has different motivation and a different personal goal, but they team up in order to do the task assigned by the Game Master. In other words, they do not act against each other.** They have to face many challenges, meet strange creatures, solve some problems, and/or riddles, and perform other tasks in order to achieve success.

At the beginning of the game, all PCs are on the outskirts of Poland. In order to achieve their goals, they have to move to various places in which they encounter problems characteristic of the sites themselves and/or of the non-playing characters residing in those places. **The Game Master runs the game and supervises the players.**

GAME MECHANICS

The game is designed for a maximum of 5 players (playing characters) + the Game Master. If convenient or absolutely necessary, two players can assume the role of one playing character – but there is only one Game Master! (This will, however, slow down the game.)

WHAT YOU NEED TO PLAY

Ready to play the game? Then you only need to have the following:

- Roleplaying dice (as described below)
- Role cards
- Pencils and erasers
- Three to five people to play with
- A quiet place
- Time to play the game

ROLEPLAYING DICE

The Game Master and players will need these roleplaying dice:

1. D100 (percentage dice). These consist of two ten-sided dice: one D00, showing tens, the other D10, showing units.



2. 3D6. Three six-sided dice.



In order to proceed to different locations, one of the characters (a different person at each turn) rolls two percentage dice. Each location in legendary Poland has certain numbers assigned to it. The sum of the two numbers will indicate the next location, where all characters face new challenges: meet NPCs and have to perform different tasks. For example, a roll of “20” on the tens die combined with a roll of “5” on the units die, indicates number 25, which corresponds to Kruszwica. A roll of “00” on the tens die combined with any other roll on the units die indicates the number under 10. A roll of “00” on the tens die combined with “0” on the units die indicates 100.

If, during the game, a roll of dice points to the location that has already been visited, the player is asked to roll the dice again – all characters should move to another location.

ROLE CARDS, CHARACTER SHEETS AND CHARACTER CREATION

At the beginning of the game, the Game Master lets each player choose or draw (it depends on the Game Master’s decision) a role card. A role card provides some basic information about a playing character; it may also contain his/her picture. All PCs are legendary heroes or villains living in certain places in legendary Poland. In addition, each player receives a character sheet, which will allow him/her to develop the character by allocating certain values to the attributes of body, mind and spirit (see below).

Players allocate the following values among their character’s attributes:

80, 70, 60, 60, 50, 50, 40.

They can allocate them wherever they like, but they must not skip Power, which is associated with Luck.

The characters do not have to resemble in any way the people who play them. In fact, players often enjoy creating characters who are completely different from them – and that includes sex, occupation, age, appearance and skills.

SKILLS

Players allocate the following values among the eight Skills:

70, 60, 50, 50, 50, 40, 40, 40.

Before you begin playing, calculate half and fifth values.

HALF AND FIFTH VALUES

In the game, you might also need to know these values – for example, if you make skill rolls in really challenging situations. Take the value for each of your attributes, divide it by two (e.g. $60 : 2 = 30$) and round down to the nearest whole number if necessary (usually later in the game – e.g. $55 : 2 = 27$). Mark the values on your character sheet.

Then take the value for each attribute and divide it by five (e.g. $60 : 5 = 12$) and round down to the nearest whole number if necessary (usually later in the game (e.g. $54 : 5 = 10$)).

SECONDARY ATTRIBUTES

LUCK is calculated the following way. Roll 3D6 and multiply the sum by 5 (e.g. $2 + 4 + 5 = 11$; $11 \times 5 = 55$, so the luck value is 55). Circle the value on your character sheet. A luck roll is used to determine if external circumstances are in your favor or against you (see below). This is an element of chance in the game.

SANITY. At the beginning of the game, the Sanity level is equal to the character’s Power score. As the game develops, and the character has various encounters, his/her level of sanity will go up or down – the decision is made by the Game Master. If a character has a low Sanity level, s/he may not be up to certain tasks

and somebody else – with a higher Sanity level has to do things for him/her. A low Sanity level may sometimes be compensated with Luck.

The game consists of verbal challenge. After the characters have been created, players describe them in some detail to other participants of the game as well as the Game Master. Apart from the attributes mentioned above, they can also describe their appearance, personality, and other important details. They tell the Game Master what they intend to do. The Game Master decides whether it is possible in the game. If not, s/he tells them what they must do or what happens instead. Sometimes, skill rolls or luck rolls are required.

SKILL ROLLS AND LUCK ROLLS

Skill rolls are required in dramatic situations in the game, which can happen as the characters travel through Poland. Before a character rolls the die, s/he should agree on a goal (positive outcome) with the Game Master. Then, if the skill roll is successful, s/he has achieved the goal.

If a character is to perform a task (e.g. fight the dragon), first it is necessary for the Game Master to check if the character has enough points assigned to a particular attribute (e.g. strength) to achieve success. If not, the player rolls the two percentage dice.

For regular tasks, the number indicated by the dice must be lower than the points assigned to this particular attribute in order to perform the task successfully. If the character fails, someone else from the team will try to do the same task or solve the problem in a different way (e.g. persuasion or even manipulation instead of fighting).

A difficult task requires a **roll result equal to or less than half of the character's skill value** (a hard success).

A task approaching the limits of human capability requires a **roll equal to or less than one fifth of the character's skill value** (an extreme success).

Additionally, if the skill roll is successful, the character puts a check (tick) next to his skill. That

means s/he cannot use this skill again in this particular situation, only later in the game, if needed.

After each dramatic situation, the Game Master may decide that a skill increase is necessary. The character rolls percentage dice for skill increase against any checked skills. If she rolls less than the value of the skill, nothing changes. If s/he rolls over the value of the skill, s/he can then add only 1D10 points to the skill's value, e.g. 4 (and mark half and fifth values again; e.g. $70 + 4 = 74$; $74/37/14$). In other words, the more you know about something, the harder it is to learn anything new. **Luck rolls** may be called for by the Game Master if external circumstances are in question, and also if determining the hand of fate. To succeed in a luck roll, the character must roll equal to or under their current luck value. The Game Master makes a decision about a luck roll.

HOW TO WIN THE GAME

In this game, there are no winners or losers in the traditional sense. All characters play the game as a team, so the game is more cooperative than competitive, though, of course each character has his/her own motivation. **All characters travel together, moving from place to place by throwing dice.** During their journey they face different problems: they have to perform certain actions depending on the place in which they find themselves and/or the non-playing character they encounter. Characters may win or lose battle, lose their possessions or acquire something precious, become injured... Visiting a place or meeting a non-playing character may help them achieve their goal or frustrate their efforts; this depends on their attributes, skills and/or luck. The non-playing characters are frequently (though not always) spiteful, and more often than not, they will try to hurt the playing characters or at least delay them. **Finally, in one of the places they have reached by throwing dice they all face the final challenge, which will give them a chance to find the treasure of their dreams; in other words gain something, whether material or not. The nature of the challenge is determined by the Game Master who runs the game.**

THE NUMBER OF PLAYERS IN THE GAME

As with all role-play games based on narrating a story in a circle, the ideal number of players ranges from 3 to 8. However, as there are usually more students in a classroom, other solutions have to be employed. According to *A comprehensive model of a cooperative role-playing game* by Jože Rugelj, Sanja Jedrinović, and Mateja Bevčič (2018: 32), there are three basic ways of playing in large groups: student audience, multiplayer and student Game Masters. They will be described below.

Student audience

In this mode, a circle of students play the game with the teacher as the Game Master, while other students sit/stand behind the players and observe. The obvious drawback of this mode is that the observers, who do not have any chance of influencing the game, may get bored and disrupt the game or do other things, not connected with the lesson. To avoid this, it is advisable to give them some tasks to do, something connected with the game itself, for example in *Polonia Misteriosa* they may read the cards of the characters taking part in the game more carefully and give prompts to the participants about their special powers, objects or animals. Another solution will be to have the players play the game until mid-class and then switch the roles with the students from the outer circle who will carry on with the game.

Multiplayers

In this mode two or three players play one character. They may discuss their ideas for the game and make decisions collectively. We may also ask them to take different roles in each “character team”. For example one person may be responsible for the narration, one for throwing dice and calculating the points and another one – for the information about the character from the character card. They may switch roles from time to time. As Rugelj, Jedrinović, and Bevčič state:

This method can be especially useful if some of the players are experienced with role-playing while others are not, and having pairs of experienced gamers and beginners allows the students to learn from each other through the process of the game instead of learning from a lecture. When beginners gain experience and become better, they could be allowed to take over the characters and try playing by themselves.

Student game masters

The third way of leading the game in larger classroom groups is training students to become Game Masters. In this mode the teacher explains the game to a group of 5-6 students who then lead the game in small groups as Game Masters. Even a better solution, if possible, is to play the game with those 5-6 selected students first, with the teacher as the Game Master and the students as the players. The students observe the Game Master and learn the role. Then they will use the gained experience in the following games, in which they will be Game Masters and the rest of the class will be the players. Game Master training through playing the game may be carried out while other students do some quiet work, for example working on other projects. Rugelj, Jedrinović, and Bevčič explain that in this mode it would be good to have students with previous experience in role-play games. Such students would naturally take up the role of the leaders. If this is not possible, other students can be trained, as long as the teacher organises the classes in a way which makes such training possible.

AN INTRODUCTORY STORY:

One dark night in “Vratislav”

The 21st century. The age of information. Devils, giant spiders, water demons and wood spirits may be seen any time – in films and series. Nobody believes in creepy creatures that may ensnare your mind and drown you in the bog. These belong in the 19th century fairy tales.

A youth hostel “Vratislav” in Wrocław. Late evening. A group of backpackers from different parts of Europe discuss their travel experiences and then go to bed. At night, they cannot sleep because of strange noises: something like a wolf’s howling, the clip-clop of horses’ hooves, a horse’s neighing, loud eerie sniggers. In the morning the tourists can hardly believe their eyes. Everything looks different, as if they had travelled back in time: the place resembles an old inn with animal hides and horns on the walls, the manager has turned into an inn-keeper in simple linen and leather clothes and they are served a whole leg of sheep for breakfast! To cap it all, outside there are endless marshes and forests instead of the usual morning bustle of the big noisy city.

The travellers are different, too: they are a strange mixture of people representing different epochs and status in life. At first they are scared and then... rather amused. From an old document brought by the inn-keeper they learn that, because they came to the inn on a particular night, they undergo the curse of Prince Vratislav, the legendary founder of the city. Once a year, on that very night, the travellers trapped in “Vratislav” take on roles of characters from Polish legends and have to go on a quest in pursuit of their characters’ unfulfilled wishes. Each of them is endowed with special skills and powers. It is advisable to go as a group and help each other on the way because the curse will be lifted only when all the travellers achieve their characters’ personal goals. After a short discussion, the travellers decide to embark on the journey...

JURATA, THE QUEEN OF THE BALTIC SEA

Long, long ago, the Baltic Sea was ruled by Jurata, the queen of unusual beauty and kindness. She had long golden hair and green eyes, just like the colour of the seawater.

There was a god called Perkun, the fierce Lord of thunder and lightning, who fell in love with the beautiful Jurata. He would not let his storms disturb the waters of her kingdom. He wanted her to live peacefully in her amber castle, without a worry in the world.

Jurata had a good heart. She loved all living creatures, and being the Queen of the Baltic Sea, she established just and fair laws to protect all her sea creatures. One law did not allow anyone to set traps that caught too many fish at one time.

Though Jurata liked to eat flounder and sometimes had it served at the palace, she ordered her servants to keep only half of each fish and to throw the other half back to the sea. These fish-halves stayed alive, recovered, and grew whole again because of her magical powers.

On the Baltic Coast lived a bold, free spirited young fisherman who had very little common sense. Although he knew about Queen Jurata's law, he ignored it and disobeyed it. He set many big traps and caught many, many fish which he later sold to people who lived far from the sea. In addition, he was truly vain: he spent most of his money on fine clothes and drink. He did

not care about the creatures of the sea.

The Queen found out about this fisherman and at first was very angry with him. Her plan was to swim close to the shore, get the fisherman to go in the water and eventually drown him. She was planning to use her mermaids who could lure him with their beautiful songs. He certainly deserved the punishment!

But her plan did not work out. When she saw him in his beautiful clothes, looking around with great self-confidence, instead of drowning him, she fell in love with him as he did with her. Every night she would swim to the shore and see her new sweetheart.

Thus, Jurata herself had broken a law. The gods said that magical beings could love only magical beings and the fisherman was an ordinary human being. Perkun got very, very mad about this, especially that Jurata had never paid much attention to him. He went into a rage and with thunderbolts destroyed the amber colored palace while the Queen was inside, and chained the young fisherman to the bottom of the sea. They were never seen again. The fisherman can sometimes be heard calling for his love.

Today, the only things that remain from Jurata's palace are pieces of amber that sometimes wash up on the beaches of the Baltic Sea.



DOLA (FATE) IN A BONE

Long time ago, during the reign of King Jan Kazimierz (Johannes Casimirus) in Warsaw there were two brothers: a rich butcher Bartosz and a poor sandman Walery. Bartosz had everything he needed and Walery could hardly make ends meet. One day Walery, coming back from hard work in his boat, turned the boat so unfortunately that the pay for his work fell into the river. Although he dived into the bottom, he did not find anything. He sat on the river bank and cried bitterly. What fate: not only very poor but also very unlucky! Nothing seemed to go right in his life. Little did he realise that, step by step, Dola (Fate) was following him quietly (in the form of a poor woman in tattered clothes) wherever he went. She just liked him so much!

The next morning he set on the road to his brother's wedding. However, he was not let in, he only got a big beef bone with a little meat.

He ate the meat and he saw a pale, thin creature crawl into the bone to eat the marrow. He realised immediately it was Dola! This was his unexpected chance for a better life! He sealed the end of the bone. Dola cried and screamed, asking to be let out, but he was adamant. He threw the bone into a very deep well in a deserted place and went home.

Since then Walery's fate reversed – he was better and better off and was even able to help the poor. His brother Bartosz started to get jealous and he asked about the reason of this change. When Walery told him the truth, Bartosz, jealous about his brother's prosperity, decided to free Dola to make his brother unhappy again. He found the well and the bone and freed Dola, which was so happy that she immediately fell for her saviour. She decided to follow him forever! Soon Bartosz became a poor man, while his brother's fortune thrived.



THE SLEEPING KNIGHTS OF GIEWONT

For centuries the silhouette of the Giewont mountain in the Tatra mountains has been compared to a sleeping knight. The mountain is associated with a legend of armoured knights sleeping in one of the caves under the mountain. Legend has it that a group of armoured mediaeval knights with their horses are immersed in deep sleep in that cave, awaiting a call of service to their homeland. It is only when the country is in real danger that the Sleeping Knights of Giewont will wake up and mount their horses to defend the land.

One version of the legend says that once a year at Easter there is a meeting of the old Polish kings at the Wawel Castle in Kraków. In the meeting they discuss the matters of utmost importance connected with the Polish state, its safety and prosperity. During the talks, the Zygmunt bell in the Wawel cathedral tolls and its deep low tones go as far as the Tatra mountains. When they reach Giewont, the knights wake up, mount their horses and ride at speed to Kraków. When they arrive at the Wawel Castle, they ask:

“Is this the time?” When the king Boleslaus the Brave, who presides over the talks, tells them it is not, they haste back to the mountains to fall into deep sleep again.

Another version says that there was once a boy called Jaśko (John), a great admirer of the Tatra Mountains who lived in a village and loved to wander around the hills and valleys. One day he was told by an old highlander that a great treasure is hidden in a cave at the foot of Giewont. He decided to go looking for it and when he reached a considerable hight, he suddenly heard a neighing of a horse. The sound led him to a cave full of sleeping men in armour, whose swords and shields lay nearby. There were also sleeping horses who neighed in their sleep. The astounded boy slipped on a stone and screamed. One of the knights woke up and asked: “Is this the time?” “No, Master, it is not”, the scared boy said and the knight went back to sleep. When the boy came back to the village, the old man told him that he had found the greatest treasure there is on earth: freedom.



THE WAWEL DRAGON

A long time ago in Poland, in a cave at the foot of Wawel Hill, there lived a horrifying dragon. None of the Kraków inhabitants from the poorest beggar to His Majesty King Krak, the founder of the city, knew where exactly it had come from and how it got there.

Whenever people heard the monster roar, or when they saw him spit fire, they trembled with fear. The dragon demanded fresh food every day: a young lamb or ... a lovely virgin. The harder people tried to satisfy his hunger, the greater the hunger grew.

Days went by. The dragon made himself feel more at home living there and grew even bolder. No man was brave enough to face the terrible beast.

One day King Krak told a poem to the people of Kraków:

“He who once and for all puts this dragon down
Shall receive my scepter and my royal crown,
So come and defeat this most horrid beast
And win my daughter’s hand and a wedding feast.”

Tempted by this generous and unusual offer, more brave and valiant knights than before made their way from different countries to reach Poland to defeat the dragon. Some approached the beast’s den and lured him out. Others, the intrepid ones, entered the den and tried to fight him there. Alas! They were all helpless. Swords and arrows shattered on the dragon’s scaly body as if on a shield. Nobody was able to kill this dragon or at least drive him away. Many a knight tried to fight him but they either died or managed to run away, defeated and humbled. It seemed that there was no one and no weapon to defeat the dragon. Time passed, and the dragon laid waste to the grounds of Kraków. In spite of the princess’ renowned beauty, fewer knights came every day. No young man was willing to lose his life or his precious reputation. More people deserted the town, until one day a young man, a shoemaker called Szewczyk Dratewka, knocked on the gates of the King’s castle. He bore no arms and wore no armour. Some twine, a needle, a hammer, and

sharp mind were his only weapons. The guards wouldn’t let him in, but he insisted on seeing the king. He promised to get rid of the dragon, but the guards did not trust him because he looked nothing like a fearless and welltrained knight. King Krak, however, desperate to find a solution, asked Szewczyk Dratewka to come in, listened to what the boy had to say and decided to put some trust in him so he could have a go. The boy said that he would need: lambskin, some sulphur and some mustard seeds. The king nodded his acceptance to him.

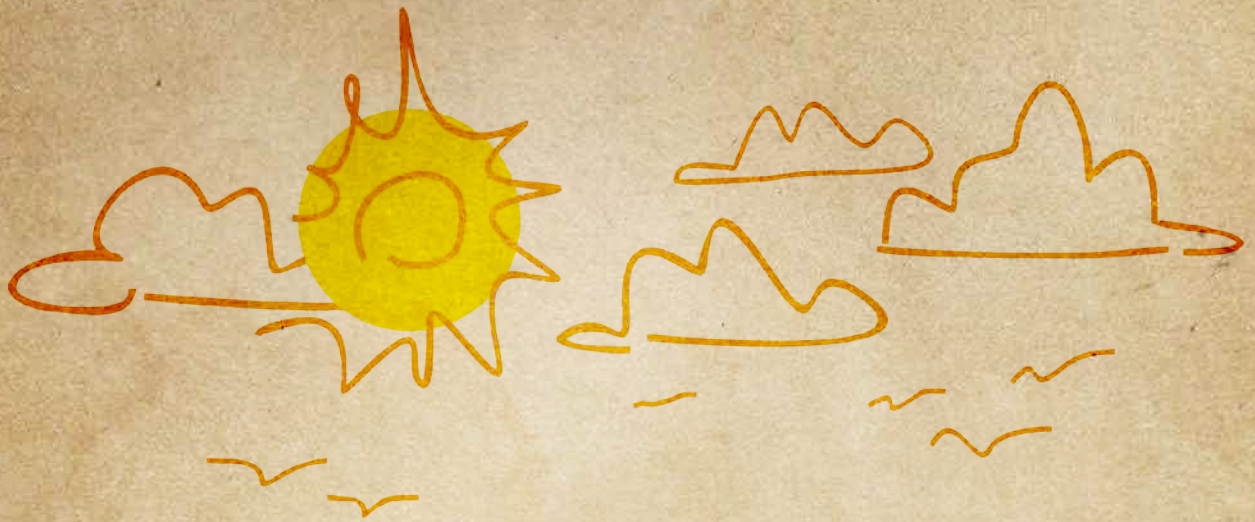
All night long the shoemaker spent working hard on his clever plan. Local residents would peer through the window staring at his work. He took the 18 lambskin, stuffed it with sulfur, pitch and mustard seeds, and skillfully sewed up the hole of the lamb’s belly.

Everyone was now wondering what the following morning would bring. At sunrise the shoemaker took the lamb and set off to see the dragon in front of his den. There he laid his bait and quickly hid in nearby bushes waiting to see what was going to happen.

He did not wait very long. The dragon awoke. He was hungry, as usual, and his appetite was insatiable, so he lumbered out of his den to see if the residents had prepared any food for him. Suddenly he saw what looked like a delicious lamb, jumped down greedily in order to eat it and swallowed it whole with his jaws. And then... the dragon felt as if something burning inside of him, and waddled to the Vistula River to drink some water. He drank and drank, but no amount of water could satisfy his thirst.

Then ... “BANG” went the dragon, filled with too much water and sulfur ... and exploded; exactly what the shoemaker had planned. For a short while, the villagers were completely silent. Then the loud cheer began. All the knights ran to the bottom of the hill. The dragon was dead. But the Vistula River had been gulped up.

Szewczyk Dratewka, extremely satisfied with his work, went to King Krak to claim his prize.



KING POPIEL AND MICE

Once upon a time, in a castle town of Kruszwica, near Lake Gopło, stood a wooden statue of Światowid – the god protecting the town. The formidable King Popiel and his wife lived in the castle and ruled the town with an iron fist.

The people living in Kruszwica were hard-working and diligent farmers, going about their business every day.

In the middle of the lake there was a tower, erected by slaves on the orders of the fearsome king.

One night, the King's sleep was interrupted by Hilderica, his wife. Popiel sat up and listened to what his wife had to say. She told him about a conspiracy to overthrow him. Popiel's uncle, Sobiesław, supported by his brothers and other relatives – even those who had appeared most faithful – wanted to replace him on the throne. Even Mieszko, Popiel's favorite cousin was part of the plot! What is more, Sobiesław planned to adopt a new religion and get rid of the old statue of Światowid, which had towered over the town since time immemorial.

King Popiel was scared. Was it really true? If so, what was he to do? Could his treacherous relatives be stopped? He turned in his bed, wide-eyed, unable to sleep. When dawn came, he had made up his mind. Just as they tried to get rid of him, he would get rid of them! Popiel and Hilderica went to a wolf-healer to get some poison. The healer wanted to know why they needed it; King Popiel and Hilderica said that they had to get rid of rats in their castle. They would use it when time came.

In the meantime, there were some rumors that the Mishing raiders were approaching Kruszwica. It was necessary to get ready for an invasion or a longlasting siege.

“We must hold the council, Your Majesty,” said one of Popiel's advisors, “Your enemies are approaching.”

“I do not fear my enemies,” said Popiel. But it was not entirely true. Soon a messenger from

Mieszko arrived.”

“Get ready, Your Majesty,” he said. “The Mishing raiders are on their way. My lord has already told the serfs to store a lot of food and protect their households. We cannot leave anything to chance.”

But Popiel still would not hold the council. He did not really believe that the Mishing raiders were approaching, but kept thinking about the conspiracy. Hilderica looked as if she was considering something important. Finally, she urged him to invite his relatives – all twelve of them to a feast and to a council meeting. It was a great idea to have them all under Popiel's roof! Popiel would have the opportunity to see with his own eyes that the plot to overthrow him was real. Hilderica sent messengers to invite all relatives.

Then, she urged Popiel to go to bed, covering his face with white flour. The king looked pale, with sunken cheeks and watery eyes. When his relatives arrived, they could hardly believe their eyes. Hilderica was sobbing quietly. They understood that Popiel was dying. One by one, they were summoned to the king's bed.

“I have no children and I think you should be the next king,” Popiel said to Mieszko, “but you must beware of others.”

He said the same thing to each and every one of them. Thus he planted a seed of discord among them. They looked at one another with apprehension and wellmasked fury.

Still, they had to hold the council to discuss the invasion. But before that, Hilderica invited them to a feast and served wonderful food and wine. When they were about to leave, she encouraged them to stay and drink “one for the road,” since they might not see Popiel again. They all agreed but as soon as they tasted the wine from the last barrel ...

“What was in that wine?” blurted Mieszko, holding his stomach and unable to stand up. Within seconds, they all were writhing in agony and collapsed on the floor. After a few seconds, they were silent.

“Get up, Popiel!” commanded Hilderica. “We must do something with the bodies!”

Popiel blinked. He could not believe his eyes. All his relatives were here – and yet he was completely alone, their faces distorted by the agonies of death. They had all come to hold the council – and now he had to face the enemy by himself.

“Move it,” commanded Hilderica, “Let’s drown them in Lake Gopło.”

The night was dark. Stealthily, they moved toward the lake twelve times, to get rid of the bodies.

“We did a horrible thing,” said Popiel, wiping his forehead.

“Yes, but now you cannot be challenged by anyone,” said Hilderica, apparently content with the outcome of the feast.

In the meantime, the people of Kruszwica were getting ready for war. They wanted to hide or

run away rather than fight – they had heard that the king was unwell. The Mishing raiders were coming!

The king however, filled with remorse, did nothing for days. Then, one day he woke up and saw many ships crossing the lake. It was too late to do anything. The Mishing raiders had arrived. The people of Kruszwica were not prepared, but they fought valiantly.

“Let’s run to the tower!” ordered the King. And so he did. Forgetting about his people, his royal duties, fearing for his life, he grabbed his wife’s hand, jumped into a small boat, and crossed the lake and hid in the tower ... but they were followed by hundreds of mice, which had been feeding on the bodies of the murdered relatives. Now they were hungry again, hungry for human flesh ...

And so the mice ate King Popiel, who had betrayed them instead of defending them and defending his own town.



PAN TWARDOWSKI AND HIS CONTRACT WITH THE DEVIL

Several Polish legends concern Pan Twardowski (Mr Twardowski), a nobleman from Kraków who was well-educated and interested in alchemy and magic. One day he found in an old book a recipe for summoning a devil. He used the recipe to ask the devil for supernatural powers in return for his soul. One of the conditions was that after many years of using magic Twardowski would go to Rome to be captured by devils and taken to hell. The contract was signed with his own blood.

Twardowski was now free to use magic. He enchanted a big rooster to listen to his commands and travelled on his back throughout Poland, performing actions which would be impossible without magic. He became more and more famous in Poland and finally the king Sigismundus Augustus heard about him. He sent for Twardowski to ask a favour of him: because the king missed his late wife Barbara terribly,

he wanted the sorcerer to summon the queen's spirit from the dead.

Twardowski did what the king requested using a magic mirror. The king was very touched and he rewarded the nobleman handsomely.

Years later, when the devil realised Twardowski had never intended to fulfill the contract by going to Rome, he tricked the man to go to an inn called "Rome" by sending to him a boy begging to cure his mother apparently staying there. The moment Twardowski set foot in the inn, he was snatched by the devil to be delivered to hell. When they were flying over the Moon, Twardowski started singing a song for the Blessed Virgin Mary. The shocked devil dropped him to the surface of the Moon. Since then, Twardowski has been staying there in the company of a spider, which sometimes uses its thread to go to the Earth to collect some news.



DEVIL BORUTA AND THE GOLD OF ŁĘCZYCA

In Polish legends Devil Boruta is a well-known devil looking like a 17th century Polish nobleman. He may harm people or help them, according to his will. He is also a shape-shifter. He lives in the dungeons of the castle of Łęczyca, a town in the very centre of Poland, guarding its treasure.

There was once a man so arrogant that he believed to have the strength of Devil Boruta. He boasted he would fight Boruta and win. He decided to go to the dungeons of Łęczyca not only to meet Boruta but also to steal the treasure. When he was walking the dark corridors leading to the main chamber, however, his courage began to dwindle. Finally, when he entered the main chamber full of gold, he saw a strange-looking owl with glowing eyes.

He knew at once this was Boruta. He looked at the strange bird suspiciously but it did not move or make a sound. Encouraged by the bird's inertia, the man started to collect the gold. When his hands and pockets and even his mouth were full of coins, he tried to leave the chamber but in the last moment, when he was almost behind the door, the owl suddenly swooped on the door and shut it forcibly, seriously hurting his heel. The man dropped some of the gold and run away. The stolen gold did not bring him happiness – both his body and spirit had been scarred by the experience. He was weak and frightened and, little by little, Boruta sneaked into his house to take the gold back. Finally, it was all put safely back in the dungeon under the Łęczyca castle.



ORPHAN MARYSIA AND THE DWARVES

This story is entirely based on a children's book written by the Polish author Maria Konopnicka and published in 1896. It is known very well in Poland.

Once upon a time there was a kingdom of dwarves in Poland in the Cristal Cave under the surface of the earth. They stayed there the whole winter and it was very cold. They became impatient because they longed for Spring. That is why Blystek, the king of the dwarves, sent first one and then another dwarf to look for the signs of Spring. Their names were Koszałek-Opalek and Podziomek.

Koszałek-Opalek was the king's chronicler but he was rather naïve. Hoodwinked by Sadelko the fox, he told him where a flock of geese could be found, guarded merely by Marysia, a poor orphan girl employed by an evil woman. Sadelko, of course, used the in-

formation to kidnap the geese. Poor Marysia, crying desperately, asked Koszałek-Opalek and Podziomek for help. They took her to the mountains to see good Queen Tatra, who miraculously brought the dead geese back to life.

In the meantime, all the dwarves from the Cristal Cave came to the surface of the earth to discover that Spring was in full bloom. They moved to a house of Skrobek, a poor, kind-hearted man, having decided to help him in the household.

When Marysia was thrown out of her job at the bad woman's house, Skrobek adopted her and she became part of his family.

In late autumn, the dwarves went back to the Cristal Cave to stay there for the winter. Only Koszałek-Opalek stayed in Skrobek's house to tell stories about orphan Marysia and the dwarves to children.



PAJĄK (SPIDER) FROM PAJĘCZNO

Ziemia Wieluńska, crossed by the Warta river, is a region in the central Poland, south-west of the city of Łódź. Long time ago it was an important region on the amber trade route, with old forests, deep ravines and occasional lime rocks. One of the towns in Ziemia Wieluńska is Pajęczno (Spider Town). Where does it take its name from?

Legend has it that in the old times, when the best part of Poland was covered by dense forests, Pająk – a monster spider lived in the region. It was the size of a small elephant and it lived on wild animals he hunted in the forest. With time, the animals deserted the forest and the spider had to go out to the fields and villages to hunt for farm animals. Scared peasants used to lock themselves with their livestock inside buildings but the strong beast often broke the gate to get to the animals. When livestock became scarce, Pająk began hunting humans. Its first victims were stray wanderers, but soon it became bolder and started attacking farms and kidnapping villagers. Many brave knights and daredevils

wanted to kill the beast but they ended as its prey. Years of such events caused the region to be almost deserted. Scared with the living terror, peasants moved away. The few who stayed on their home farms lived in constant fear.

In one of the huts there was a family whose father had been killed by Pająk. The oldest son got determined to kill the beast and thus revenge his father's death. He went to the forest and found the spider's den. He tried to make a deal with the monster to leave the area but it just laughed, calling the boy his "dinner". The boy pretended to give in. He fell on his knees and begged the spider to spare his life, meanwhile looking for any weakness in the beast's body. When the spider came closer to attack the boy, the brave peasant started taking arrows from his quiver and shooting at the spider eyes, one by one. The spider fell dead. The boy cut off its giant head and took it to the village. The happy peasants cheered and danced and promptly threw a big feast to honour the brave boy. Since then the town has been called Pajęczno (Spider Town).



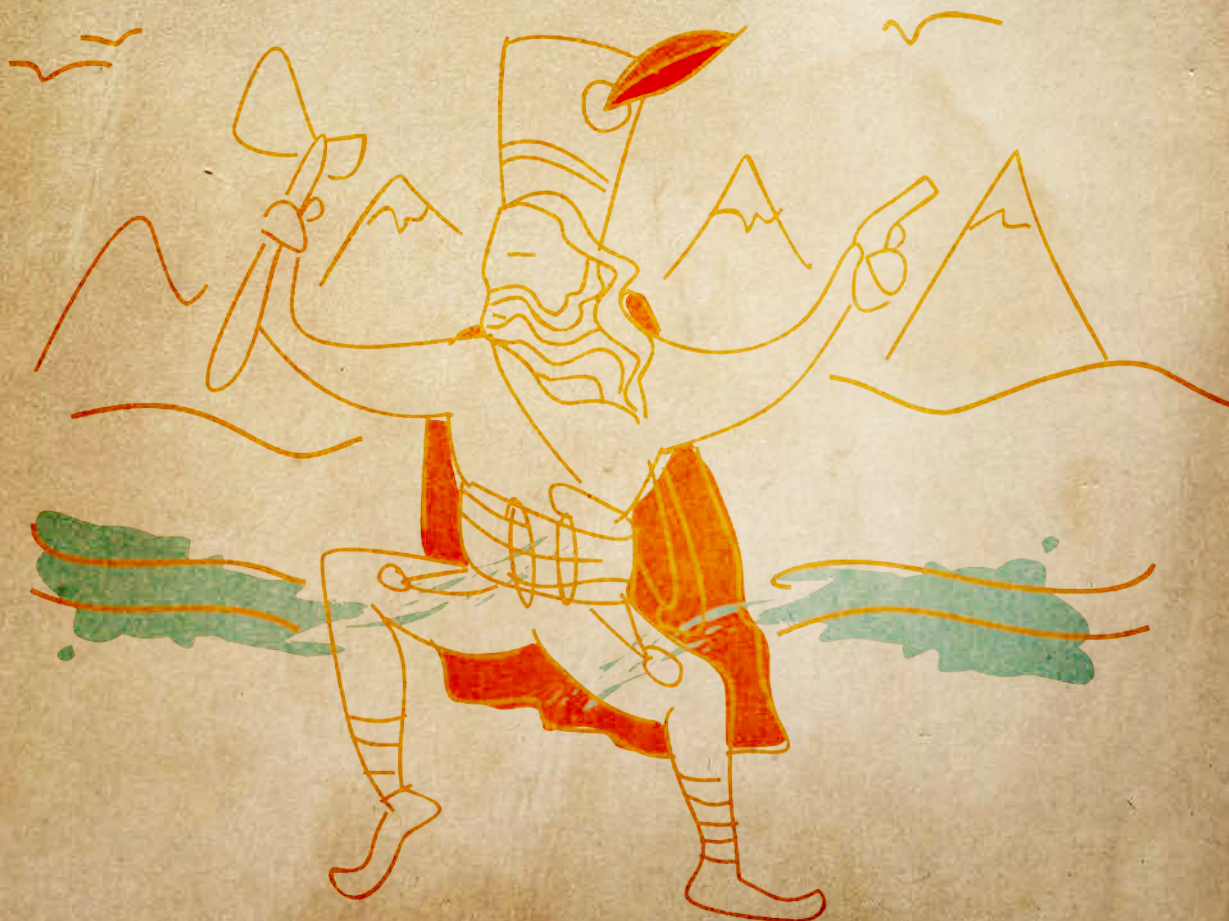
HOW JANOSIK BECAME A HIGHWAYMAN

Janosik was a legendary highwayman, in the type of Robin Hood, who robbed the rich to give to the poor, famous in Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland. He is probably most famous in Slovakia, in the regions of Žilina and Liptov, south of the Tatra Mountains. In Poland legends of Janosik thrive in the Podhale region, north of the Tatra Mountains.

One of the legends connects the power of Janosik to gifts from witches. According to this source, Janosik was a student coming back from school for the summer holidays. When he got lost in the woods, he found a little hut belonging to three old women and decided to sleep there. What he did not know was that this was the hut of three witches. After dinner, when he went to bed, the witches decided his fate. They put a hot coal on his body to test his endurance and he did not move. They realised he was very tough and worthy of becoming a highwayman.

Therefore they gave him three magic gifts: an axe on which one could travel three miles at one go as well as a shirt and a belt which gave one supernatural strength.

They also set him an initiation task: to rob his own father. When Janosik came home, he tried to dissuade his father from going to a fair the following day with a considerable sum of money, warning him about the danger from robbers. His father, however, said he was not afraid of any robbers. The next morning in the forest Janosik, dressed in his magic shirt, belt and carrying the axe, robbed his father who did not recognise him. Then he sneaked back home and sat at the table in his student clothes. When his father lamented the loss of the money, he showed him the magic clothes, told him the truth and gave the money back. Then he left the house to become a highwayman.



THE KING OF RAVENS

This story happened a long time ago, when Poland was ruled by the Piast dynasty. On the walls of the city of Poznań there lived and worked Bolko – a city guard whose task was to look out if the city was not approached by a hostile army. Bolko had a good heart and he loved all animals. In winter, he fed hungry birds and homeless dogs. He also knew how to cure sick animals.

One day, when he was watching the area from the city wall, he heard a roar, and something black fell at his feet. He picked it up and saw that it was a black raven, which could not get up on its own. Its wings were limp, most probably broken.

Bolko picked up the raven gently, carefully, and inspected the wings. Yes! He thought he could help the bird, but it would probably take a few days. But it did not matter. Bolko loved animals too much to care.

For the whole month Bolko took care of the raven, fed it, and changed the dressings. He made sure that the bird was completely cured before, heavyhearted, he decided to let it go. But when he was about to do that, the bird spoke suddenly in a human voice:

“Bolko, I am not an ordinary bird. I am the King of Ravens. You have cared for the whole month, and I am grateful for that. Without you, I would have died. We, ravens do not forget to pay back. Now I’ll give you a silver trumpet. Whenever you are in need, stand on the city walls and play the trumpet and I will come to help you. And now, farewell!”

Bolko could not believe what he had just seen – maybe it was just a dream? But a small silver

trumpet was next to him. He looked at it and gently put it away.

Years went by and Bolko had almost forgotten about his unusual friend. One day, the enemy attacked the city. All inhabitants defended it together, since they had been warned by Bolko. But the city was under siege for a long time. Bolko realized that they might have to surrender – there were just too many enemy knights! What could possibly be done to save the city?

And then he remembered the trumpet, never used so far, and kept in a drawer. Repeating in his mind the words of the King of Ravens, he blew the silver trumpet. It produced a strange, penetrating sound, which could probably be heard for miles. Bolko put the trumpet away. And then ... he looked up at the sky, which was now completely black, although it was the middle of the day. Thousands of ravens arrived and attacked the enemy soldiers. Bolko heard incredulous cries of pain, screams of fear, and curses. The enemy soldiers did not understand what had just happened and they started withdrawing swiftly. Soon their hasty retreat was accompanied by cries of joy. The city of Poznań did not fall! Bolko and Poznań residents were saved! But they still did not understand where the help had come from. They talked about some spirits, or fate, or gods. Only Bolko knew the truth. The king of ravens had come to help him. Ever since then, with the silver trumpet in his hand, Bolko played the same tune. If the King of Ravens came again, then Bolko could thank him.

But the King of Ravens never showed up again.



HOW MINER TRĄBALA TRIED TO FOOL SKARBNIK

Skarbnik is a supernatural creature taking the form of an old man with a grey beard, long clothes and a miner's pickaxe or a lantern. He lives in mines where he guards treasures: coal, salt and precious stones alike. He is the ruler of the underground realm where he takes the souls of the miners who were killed in the mine. He is usually friendly and helpful towards the miners, often warning them of the coming danger or helping them with their work. He knows all the underground tunnels and passages and can lead you out of the dangerous spot if he wishes to. However he can also be very nasty and malicious if he does not like somebody's behaviour.

Once upon a time there was a miner called Szymon Trąbala. He knew the mine very well and he knew exactly where to find Skarbnik. He actually made friends with Skarbnik with whom he played cards during breaks from work. Their deal was that when Skarbnik lost, he was obliged

to help Szymon with his work and when Szymon lost, he had to bring from home a big slice of bread with a thick layer of butter for Skarbnik to eat. As the days passed, sometimes Szymon won, sometimes Skarbnik did and they were both satisfied with the deal.

However, Mrs Trąbala, an unkind and greedy woman, did not like to give the bread with butter away. She convinced her husband that, if the bread was covered with mashed potatoes, Skarbnik would not notice. The next day, then, Szymon Trąbala gave Skarbnik that very food. Angry Skarbnik, who immediately spotted the difference, shouted at Trąbala and even hit him on the head. Then he disappeared. Since then, Trąbala's work was strangely difficult: the coal he tried to get was hard like rock and he did very little work each day. Oh, how he regretted forfeiting his friend's trust! Eventually, he had to leave mining altogether and he became an organ-grinder.



KIDNAPPING SYRENKA (THE MERMAID)

There are several legends of Syrenka – the mermaid of Warsaw, the capital of Poland. According to one of them, Syrenka lived in the Wisła (Vistula) River near Warsaw and every night she sang a beautiful song. Fishermen often heard her but few people had ever seen her. One night they decided to set a trap and catch her. They prepared a net sprinkled with holy water. In order not to be influenced by the mermaid's beautiful voice, they blocked their ears with wax. Then they took a boat and rowed to the middle of the river where the song was usually heard. Suddenly, Syrenka emerged very close to the boat. They immediately threw their net on the poor creature and heaved her to the boat, where she tossed desperately. They decided to present her as a

gift to the prince of Czersk in the morning, after spending the night on the river bank.

At night however, when they were asleep, one of them, a young kind-hearted boy, took out the wax from his ears, curious to hear the famous mermaid's song. The moment he heard it, a feeling of great calm and happiness overwhelmed him. He decided to free the amazing creature. He disentangled her from the net and carried her to the water, where he let her free. Grateful Syrenka asked him to go with her. He jumped into the river, where he was transformed into a merman.

The couple lived happily for many years but Syrenka never sang near Warsaw again. When she wanted to sing, she swam up or down the river to where nobody could hear her.



THE LEGEND OF THE BASILISK

A long time ago, in Świdnica, there lived an armorer, Melchior, who had the best forge in Świdnica. Knights from all over the country went to him to have their armours made or repaired – his skills were unmatched. The armorer had two children, who often played in town while he was busy at work. One day, his 5-year-old daughter disappeared in a mysterious way, together with another little girl, her playmate. Melchior's wife went looking for them, along with the nursemaid. When the nursemaid looked into the underground cellar of a house that had fallen into ruins 30 years earlier, she glimpsed someone lying motionless down there, without responding to the shouting of the two women. When the maid was too hoarse to shout for the children anymore, she gathered her courage and went down the stairs to find out what had happened to the children. Then something terrible happened: before the eyes of her mistress, she suddenly sank to the floor beside them, and did not move. Melchior's wife wisely did not follow her into the cellar, but ran back to spread the word about this strange and mysterious business. The rumour spread like wildfire throughout Świdnica. Many people already knew that something was terribly wrong because this had happened before: young servants who had been sent to get some water from the cellar (there was a well down there) had mysteriously disappeared; only knocked over pails had been left. In those days people thought the air felt unusually thick to breathe and suspected that a basilisk was hiding in the cellar. His gaze was fatal to anyone who looked him in the eye.

Melchior's daughter was still nowhere to be found and now people realized that the basilisk was a mortal danger to all of them. What were they to do? How to approach the basilisk? Who would be brave enough to do that? Was there any chance to find Melchior's daughter? They decided to seek the advice of a sorcerer, Hermenegildus Fabuła, who possessed great knowledge about vario-

us arcane subjects and would probably know how to approach the awful beast. Hermenegildus was not, in fact, a sorcerer, but a former chief physician to the king. His chamber was filled with strange instruments, vials, a stuffed crocodile, and lots of dusty books.

First, he commanded that the body of the nursemaid be pulled out of the cellar. This was done with long poles that had iron hooks at the end, and Hermenegildus examined it closely. His helpers gasped. The nursemaid's body presented a horrid appearance, being swollen like drums and with much-discoloured skin; the nursemaid's eyes "protruded from the sockets like the halves of hen's eggs." Hermenegildus, who had seen many things during his fifty years as a physician, at once pronounced the state of the corpses an infallible sign that they had been killed by a basilisk. How could such a formidable beast be destroyed? The knowledgeable old physician, thought to be a sorcerer recommended that a man descend into the cellar to seize the basilisk. To protect his own life, this man had to wear a dress covered with mirrors, facing in all directions. Who would be brave enough to try and face the basilisk?

Hermenegildus, an old and frail man did not volunteer to try out this plan himself. He did not feel quite prepared to do so, he said, owing to age and infirmity. In fact there was no man of sufficient courage to seek out and destroy the basilisk within its lair. Even Melchior could not do that, since his wife had begged him not to risk his life. Was there any chance to find the girls?

Suddenly help came from an unexpected quarter. A Silesian convict named Jan Ślązak, who had been sentenced to death for murdering his traveling companion, was persuaded to make the attempt, on the condition that he be given a complete pardon if he survived his encounter with the loathsome beast. Ślązak was quite willing to take the chance; if he was lucky, he would survive the encounter and that he would be able to prove that he

was, in fact, wrongly accused and sentenced. How was he going to prepare for it? It would be foolish to try to face the beast without any plan, and Jan Ślązak was not a fool. He turned to Melchior, the armourer, who was eager to help him. Protected by a shiny armour, which looked like a mirror, and carrying a mirror in his hand, Jan Ślązak was ready to venture into the cellar, no matter the consequences. He was cheered on by at least two thousand people who had gathered to see the basilisk being conquered – or conquering the intrepid convict. After searching the cellar for more than an hour, the brave Jan Ślązak finally saw the basilisk, lurking in a niche of the wall.

Old Dr. Hermenegildus shouted instructions to him: he was to show the beast the mirror, avoid looking the monster in the eye and, after the basilisk collapsed, carry it out into the broad daylight. Ślązak accomplished this, and the populace ran away like rabbits when he appeared in his strange outfit, gripping the neck of the basilisk, now completely limp, no longer crowing or writhing. Hermenegildus was

the only one who dared examine the strange animal further. First, he declared that it really was a basilisk; it had the head of a cock, the eyes of a toad, a crest like a crown, a warty and scaly skin “covered all over with the hue of venomous animals,” and a curved tail, bent over behind its body. The strange and inexplicable tale of the basilisk of Świdnica ends here: None of the writers chronicling this strange occurrence detailed the ultimate fate of the deformed animal caught in the cellar. It would seem unlikely, however, that it was invited to the city hall for a meal of cakes and ale; the versatile Dr. Hermenegildus probably knew of some infallible way to dispose of the monster.

But Jan Ślązak – he was the happiest man alive! He had proved his innocence, and no sooner had he done that, the travelling companion, who he had allegedly murdered, showed up in town, alive and well, clearly after a few days of heavy drinking.

As to Melchior – he recovered his daughter, who had been hiding in the cave, too scared to come out lest something terrible might befall her.



THE GOLDEN DUCK

A long time ago in Warsaw there lived a young man – Lutek. He was always the first one there when something unusual was going on. Friends loved his company and often invited him to taverns, where he entertained them with tales of his adventures. There is, however, one thing you should know: although Lutek was greatly liked by his companions, his sense of humor was this young man's only possession, for he was as poor as a church mouse.

One night, however, it was Lutek's turn to listen. An old man, whose ragged appearance could only inspire pity, told him about great wealth within anybody's reach. He said that beneath one of the palaces of Warsaw was a maze, at the end of which there was a cave, full of water of an enchanted lake on whose surface swam the Golden Duck. This mysterious bird, with a beautiful crown on its head, guarded the entrance to a treasure-trove. Before you could help yourself to the jewels, you had to fulfill the duck's unusual wishes. When Lutek heard this story, it did not take him long to make a decision: "I have nothing to lose – he said – and so I shall go and find this Golden Duck." And with that he was on his way.

He soon found the palace the old man had told him about. Once in the courtyard, Lutek soon realized that, in spite of its magnificent appearance, it had been deserted for quite some time, which made him want to turn around and head back. But he was curious ... looking in all the windows of the palace, he could not see even the faintest flickering of candlelight. Then he came across a barred opening that led to an underground fortress. Step by step, he made his way into the depths of the castle's dark cellars. Then he got lost in the maze; he was forever looking for a way out, believed he was trapped and regretted his decision to come here.

Suddenly, the cave, gleaming with gold, appeared before his eyes. Its interior was filled with crystal-clear water on which the Golden Duck was gracefully gliding.

The Golden Duck had fine feathers and a precious crown adorned its head. "Come here, intrepid one – the Duck said in a human voice. – You have found what you were looking for. All you see around you is yours to keep, but first a test you have to pass – said the Duck – These hundred ducats you shall take and in a day spend them all, but on yourself and no one else, not even those you hold most dear." One hundred ducats! Lutek had never seen so much money in his life. He departed the cave, bearing in his hand a pouch containing the money and desperate to spend it all. He did not go to work that day.

First, he made his way to the most renowned tailor where he treated himself to a new shirt, a magnificent pair of trousers, a coat and a roguish hat with a feather. Then he headed to a shoemaker, who fashioned him a beautiful pair of boots with spurs. Next he took himself to the finest tavern in Warsaw, to eat and drink his fill. Lutek was overjoyed at having acquired such a great fortune and he did not breathe a word to anyone.

The young man continued to acquire more and more new things, including a horse and carriage and a golden signet ring. In the evening he went to the theatre. He spent a small fortune in order to occupy the seat next to the king himself and watch the play in magnificent company. "As soon as I get hold of the Golden Duck's treasure – Lutek mused – I shall ask for the princess' hand in marriage and then probably build a palace where we will live happily ever after".

Overcome by his dreams, the lad fell asleep with a sweet smile on his face...

When he awoke, the play had long finished. He peered into his purse in order to count his ducats, but all that remained was one solitary golden coin. "I'll buy a jug of the finest wine and some cake and without a penny to my name I shall return to the Golden Duck and claim my reward" – Lutek reasoned. Shortly afterwards, he spotted a beggar, a poorly dressed war-worn soldier, dying of hunger. The beggar reached

out to him and in an exhausted voice pleaded: "Kind sir, help my poor soul and give me a piece of bread for it is a week since a morsel of food last passed my lips." Without a second thought, Lutek reached into his purse, pulled out the only remaining enchanted coin and tucked it into the beggar's hand.

Then suddenly, with a crash and a flash the Golden Duck appeared, its shrill voice reverberating all around: "You did not keep your word, nor our deal, when you gave the poor beggar a meal. And today, though you are in great need, a poor life once again you shall lead. Now the goods that my gold for you bought in the blink of an eye will now come to nought."

Lutek could not believe his eyes. Where a car-

riage had stood, he saw a pile of ashes. His beautiful clothes were tattered again; his signet had simply vanished. Lutek wept for his lost fortune. He then looked at the beggar. The old man smiled and said: "Your good heartedness has triumphed over greed and true treasure is not enchanted gold but a generous spirit and a pair of hands eager to work. That is the way to gain a fortune and the goodwill of others."

Lutek took heed of the beggar's advice and, having recovered from the loss of the magic treasure, found himself a new job. To commemorate the young man's encounter with the Golden Duck, the inhabitants of Warsaw built a fountain in the image of the Golden Duck and positioned it in the castle courtyard, beneath which the enchanted lake was to be found.



THE SILVER-ANTLER DEER

Once upon a time, in a small village, at the edge of an ancient forest near Wrocław, there lived two brothers: Sambor and Wojan. They could not have been any more different. Sambor, a hardworking young man, knew how to enjoy every day of his life, but Wojan complained all the time, though he hardly ever did any work. All Wojan wanted in life was to get rich quickly, without much effort. Both brothers were in love with the same girl, Bogna, daughter of the village woodcutter. Of the two brothers, she preferred Sambor, who was hard-working and modest, but her father promised her hand in marriage to Wojan, since he believed that the latter had a greater chance of becoming rich one day. The father wanted daughter to have a bright future with a wealthy husband.

One day, the two brothers went to the forest to cut some wood. While Sambor was trying to cut down a big tree, Wojan was lying on the grass and looking at the sky, dreaming about his future wealth. Suddenly they heard some noise, and they saw a big deer approaching the clearing. There was something really special about the deer. The stag had beautiful silver antlers, and as he approached the brothers, they heard him speak in a human voice:

“Save me, please! The hunters are trying to kill me to get my antlers” – and then the deer ran away.

A few moments later, the two brothers saw a prince with his suite and hunting dogs. Breathless, the prince asked the two brothers where the deer had gone, and before Wojan could say anything, Sambor showed the prince the wrong way. He wanted to protect the wonderful animal and did not care about the prince’s gratitude.

The prince shouted to his companions to follow him and went the wrong way. A few moments later, after the prince, his men and his dogs had gone, the deer appeared again and thanked Sambor for helping him.

“You are my savior,” said the beast. “How can I pay you back? Tell me your wish and it will come true.”

Sambor thought for a long time. He did not have any special wishes. All he wanted was to have his own forge to help the people in his village.

But Wojan, whom the deer did not even address, knew exactly what he wanted.

He had dreamed of becoming rich for such a long time, and now was a perfect opportunity! He could not blow his chance.

With little hesitation, he asked the deer for great wealth. Surprised by this adamant request, the deer agreed to make both wishes come true: Sambor would get his forge and Wojan would be rich. The stag then stamped the hoof on the ground and two rings appeared.

Sambor got an iron ring, and Wojan a gold one, and each of them went his own way.

Sambor’s ring fell out of his hands and he followed it until it stopped. Sambor saw a red patch on the ground and he started digging. He dug and dug until he found iron ore – so he had the material to make his tools! Soon afterwards he built his forge, and since his brother Wojan had disappeared he asked the woodcutter for Bogna’s hand in marriage.

Meanwhile, Wojan had followed his gold ring until it stopped next to a cave. A funny little dwarf was guarding the entrance to the cave, where Wojan glimpsed precious jewels, bars of gold and other innumerable riches. The dwarf smiled cunningly.

“Take as much as you can carry,” he said. Wojan followed him into the cave, and he packed so much gold that he could hardly lift the bag. Satisfied, he walked out of the cave and turned around to bade farewell to the dwarf, but both the cave and the dwarf had already disappeared.

“Anyway, I have everything that I have ever wanted,” murmured Wojan to

himself and walked towards the nearest town. He did not even think of his brother or Bogna. Now he was going to live the life of a wealthy man.

A few years later, a miserable, thin beggar sho-

wed up in front of Sambor's forge.

He was dressed in rags and looked as if he had not had a decent meal for many weeks. In a trembling voice, he asked for a piece of bread and ... any job that he could do to earn his keep.

Sambor looked at the beggar and he could not believe his eyes. It was his brother Wojan, wearing tattered clothes, completely humiliated. He would not even look his brother in the eye.

Sambor did not hesitate. He asked his brother to come in, but did not ask what had happened to him. Wojan was a changed man: he started

working hard as if he wanted to pay back for his laziness and excessive pride. He was too embarrassed to look at Bogna who had married Sambor.

Wojan worked, without uttering a word of complaint, for many years. At night, when no one was watching, he was carving a relief. It represented a silver-antler deer. When he was finished, he gave to the builders of the city hall in Wrocław.

The relief is still on one of the walls of the city hall – you have to come to Wrocław to see it!



Player's card

CHARACTER NAME _____

ATTRIBUTES

BODY	value	MIND	value	SPIRIT	value
Agility		Cunning		Charisma	
Beauty		Education		Conformity	
Health		Intelligence		Faith	
Power		Memory		Honour	
Size		Prophecy		Kindness	
Speed		Wisdom		Ruthlessness	
Strength				Sacrifice	
				Self-control	
				Stealth	

SKILLS

	value		value		value
Charm		Foreign language		Perception	
Chitchat		Hectoring		Persuasion	
Combat		Hiding		Psychology	
Courage		History		Riding	
Dodging		Mechanics		Survival	
Fighting		Nimble fingers			
First Aid					

LUCK (OUT OF LUCK)

	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39
40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59
60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79
80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99

SANITY (INSANE)

	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39
40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59
60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79
80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99

RPG places in Poland

NON-PLAYING CHARACTERS You can meet them in the following places:	PLAYING CHARACTERS They were born or have lived in these places:
01 – 04 BAŁTYK (The Baltic Sea) Perkun, Lord of Thunder and Lightning	01 – 04 BAŁTYK (The Baltic Sea) Jurata, Queen of the Baltic Sea
05 – 09 DUNAJEC (The Dunajec River – Gorge in the Pieniny Mountains) Dziwożona	
05 – 13 GDZIEKOLWIEK (Anywhere, or in the middle of nowhere) Dola	
14 – 17 GIEWONT The Sleeping Knights	
18 – 21 KRAKÓW The Wawel Dragon	18 – 21 KRAKÓW Szewczyk Dratewka (The Little Cobbler)
22 – 25 KRUSZWICA Mice	22 – 25 KRUSZWICA Król Popiel (King Popiel) Hilderica (King Popiel's wife)
	26 – 29 KSIĘŻYC (The Moon) Pan Twardowski
30 – 33 LUBUSKIE (FORESTS) Rusałka (Nymph)	
	34 – 37 ŁĘCZYCA Diabeł Boruta (Devil Boruta)
	38 – 41 MAZOWSZE (Masovia) Koszałek-Opalek
42 – 45 PAJĘCZNO Pająk	
	46 – 49 PODHALE Janosik
50 – 53 POZNAŃ Król Kruków (The King of Ravens)	50 – 53 POZNAŃ Bolko
54 – 57 PUSZCZA BIAŁOWIESKA Borowy	
58 – 61 PUSZCZA NOTECKA Nocnica	
62 – 65 RYBNIK Skarbnik	
66 – 69 SUWAŁKI Pieniężny Chłopczyk (The Money Boy)	
70 – 73 ŚWIDNICA Basilisk	70 – 73 ŚWIDNICA Melchior, an armourer Jan Ślązak, a convict sentenced to death Hermenegildus
	74 – 77 TATRY (The Tatra Mountains) Królowa Tatra
78 – 81 WARSZAWA Złota Kaczka (The Golden Duck)	78 – 81 WARSZAWA Lutek
	82 – 85 WIELICZKA (a salt mine) Księżniczka Kinga
	86 – 89 WIEŚ Chłopek-roztroppek Jaśko (Smart Young Peasant Johnny)
90 – 93 WISŁA (The Vistula River) Syrenka	
94 – 100 WROCŁAW Srebrnorogi Jeleń (The Silver-antler deer)	94 – 100 WROCŁAW Sambor, a blacksmith Wojan, Sambor's brother

LOCATION:

THE BALTIC SEA

The Baltic Sea, situated north of Poland, is characterized by high waves and very cold water. Though it is the most polluted sea in the world nowadays, it was appreciated in the past for its amber, which is considered to be the most beautiful in the world. In Poland, people love the Baltic Sea for its incredible white-sand beaches, dunes, and enchanting sunsets. It still has some edible fish, for example herring and mackerel, so it can be treated as an emergency source of food. The sea can also be very dangerous, not only because you can drown in it; its waters can make you sick, with your skin turning an ugly shade of grey or blue, like that of a floater. You can get seriously hurt or even killed if an unexploded bomb, placed there during the Second World War, suddenly goes off



PC: JURATA

You are a beautiful queen of the Baltic Sea with long, golden hair and green eyes the color of the seawater. As a sea creature, you have the power to breathe underwater. You want to be kind to all sea creatures, therefore you do not allow fishermen to set traps that would catch too many fish at one time. That does not mean that your diet is strictly vegetarian! On the contrary, you sometimes eat a piece of fish, usually half of it, in your palace, but the remaining half of fish is still alive due to your magical powers. Unfortunately, you have a soft spot for fishermen, whose station in life is much lower than yours and who are mere mortals, unlike you. If you fall in love with them, you will have to deal with Perkun, who will not tolerate your love affairs.

OBJECTS AND/OR ANIMALS

- an amber crown, thanks to which you can move underwater easily
- a mermaid, who can cast a spell with a beautiful voice and then drown an innocent listener. The mermaid is obedient to you, and has no will of her own; you can use her powers only when absolutely necessary

MOTIVATION

- keep ruling over the Baltic Sea
- punish those who try to destroy your realm
- find true love

NPC: PERKUN

Perkun, the fierce Lord of Thunder and Lightning. He is very tall, towering over mere mortals as well as many a sea creature, with long, thick beard and piercing eyes. Wears a loose garment, which drapes the entire body, covering a muscular chest and strong biceps. Holding a fiery sword (a bit strange considering that he is a sea god – but maybe he signed a pact with some underworld creatures?) in his hand, Perkun destroys everything with storms (thunder and lightning) if someone upsets him or breaks the law. What is more, Perkun does not tolerate anyone who goes against well-established customs and traditions. He also has a soft spot for Jurata, in fact he is in love with her, so he will frustrate all her attempts to find true love, especially if she looks in all the wrong places. He has the power to control weather.

OBJECTS AND/OR ANIMALS

- a sword which can be used to fight both land and sea creatures

MOTIVATION

- keep ruling over the Baltic Sea
- get Jurata's attention, whatever it takes
- punish those who try to destroy the sea
- find true love

LOCATION:

DUNAJEC

(THE DUNAJEC RIVER GORGE
IN THE PIENINY MOUNTAINS)

This is one of the most beautiful places in Europe. The river Dunajec flowing through the Pieniny Mountains forms a scenic gorge. If you float down the river on a boat or raft, you may admire high white peaks and green forests. However, if you are unlucky, on the river bank you may encounter Dziwożona, who is especially dangerous towards young girls, mothers and their babies, and old people.



NPC: DZIWOŻONA (THE WILD WOMAN)

Dziwożona is a slavic demon in the shape of a particularly ugly woman living in bushes near water, especially in the mountains. She is characterised by long flabby breasts hanging down to the earth (which she can use to wash clothes in a river) and a red cap with a sweet kind of fern (ślodyczka) on her head. A great danger from Dziwożona is that she may kidnap a human baby, leaving her own child (a changeling) instead. The changeling is usually ugly, voracious and nasty towards people. It does not want to sleep at night and makes its new “mother” exhausted. If she wants her own child back, she may challenge the Wild Woman by whipping her child with a birch twig and pouring water from an eggshell on its head. Dziwożona will then come to rescue her own child and give the human baby back. To protect babies from being swapped with wild babies mothers refrain from washing their babies’ nappies after sundown and tie red ribbons on their children’s wrists.

The Wild Woman may also kidnap a young mother to force her to feed her wild baby.

Sometimes Dziwożona kidnaps a young woman wandering alone. She will then be turned into another Dziwożona.

The greatest danger from Dziwożona, however, is that for old people whom she may tickle to death.

OBJECTS AND/OR ANIMALS

- a red cap
- sweet fern called ślodyczka

MOTIVATION

- kidnap human babies and swap them with wild children
- kidnap young women and change them into wild women
- tickle old people to death

LOCATION:
GDZIEKOLWIEK
(ANYWHERE)



NPC: DOLA (FATE)

Dola is fate in shape of a woman. It may be your fate, it may be somebody else's. She may be following you or not. If she is following you, she'd better be your own fate, not somebody else's. If she is not yours, she will never fit and you will not be able to do your job right. She may be good, she may be bad. If she is good, it is enough to work hard and you will get everything you need. If she is bad, or weak, or lazy, you will never get what you want, no matter how you try. If she likes you, she will follow you everywhere and will never leave you. That is why it is better to have a good one! She will then take care of you, your family, your children and all your endeavours.

If she is bad, you may trick her into a tight space, which you may seal and thus dispose of her, perhaps forever. You may also find a new one by accident. When you meet a new one (and they can be met anywhere!), look at the state of her clothes as the sign of her status.

OBJECTS AND/OR ANIMALS

- nice new clothes or old tatty clothes

MOTIVATION

- find good food and shelter whenever possible
- follow a human and determine his/her fate
- keep balance between poverty and well-being in nature

LOCATION:
GIEWONT

A mountain massif in the Tatra Mountains consisting of three peaks: Small Giewont, Great Giewont, and Long Giewont. The Great Giewont (Wielki Giewont in Polish) is the highest of the three, with the altitude of 1895 m. and a 15-metre steel cross on top, making it a dangerous place during thunderstorms. Because of the three peaks, Giewont resembles a profile of a sleeping knight. In the caves of Giewont, a group of Sleeping Knights rest, awaiting a call for action.



NPC:
**THE SLEEPING KNIGHTS
OF GIEWONT**

This is a group of Polish knights sleeping in a cave in Tatra Mountains, the highest Polish mountains. One of the mountains, Giewont, has a shape of a head of a sleeping man. Near the mountain there is a cave where a group of noble mediaeval-looking knights sleep in their armour. Their swords and shields lie nearby. Their role is to defend the country in need. They are very strong, valiant, and honourable and will only fight for the right cause. You can only wake them up with a bell. If you wake them up, they will ask you if this is the time. If you want their help, you should tell them it is but you have to convince them the fight is for a noble cause. If you fail, you can expect their wrath and your life will be in danger.

OBJECTS AND/OR ANIMALS

- armour
- weapons (swords and shields)
- horses

MOTIVATION

- defend the country in need
- fight for freedom
- fight for any right cause

LOCATION:
KRAKÓW (CRACOW)

Kraków is a former capital of Poland. A lovely and prosperous city on the Vistula river, situated in the south, in Małopolska (the Lesser Poland region), dominated by the castle on the Wawel Hill. The name of Kraków is derived from the city's renowned founder, King Krak. Legend has it that the city was established on the Wawel Hill, right above the cave inhabited by a terrifying dragon. That was the only true problem with the city, whose inhabitants, a happy and peaceful people, had to cater to the dragon's whims; soon enough life became unbearable for them. Even the city founder, King Krak, was unable to solve the problem by himself and he asked his own subjects for help.



PC:

**SZEWCZYK DRATEWKA
(THE LITTLE COBBLER)**

You are a "little cobbler" (shoemaker), a talented and skillful cobbler's apprentice. You live in Kraków, near the Wawel Castle. You are young, clever, and unafraid of any challenges, hot-headed as some people say, or maybe vain, since you wouldn't mind a little recognition. If dared to solve a difficult or dangerous problem, you are ready to come up with a plan. Since you have a good heart and a strong sense of justice, you have been known to help some people as well as some animals (ants, bees, ducks), which are always grateful and ready to pay you back. You even have a plan how to fight the dragon living in a cave under the King's castle, demanding that lamb or sometimes young maidens be offered to him from time to time.

OBJECTS AND/OR ANIMALS

- shoemaker's hammer – it can break almost anything
- shoemaker's twine – it can sew various things together, make them stick
- no accompanying animals, but can summon them if in need – they'll be ready to help!

MOTIVATION

- free Kraków and its inhabitants from the terrible monster
- raise your status in the community
- get a reward, possibly the king's daughter's hand in marriage or at least some money
- gain fame

NPC:

THE WAWEL DRAGON

He is a huge beast with a long tail, jaws full of sharp teeth and thick, green skin, covered with hard, spiky scales. The dragon is constantly hungry and his appetite is insatiable, but at the same time he is too lazy to get the food for himself. The Wawel Dragon lives in a cave under King Krak's castle. When in a rage, the dragon breathes fire and smoke, which might destroy the city. Threatens the whole city of Kraków, demanding a lamb (or, at times, a lovely maiden) every week to quench its appetite. Unfortunately for his own sake, he is not very clever. In fact, his lack of intelligence might be his only weakness.

OBJECTS AND/OR ANIMALS

- no special objects or animals, because he is an animal – but the ability to breathe fire!

MOTIVATION

- eat to satiation, animals or humans, especially young maidens
- raise his status in the community
- force King Krak to obey
- rule by terror

LOCATION:

LUBUSKIE LASY (FORESTS)

Lubuskie (in the western part of Poland) is the most wooded area in the country, with a great variety of plants. Not surprisingly, the region is very popular with mushroom pickers as well as eco-lovers. Both of these groups sometimes report finding strange things in the forests (possibly left after the Second World War), getting lost (probably wandering into an old German bunker by accident) or meeting strange creatures.



NPC: RUSAEKA (NYMPH)

In the folk legends of Poland, Slavic water spirits called Rusalkas are believed to inhabit the forests and lakes of western Poland (e.g. Lubuskie). Rusalka is the restless spirit of a girl or young woman whose death was unnatural, violent, or premature. Some say that the girl who later turned into Rusalka had died on her wedding night. Now she seeks to continue her existence by drawing the energy of life from nearby living things: animals and humans. At certain times of the year Rusalkas come out of the water and sit in the branches of willows and birch trees. Rusalkas apparently miss the human world and ordinary lives they never fully enjoyed or experienced, so they want to share the company of men asking them for bread, salt, onions, and trying to seduce them! They also want to take revenge on men in general, since men are often to blame for their premature death. Those who are seduced by Rusalkas, are likely to die in their arms, or lose almost all of their power.

OBJECTS AND/OR ANIMALS

- no special objects or animals but the ability to communicate with the natural world

MOTIVATION

- share the company of men
- draw energy from the people you approach
- seduce men in order to take revenge on them

LOCATION:
KRUSZWICA

Kruszwica (in western Poland) is the legendary capital of Poland, on Lake Gopło. In the past, the town was well known for its convenient location on the amber trade route. The Baltic Sea amber was considered to be the most beautiful in the world and many fair ladies desired it, so lots of merchants and adventurers passed through it. It is possible to buy there just anything you might need. Kruszwica has an old tower in which one can find shelter if under attack.



PC:
KING POPIE

You are a truly cruel character, ruling the region of Lake Gopło with an iron fist. Most of all, you are greedy, corrupt and power-hungry but also quite efficient at achieving your goals and dealing with your enemies or anyone who opposes you. You are ready to get rid of anybody who opposes you, but, who knows? Maybe you still have some conscience and would have stopped short of murdering all twelve tribes' elders (your own blood relatives) if it had not been for your wife. That means, of course, that you do have a soft spot for her, and you are too weak to go against her wishes. You are of course suspected (by the people) of murdering your own relatives after inviting them to your castle for a feast. Everyone fears you, therefore hardly anyone is brave enough to contradict you. What is worse, you do not respect old Slavic gods or the town's age-honored traditions.

OBJECTS AND/OR ANIMALS

- poisonous potion, which can make people/animals weak or even kill them
- armour
- weapons (swords and shields)
- horses

MOTIVATION

- stay in power at any cost
- eliminate all the people who will challenge your position
- rule by terror so that all who oppose you will be too scared to do anything against your will
- inspire fear in your subjects

PC: **HILDERICA,**
KING POPIEL'S WIF

You are a beautiful woman, with long, blond hair, and a cold, unsmiling face, commanding respect in those around you. At the same time, you are a truly cruel character, just like your husband, ruling the region of Lake Gopło with an iron fist. Just like him, you are greedy, corrupt and power-hungry and also extremely efficient at achieving your goals. You certainly know how to charm your own husband – you can talk him into doing almost anything – in the end he ends up doing anything you want! You are ready to kill anybody who opposes you – so, just like your husband, you are suspected of murdering all twelve tribes' elders (Popiel's own relatives) after inviting them to your castle for a feast. Everyone fears you, therefore no one contradicts you. In addition, you have little respect for old Slavic gods or the town's age-honored traditions.

OBJECTS AND/OR ANIMALS

- poisonous potion, which can make people/animals weak or even kill them

MOTIVATION

- stay in power at any cost
- persuade your husband to follow your advice – and kill your enemies!
- eliminate all the people who will challenge your position
- rule by terror so that all who oppose you will be too scared to do anything against you

NPC: MICE

They are giant mice, ready to devour anything that they come across. They are unusually cruel and bloodthirsty, they will eat almost anything they find, but, surprisingly, they do have a sense of justice – for example will punish those who have committed terrible crimes and have never been punished for them. Most probably they fed on the bodies of Popiel's murdered relatives, that's why they are so big.

OBJECTS AND/OR ANIMALS

- nothing except for sharp teeth: they will eat anything

MOTIVATION

- devour anything that can be eaten
- do justice if possible at all

LOCATION:
KSIEZYC
(THE MOON)



PC:
PANTWARDOWSKI

You are a Polish nobleman and magician from the 17th century Kraków, wearing a traditional old Polish split-sleeve overcoat, a fur hat and long moustache. Because you wanted knowledge, power, and gold, you sold your body and soul to the devil who gave you magical powers. The contract was signed with your blood. You have used magic to live adventurous life among the most powerful. You once helped the Polish king Sigismundus Augustus to evoke the spirit of his dead wife Barbara.

The devil is awaiting you in Rome to snatch away your body and soul. Therefore, you cannot go to Rome, even a place called Rome, for example an inn. By extension, you have to avoid any place whose name begins with an "R", like Radom. The devil has already tried to catch you. He cornered you in an inn called "Rome" and you escaped on your faithful flying rooster to the moon (when you now normally reside). You can travel very fast if you want to.

OBJECTS AND/OR ANIMALS

- a sabre
- a magic mirror showing the future
- a roost
- a spider who is a spy and a messenger (difficult to see, so it can collect information secretly)

MOTIVATION

- retain the magical power you obtained from the devil
- escape the devil's claws

LOCATION:

ŁĘCZYCA

One of the oldest Polish towns which hosted many important historical events. The town lies almost exactly in the centre of Poland! Łęczyca is surrounded by defensive walls inside which there is a medieval castle erected by king Casimir III the Great in the 14th century. Three more Polish kings often visited the castle. In the dungeons many Teutonic knights were held as prisoners. Because the castle is such an important place, a precious treasure is kept there. Unless you are Devil Boruta, the treasure guard of Łęczyca, beware of entering the castle dungeons!



PC: DEVIL BORUTA

You are the best known devil in Poland. You live in the dungeons of the Łęczyca Castle. People treat you with respect because you belong to the nobility among the devils. You are a shape-shifter. You change your shape at will. There are several shapes that you may assume:

1. A Polish 17th century nobleman with black eyes and a black moustache, wearing a traditional old Polish split-sleeve overcoat hiding the tail, leather boots covering the hooves and a fur hat hiding the horns. This is your usual and favourite shape;
2. A bird with big wings (the bog Boruta);
3. A giant horned fish in the river Bzura (the drowned Boruta);
4. A swift black horse;
5. A wolf in the forest;
6. An owl;
7. A sitting hooded monk holding a shining kettle.

You are a controversial figure. You sometimes harm people and sometimes help them. You are very cunning and like playing tricks on people, for example by pulling a horse-drawn cart into the bog. Sometimes you help the poor, e.g. by stealing the flour from the miller and giving it to them by night. You like beer (sometimes you come to an inn with your brother Rokita) but you do not like paying for it. If you pay, it is with fake gold coins, so hot that they are impossible to hold in hands. When people throw them to the floor you disappear with a devillish laughter and there is black smoke and the smell of sulphur. Sometimes you duel with noblemen with the use of the sabre, but you hardly ever win, that is why you are missing two fingers. Your main task is to guard the Łęczyca treasure in the castle dungeons. You also take care of the forest animals and hunters. Your favourite tree is the pine tree.

OBJECTS AND/OR ANIMALS

- a pine tree
- a shining kettle
- a pitchfork
- false coins

MOTIVATION

- guard the gold of Łęczyca
- play tricks on people
- take care of the forest animals and hunters

LOCATION:

MAZOWSZE (MAZOVIA)

A region in mid-north-eastern Poland with Warsaw as the main city. The region is known for its beautiful plains and pine forests located around Wisła (The Vistula River). Żelazowa Wola, the birthplace of Fryderyk Chopin lies there. More importantly, Maria Konopnicka, a great friend of little gnome-like creatures called krasnoludki, lived and worked in Mazowsze. She knew better than anybody else that under the roots of giant oak trees there is a subterrestrial kingdom of krasnoludki governed by the wise king Błystek. One day the king decided to send his chronicler Koszałek-Opalek up to the surface of the earth to look for the signs of Spring...



PC:

KOSZAŁEK-OPALEK

You are a dwarf (krasnoludek), the court chronicler of the dwarf king Błystek. You are very old, with a grey beard and glasses. You carry with you an ink bottle, a goose feather and giant books. You collect and write down legends and you have described everything that had ever happened in the kingdom of dwarves. You possess infinite knowledge from books, however you do not know much about real life. You are good-natured and naïve and can be easily duped. However, your knowledge is very precious and it can help you solve many problems. You like Spring and you like telling stories to children

OBJECTS AND/OR ANIMALS

- an ink bottle
- a goose feather
- books

MOTIVATION

- find Spring
- keep the wisdom of ages for the next generations
- tell stories

LOCATION:

PAJECZNO

Pajęczno is a town in Ziemia Wieluńska, a region in the central Poland, south-west of the city of Łódź. Ziemia Wieluńska, crossed by the Warta river, is an important region on the amber trade route, with old forests, deep ravines and occasional lime rocks. It is home of many supertnatural creatures: utopce, południce, chochliki and other unpleasant lot. However, the foulest creature living there is Pająk (Spider), from which Pajęczno takes its name



NPC:

PAJĄK (SPIDER) FROM PAJECZNO

Pająk is a monster spider, the size of a small elephant, from which the town takes its name. It has lived in the area for years. When it was younger, it lived in the forest hunting wild animals. With time, the animals deserted the forest and it had to go out to the fields and villages to hunt for farm animals. Scared peasants used to lock themselves with their livestock inside buildings but the strong beast often broke the gate to get to the animals. When livestock became scarce, Pająk began hunting humans. Its first victims were stray wanderers, but soon it became bolder and started attacking farms and kidnapping villagers. Many brave knights and daredevils wanted to kill the beast but they ended as its prey. Years of such events caused the region to be almost deserted. Scared with the living terror, peasants moved away. The few who have stayed on their home farms live in constant fear. They say the beast runs away from silver and salt but no one has ever dared to test this. Also, like other creatures from hell, it is rumoured to be afraid of the rooster's crow. Whatever the case, the giant Pająk is still lurking in the forests near Pajęczno, awaiting its prey...

OBJECTS AND/OR ANIMALS

- eight speedy legs and eight keen eyes

MOTIVATION

- hunt and eat anything that moves
- taste human flesh

LOCATION:

PODHALE

It is a region in the very south of Poland at the foot of the Tatra mountains. The name “Podhale” means “meadows under the mountains”. The region is inhabited by górale (highlanders), tough people enduring harsh living conditions with very rich culture. People have always worked very hard here, not getting much as the product of their work, but they always found time for art, embroidery, music and dancing. However, cruel masters usually exploited them beyond measure. That is why noble highwaymen had to do the justice. One of such men was Janosik, a famous mountain rozbójnik (robber).



PC: JANOSIK

You are a robber from the Tatra mountains on the border with Slovakia dressed in traditional mountaineer clothes. You are a highwayman of a peasant origin who has rebelled against the oppression of poor peasants by rich and merciless magnates. You have always been very brave and because of that three witches in the forest decided to prepare you for your job. They gave you three magical artefacts: an axe on which you can travel 3 miles, a shirt protecting from bullets, and a belt which gives you exceptional strength. You have a band of robbers with a mission of taking gold away from the rich and giving it to the poor. As a very noble man, you have great authority among your men. Your group of robbers is governed by a special code of honour. Whatever you do, you do it for your men who would do anything for you in return. However, you have a soft spot for beautiful women, of both high and low birth

OBJECTS AND/OR ANIMALS

- an axe on which you can fly 3 miles
- a shirt protecting from bullets
- a belt that gives exceptional strength

MOTIVATION

- fight the rich
- help the poor
- reward your men
- win the heart of a beautiful woman

LOCATION:
POZNAN

It is a well-known city in western Poland, with a wonderful Town Hall in its Old Town. Surrounded by thick walls. Always in danger of being attacked due to its proximity to the border. Protected by guards on the city's walls. Most people visiting the city like to see two famous city goats, standing in front of the Town Hall tower clock, which gore each other whenever the clock strikes, and then separate peacefully. You can become so distracted by this unusual sight that you can forget what you wanted to do and waste a lot of time. On the other hand, the goats goring one another can remind you that you were about to do something really important, so you focus instantly!



PC: BOLKO

You are Bolko, a city guard, standing watch over the walls of the city of Poznań. Your most important duty is to warn the inhabitants of the city of any danger. You love the job because from the walls one can see the beautiful view of the city as well as the surrounding countryside. You also love all animals; and if they are ill or injured, you are able to nurse them back to health. Once you met an injured raven and you took care of him. You thought you were taking care of an ordinary bird, but it turned out that it was the King of Ravens, who was extremely grateful and promised to help you out if your life was ever in danger. All you need to do is to summon the King of Ravens with a special silver trumpet.

OBJECTS AND/OR ANIMALS

- a silver trumpet, which can summon help of the King of Ravens. It cannot be misused to demand help in solving trivial problems

MOTIVATION

- help your people, warn them of any danger, as early as possible
- protect the city from invaders or any other danger
- gain respect and fame for doing a good job
- help anybody in need – people, animals – since you have a good heart

NPC: KING OF RAVENS

The King of Ravens is a beautiful, big, black bird with wonderful wings. It is powerful, ready to help, and able to transform into an elf and communicate with people. Will come if summoned with a blow of the silver trumpet; will summon a great flock of ferocious ravens to help the city's inhabitants if need should arise. The King of Ravens should not, however, be called to help with any trivial problems since he might get angry and never show up again.

OBJECTS AND/OR ANIMALS

- a silver trumpet, which can be used to summon help of the King of Ravens. It cannot be misused to demand help in solving trivial problems

MOTIVATION

- help people if they have deserved his help
- gain respect and fame for doing a good job
- keep his word – since he is an honorable being

LOCATION:

PUSZCZA BIAŁOWIESKA

The largest fragment of primeval forest in Europe shared between Poland and Belarus. A vast mysterious wood full of wild animals, including wolves and European bison, dark entangled masses of trees and bogs. Hundreds of plants and animals there need care and protection from humans. If you go there, respect Nature or you will answer to Borowy.



NPC: BOROWY (THE WOODMAN)

Borowy is the protective spirit of the forest. His main role is to govern the realm of the woods. He takes care of everything that lives in the forest: trees, bushes, small plants, animals. All the animals obey him and big forest beasts, like wolves and bears, are at his service, whenever he needs them. He appears in the form of an old man with a long twiggy beard and bushy leaves instead of the hair. His attitude towards humans varies according to their behaviour in the forest. If they cut down trees, destroy bushes, or hunt, he may get very angry and set dangerous beasts against them or will entangle their paths in the woods. He may take the form of a bear or wolf at will. His terrible roar, when angry, may render a human (temporarily) deaf. If, however, an innocent human loses their way in the forest, Borowy will help find it. He will also give back farm animals that incidentally get lost in the forest. He especially likes children, whom he protects from wild animals and robbers.

OBJECTS AND/OR ANIMALS

- all the forest animals are at his service

MOTIVATION

- take care of plants and animals in the forest
- help people and farm animals find their way
- protect children in the forest

LOCATION:

PUSZCZA NOTECKA

An old pine forest in the west of Poland growing on dunes, which may be over 30 metres high and which make a labyrinth of hills and valleys. Most of the forest grows on sands but there are also lakes and bogs. The main river there is Noteć. Puszcza Notecka also boasts a large rock called “Devil’s Stone.” It is a risky venture to go there at night. Both in the forest itself and in nearby villages you may meet Nocnica and not live to tell the tale



NPC: NOCNICA (ZMORA)

Nocnica is a Polish demon active at night. She is very malicious and can do real harm. During the day she sleeps in the forest and wakes up at nightfall. Then she combs her matted hair with spruce cones. When she is ready, she flies on her membrane wings to the nearest human dwelling to do her foul tricks. She pinches children to make them cry at night. She sits on the sleeping humans’ chests to draw out their life energy. They cannot breathe and have nightmares. The next morning they feel very tired and ill. If she takes to someone, she will visit them every night until their death of exhaustion.

Sometimes she meets night wanderers. She may show herself to them in the form of a woman who invites them to dance. When they agree, she will dance with them for hours until they die. She can also draw the unwary travellers to the bog, where they may drown.

Metal objects, especially silver ones, protect you from Nocnica

OBJECTS AND/OR ANIMALS

- spruce cones

MOTIVATION

- harm humans at night

LOCATION: RYBNIK

A city in the Górny Śląsk (Upper Silesia) region in the south of Poland, a centre of coal-mining. Its name means “a fish pond”, because in the olden times it was a fishing centre. That is why a fish is the emblem of the city. There are several coal mines around the town. The coal miner’s work has always been very hard and dangerous and miners sometimes need the help of a wise and powerful supernatural man: Skarbnik. If you are in a coal mine, you may meet him too.



NPC: SKARBNIK (THE TREASURER)

Skarbnik is a supernatural creature taking the form of an old man with a grey beard, long clothes and a miner’s pickaxe or a lantern. He lives in mines where he guards treasures: coal, salt and precious stones alike. He is the ruler of the underground realm where he takes the souls of the miners who were killed in the mine. He is usually friendly and helpful towards the miners, often warning them of the coming danger or helping them with their work. He knows all the underground tunnels and passages and can lead you out of a dangerous spot if he wishes to. However he can also be very nasty and malicious if he does not like somebody’s behaviour. He does not approve of laziness, dishonesty, foul language, whistling in the mine.

He is a shape-shifter. His usual shape is that of an old bearded miner with a torch and keys. He can also appear as a spider, a mouse, a dog or another animal. If he chooses so, he can be invisible and then the miners will either feel his presence or hear some noise.

If you want to secure his help, you need to prove to be a polite, hardworking, honest man.

OBJECTS AND/OR ANIMALS

- a lantern that shows the way even in blocked passages
- keys to the underground realm

MOTIVATION

- take care of the souls of the dead people
- keep order in the mine
- take care of the purity of language

LOCATION:
SUWAŁKI

A town in north-eastern Poland, the coldest place in the country apart from the mountains. Its winter night temperatures may reach -25 degrees C while in the summer they are over +30 degrees C. The Suwałki region is a beautiful territory with lakes and primeval forests, close to the borders with Russia and Lithuania. Some Lithuanians live in the city. Because life in this region has always been difficult, poor people often need support. If they are lucky, they may meet Pieniężny Chłopczyk there.



NPC:
**PIENIEŻNY CHŁOPCZYK
(THE MONEY BOY)**

The boy usually lives in Lithuania, but often crosses the border with Poland. He can be met in the North-East of Poland. The Money Boy is made of money but it is not immediately obvious as he looks like a normal beautiful male child. When he meets someone on his way he begs the person to slap his face. Most people, scared of the strange request, quickly run away, thinking this must be a devil's provocation. Those, however, who are brave enough to stand up to the challenge, become very rich. The trick is that, when you slap the boy, he immediately falls off into hundreds of gold, silver, and bronze coins. The boy itself disappears but may crop up again in a different place, again full of coins.

OBJECTS AND/OR ANIMALS

- gold, silver, and bronze coins masked by the boy's human appearance

MOTIVATION

- give people material wealth (which does not necessarily lead to happiness)

LOCATION: SWIDNICA

Świdnica, a town in Lower Silesia, which, like all towns and cities attracts all kinds of people – good and bad, certainly those who are ready to face challenges. The town has the world-famous Church of Peace, the largest wooden baroque church in the world, but has Świdnica always been so peaceful? Certainly not! Since the city has a lot of old and new houses, there are some scary dungeons under some of the city’s crumbling buildings. Over the years the town has experienced its share of unrest – it has belonged to Poland, Bohemia, Austria, Prussia, and Poland again.



PC: MELCHIOR

You are an armorer (armoursmith) who has the best forge in Świdnica. The armours you make protect the knights from harm and look truly impressive. Some of them have special properties – they shine and look just like mirrors – so smooth that you can see your face in them. You are a good man but it seems that sometimes you are so caught up in work that you forget about family duties, and sometimes your neglect might endanger those you love the most – your wonderful children.

OBJECTS AND/OR ANIMALS

- armours, some of them really shiny, just like mirrors
- swords (you make them)

MOTIVATION

- find your lost daughter, who may have been captured by the basilisk and whose
- lives might be endangered
- kill the basilisk or get someone to kill it so it cannot threaten anybody anymore

PC: JAN SLAZAK

You are a prisoner, currently facing a death sentence, but only you know that you have been wrongly convicted of murdering your traveling companion. Unfortunately, no one ever believes you, though there might be some people willing to help a “repentant sinner” if he confesses his sins and admits his fault. You might be willing to accept their help, since you want to save your life, but first and foremost you are desperate to do anything to prove your innocence and goodwill; therefore, you are ready to take risks for the good of others.

OBJECTS AND/OR ANIMALS

- **shield – which can have two different functions: reflects light just like a mirror (it’s really shiny!) and protects the body from any ordinary weapons**

MOTIVATION

- prove your innocence, since you have never killed or harmed anybody
- ready to do something good for the community to prove your good intentions
- ready to face the basilisk if necessary

PC:
HERMENEGILDUS

You are a doctor, helping people (and animals, sometimes) get better, giving them the best treatment, but people believe that you really are a wizard. In fact, you possess great knowledge; maybe you could change iron into gold? In fact, you know how to prepare healing potions, which make people feel well; how to dress wounds, since you took part in a war once, and, most importantly, how to tell if someone is really ill. You are so experienced that people respect you and listen to your advice.

OBJECTS AND/OR ANIMALS

- medicines, herbs, potions and ointments which can cure somebody, or make the sleepy
- scalpel that can be used as a weapon
- bandages, dressings that can help treat a wound

MOTIVATION

- help anybody that needs help

NPC:
BASILISK

It is a monster living in the dungeon. A disgusting and fearsome hybrid of a rooster and a serpent, standing on the rooster's scaly legs, with the rooster's head and crest, and horrifying, bulging eyes that will kill any person it sees. Has killed a lot of people who inadvertently wandered into his dungeon or its vicinity; has even ventured into town to catch some innocent passers-by.

OBJECTS AND/OR ANIMALS

- **nothing except for its murderous eyes and sharp teeth**

MOTIVATION

- kill in order to eat to satiation
- inspire terror

LOCATION:

TATRY (THE TATRA MOUNTAINS)

They are the highest, the most dangerous and most famous Polish mountains on the border with Slovakia, great slabs of granite rocks with sharp snow-covered peaks. The highest peak on the Polish side is Rysy (2499 m). Many men have tried to climb the snowy peaks and perished on the way. Rumour has it, the ghosts of the dead climbers still haunt the granite ridges and green valleys. The valleys are exceptionally beautiful with meadows of flowers in spring. There are also scenic mountain lakes there: Morskie Oko (The Sea Eye) and Czarny Staw (The Black Lake). The beautiful and powerful Queen Tatra lives and reigns here. At the foot of the Tatra Mountains there is the region of Podhale.



PC:

QUEEN TATRA

You are the queen of the Tatra Mountains with extraordinary powers no other human can boast: you are able to give life back to the dead, usually dead animals. Normally you stay in your beautiful glass palace in the highest peaks of the Tatra Mountains but sometimes you go to the valleys to listen to people's problems. Once a poor girl called Marysia came to you to lament the death of her flock of geese in the hands of a greedy fox. She asked you to revive the geese and you did it for her. On very rare occasions you also bring dead people back to life. However, the person who asks this must do more than give sound reasons for their request. They must also undergo a test. Another supernatural power you have is to make Spring come earlier, if there is a very important reason for this.

OBJECTS AND/OR ANIMALS

- a gold crown
- a sceptre with the power to revive the dead

MOTIVATION

- keep balance in nature

LOCATION:

WARSZAWA (WARSAW)

Warsaw is the capital city of Poland, full of wonderful buildings, both old and new. The story is set in the labyrinth under one of Warsaw's most wonderful palaces. There is no open entrance to it, only a window with iron bars, so a person must be truly determined to get there. At the end of the labyrinth there is a cave full of water. It is an enchanted lake that covers the door to a treasure-trove. The treasure is protected by the Golden Duck.



PC: LUTEK

You are a young, outgoing man living in Warsaw, always the first one there when something exciting or unusual is going on. Friends and acquaintances often invite you to taverns because you do not object to heavy drinking and after a few too many, you entertain them with tales of your daring deeds and brag about your achievements. Since you are such a wonderful story-teller, you are greatly liked by Warsaw tavern-goers, have a sense of humor, which is, by the way, your only precious possession; otherwise you are as poor as a church mouse.

OBJECTS AND/OR ANIMALS

- nothing special, except for tattered clothes on your back

MOTIVATION

- make some money, for at this time you have absolutely nothing save for some clothes on your back
- gain respect and fame – so far you have been treated as a good drinking companion and a braggart, but it is not enough
- meet the Golden Duck and trick her into giving you some money
- help people in need by giving away some of your wealth

NPC: THE GOLDEN DUCK

A duck guarding the labyrinth under one of the palaces of Warsaw. She (the duck is female) has a fine plumage and a precious crown on her head. Her role is to protect precious jewels and money stored in the labyrinth. When necessary, she glides gracefully. Most importantly, she can grant someone those riches but this wealth comes with a murkier side: the person thus bestowed can spend the money only on himself or herself; they cannot share it with anyone.

OBJECTS AND/OR ANIMALS

- golden ducats, which can only be spent on somebody's immediate needs; they cannot be given to anyone else or spent on charity, otherwise they will turn to dust!

MOTIVATION

- persuade someone, usually a person who is hard up to take the money and spend it only on himself – in other words to turn that person into a selfish, self-centered being; could she, then, be an agent of the Evil One?

LOCATION:

WIELICZKA SALTMINES

Wieliczka is a town in southern Poland near the city of Kraków. It is famous for its saltmines. Salt, an important commodity, and at times even a currency, has been mined there for ages. In the mine there are many chambers in which miners have carved human and supernatural figures (e.g. gnomes) in salt. At night, the figures sometimes get alive and ... behave in a friendly or unfriendly manner. However, the most important person in Wieliczka is Princess Kinga. Pray to meet her rather than the salt figures!



PC: PRINCESS KINGA

You are a Hungarian princess, the wife of the Polish king Boleslaw V in the 13th century. In your dowry you wanted to bring something of great value to the Polish nation, something as a gift to your new homeland. Your father, the Hungarian king Bela IV gave you a salt mine as a wedding present. In those times salt was as valuable as oil and gas today. You went to the salt mine, took a valuable ring off your finger and threw it into your salt mine. When you came to Poland to marry, you asked your husband to start digging in Wieliczka (near Kraków). Soon a lump of salt was dug up. Inside, a beautiful ring could be seen, your ring. You had given the promised present to the nation. In Wieliczka a salt mine was built.

You never stop to help Polish people with your wealth and you support your husband in all his endeavours. You visit the poor, you help the lepers and all those in need. As a princess you always travel with a group of warriors.

OBJECTS AND/OR ANIMALS

- a parchment psalter in Latin
- an amethyst magic ring
- a mountain crystal seal
- a jasper and silver teaspoon

MOTIVATION

- help Polish people build a strong kingdom
- help the poor and anybody in need

LOCATION:
WIES
(COUNTRYSIDE)



PC:
CHŁOPEK-ROZTROPEK
(SMART YOUNG PEASANT) JANKO (JOHN)

You are a smart young peasant, the youngest brother in the family. Nobody believes in you, because your talents have not shown yet. Everybody admires your older brothers who are better educated and boastful. Because you are kind-hearted, people think you are meek and cannot fight for your happiness and for your loved ones. You may be rejected by common folk but animals love you and they willingly help you. It is very easy for you to tame a wild beast. It pays in need, when animals come to assist you, sometimes in mortal danger. People do not know that you are, in fact, very brave and clever, and you achieve goals that others fail to achieve. You are especially successful when fighting all kinds of demons and other forces of evil – your innocence and good heart makes you immune to evil and evil forces cannot harm you. This way you are able to help others who are in the power of evil, for example a princess imprisoned by a wicked wizard.

OBJECTS AND/OR ANIMALS

- a whistle that will call wild animals when in mortal danger
- a friend animal (cat or dog) that can talk to humans and carry messages

MOTIVATION

- conquer the forces of evil with the innocence of heart
- help animals, the poor and anybody in need
- achieve success in life (be it a palace or your own farm)
- find true love (be it a princess or a peasant)

LOCATION:

WISŁA (THE VISTULA RIVER)

The longest river in Poland (over 1000 km) with origins in Barania Góra (in the mountains in the south of Poland) and its end in the Baltic Sea. It is also the 9th longest river in Europe. It flows through the biggest cities in Poland, including the capital Warsaw, Kraków, and Gdańsk. It is home to many interesting creatures, not all of them from this world. One of them is Syrenka, whom you may meet near Warsaw.



NPC:

SYRENKA (THE MERMAID)

Syrenka was born in the Baltic Sea but, a playful and curious creature, she swam along the Wisła (Vistula) river to Warsaw. There she rested on the sandy bank. She liked the place so much that she decided to stay there forever. The fishermen noticed that somebody let the fish out from their nets at night. However, they liked her singing so much that they forgave her. One day a greedy merchant kidnapped her in order to show her as a freak at fairs. He hid her in a shed without water where she would certainly die if she was not saved by the fishermen of Warsaw. She was so grateful to them that she promised to defend them and the city in case of emergency. Therefore she always carries her sword and shield with her. Syrenka looks like a beautiful woman with a fish tail. If you want to secure her help, you should be kind and gentle.

OBJECTS AND/OR ANIMALS

- a sword and a shield

MOTIVATION

- defend the city of Warsaw
- fight for freedom
- help fish and other water creatures
- sing at night

LOCATION:
WROCLAW

Wrocław, the meeting place, as it calls itself, is the capital of Lower Silesia. People often call it the most vibrant and beautiful city in Poland, full of students and visitors from many different countries. The city has not always belonged to Poland. In fact, ever since it was established in the 900s, the city has switched hands between Poland, Bohemia, Germany, Silesia, Hungary and Austria – therefore wherever you come from, you will always feel at home in this city. Everywhere in the city you will find figures of mysterious dwarves, who are generally helpful, but at times might frustrate your plans.



PC:
SAMBOR

You are Wojan's younger brother, a skilled blacksmith, living in a small village. In general, you are hard-working, friendly, and ready to help anyone. All you ever want to do is have a happy, but simple life: meet a nice girl, set up your own business, and start a family (not necessarily in that order), gaining respect of those around you. Even though you are a nice fellow, you can be quite ruthless: you are ready to steal your brother's fiancée, since you have a soft spot for her. You also know how to lie and deceit people, which can come in handy in various situations.

OBJECTS AND/OR ANIMALS

- an iron ring, which can be used to find iron

MOTIVATION

- set up your own forge
- work hard to make a living
- refuse to take anything for free
- help those who are in need

PC:
WOJAN

You are Sambor's elder brother, living in a small village. Everyone knows that you are lazy and greedy, but you are also a smooth talker, so you manage to get by. A lot of people, including yourself and your brother, also believe that you are quite lucky – because it seems that without much effort on your part you seem to get (almost) anything you want. You generally do not care about others unless they can do something for you.

OBJECTS AND/OR ANIMALS

- a gold ring – will help find riches without much effort

MOTIVATION

- make money quickly
- avoid any work or trouble if possible

NPC: THE SILVER- -ANTLER DEER

It is a mortal creature, which can be hurt or killed, but with great, supernatural powers. The deer can grant people their wishes if they protect him or help in some other way. If you meet the silver-antler deer, you should think twice before you ask him for anything. In other words: “Be careful what you wish for, you just might get it.”

OBJECTS AND/OR ANIMALS

- an iron ring – will help find iron ore and other minerals which need to be mined
- a gold ring – will help find gold and other riches without much effort

MOTIVATION

- show gratitude if someone helps him

Learning goals

Output

The game, set in the Polish cultural context and deriving from the local regional characteristics includes some elements that are typical of Polish national and regional culture, such as way of thinking and dealing with/solving problems, unique environment and nature, historical and economic aspects

Target Group

Undergraduate / Graduate students / Polish national background

Entry requirements and expected pre-requisite competencies

Knowledge, skills (abilities) and social attitudes

Knowledge:

The student (game participant) knows and understands:

- the vocabulary and structures typical of B1 English proficiency level in accordance with CEFR
- principles of speaking and writing in English at the B1 proficiency level
- basic cultural phenomena characteristic of Poland
- some Polish legends and fairy tales
- basic facts about Polish history and geography

Skills (abilities)

The student (game participant) is able to:

- communicate in speech and writing in English at the B1 proficiency level in accordance with CEFR
- understand the main ideas of complex spoken and written texts on both abstract and concrete topics
- narrate a story, relate the plot of a novel, short story or film - summarize the most important events of a story, film etc.

Social attitudes

The student is ready to:

- critically assess of his/her English language competence but simultaneously take full advantage of his/her skills, however limited
- respect his/her own cultural heritage and learn more about it
- respect the heritage of other countries and learn about other languages and cultures
- be open to various forms of communication

Students' needs

Regardless of their major field of study, both graduate and undergraduate students need to develop the following “soft” 21st century skills, allowing them to adapt to a diverse, dynamic, multicultural work or study environment:

Ability to make decisions and solve problems in a limited time, based on available knowledge, critical assessment of the situation as well as short-term needs and long-term goals

- Ability to plan, and consequently, prioritize certain task
- Ability to obtain, and process information in a limited time;
- Ability to apply this knowledge to their assigned role whether at school or at work
- Ability to work in a situation with low predictability of final outcome
- Ability to analyze quantitative data
- Ability to interact and communicate (verbally) with people:
 - representing different level of education and/or professional experience;
 - coming from various cultural backgrounds;
 - without a common past
 - belonging to different generations
 - belonging to groups with different legal backgrounds, which might affect their decision-making process

Type of game

Tabletop role-playing game or LARP (Live Action Role-Playing Game)

Overall (general) goals:

General (overall) goals:

- develop a game set in the Polish cultural context, but transferable (understandable to students raised in other cultures)
- increase the players' knowledge of Poland and Polish culture
- motivate students to participate in intercultural education
- increase the players' concentration by making the game engaging, attractive and challenging
- develop empathy
- develop the ability to switch perspectives and observe
- develop the ability to cooperate and compete, depending on tasks required in the game
- acquire intercultural knowledge

Other educational goals:

- develop language skills in English, with an emphasis on speaking, reading, writing and listening comprehension depending on the game scenario
- raise one's language awareness, especially of social, cultural, situational contexts which condition English language use both in speech and writing
- become acquainted with vocabulary and idioms pertaining to a wide range of topics, with an emphasis on history, geography, culture, storytelling and gaming
- have the possibility of analyzing short messages/ longer texts at various proficiency levels
- acquire communication skills in order to communicate with a group of colleagues, professional partners or experts, while using correct forms and language structures
- learn how to interpret correctly and independently the most recognizable cultural works
- learn to participate in a debate, discussion, exchange of views about various topics and performed tasks - learn how to critically assess one's English language competence
- become aware of the need to constantly increase his/her English language competence
- raise one's awareness of the value of the Polish cultural heritage and cultural institutions
- learn how to present and promote Polish culture using the English language

Observable learning outcomes

Knowledge:

- The student knows and understands the principles of speaking and writing in English at the B1/B2 proficiency level
- The student knows and understands basic terminology used within the field of those aspects of culture, media work, promotion and advertising in which linguistic and communication competence, in its broadest sense, is used
- The student knows and understands English vocabulary and idioms pertaining to a wide range of topics, with an emphasis on gaming, storytelling, culture, history and geography
- The student knows and understands the characteristics and needs of a typical service recipient (e.g. a foreign tourist in Poland) within those professional and cultural fields, media work, promotion and advertising, in which linguistic and communication competence, in its broadest sense, is used, as well as various ways of assessing consumers' needs and the quality of provided services Abilities and/or skills

- The student is able to use English at the B1/B2 proficiency level, in accordance with CEFR, using a variety of grammatical structures, vocabulary, and idiomatic expressions.
- The student has advanced receptive skills – reading and listening as well as productive skills – speaking and writing as well as basic translation skills.
- The student is able to select and use the available materials, resources and teaching methods in order to plan and effectively carry out various tasks in the game
- The student is able to participate in a debate, discussion, exchange of views about various topics and performed tasks
- The student is able to make decisions and solve problems in a limited time, with limited access to relevant information
- The student is able to plan his/her activities and prioritize tasks
- The student is able to evaluate various opinions and attitudes, discuss them in English and his/her native language; s/he is aware of the value of reflecting, compromise, and responsibility in the context of forming opinions and judgments as well as adapting measures connected with the process of learning
- The student is able to overcome obstacles related to the game itself as well as communication problems and solve problems in a limited time
- The student is able to be creative and dynamic in realizing various tasks in the process of learning as well as playing a cooperative/competitive game
- The student is able to present Polish cultural heritage in an attractive and entertaining way to emphasize its value and contribution to European culture Social competences and attitudes
- The student is ready to critically assess his/her English language competence and understands the need to constantly improve his/her skills.
- The student is ready to actively participate in the process of learning English
- The student is ready to recognize the significance of knowledge and language skills in the process of solving cognitive as well as practical problems in social situations, gaming as well as within his/her chosen professional field
- The student is open to various cultures and personalities, and, consequently, always acts in accordance with the principles of ethics and law.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student is ready to respect his/her own cultural heritage as well as the heritage of other cultures • The student understands the value of his/her cultural heritage represented by places, objects, customs and stories • The student is ready and proud to present Polish culture in an attractive and entertaining way and emphasize its contribution to European culture
Target group	Undergraduate/ Graduate students of other higher education institutions (the consortium); non-Polish ethnicity
Entry requirements and expected pre-requisite competencies	<p>Knowledge, skills (abilities) and social competences</p> <p>Knowledge:</p> <p>The student (game participant) knows and understands:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the vocabulary and structures typical of B1 English proficiency level in accordance with CEFR • principles of speaking and writing in English at the B1 proficiency level - no previous knowledge of Poland or its culture is necessary <p>Skills (abilities)</p> <p>The student (game participant) is able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • communicate in speech and writing in English at the B1 proficiency level in accordance with CEFR • understand the main ideas of complex spoken and written texts on both abstract and concrete topics • narrate a story, relate the plot of a novel, short story or film • summarize the most important events of a story, film etc. Social attitudes <p>The student is ready to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • critically assess of his/her English language competence but simultaneously take full advantage of his/her skills, however limited • respect Polish cultural heritage and learn more about it • respect the heritage of other countries and learn about other languages and cultures • be open to various forms of communication
Students' needs	<p>Regardless of their major field of study, both graduate and undergraduate students need to develop the following "soft" 21st century skills, allowing them to adapt to a diverse, dynamic, multicultural work or study environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to make decisions and solve problems in a limited time, based on available knowledge, critical assessment of the situation as well as short-term needs and long-term goals

- Ability to plan, and consequently, prioritize certain task
- Ability to obtain, and process information in a limited time;
- Ability to apply this knowledge to their assigned role whether at school or at work
- Ability to work in a situation with low predictability of final outcome
- Ability to analyze quantitative data
- Ability to interact and communicate (verbally) with people:
 - representing different level of education and/or professional experience;
 - coming from various cultural backgrounds;
 - without a common past
 - belonging to different generations
 - belonging to groups with different legal backgrounds, which might affect their decision-making process

Observable learning outcomes

Knowledge:

- The student knows and understands the principles of speaking and writing in English at the B1/B2 proficiency level
- The student knows and understands basic terminology used within the field of those aspects of culture, media work, promotion and advertising in which linguistic and communication competence, in its broadest sense, is used
- The student knows and understands English vocabulary and idioms pertaining to a wide range of topics, with an emphasis on gaming, storytelling, culture, history and geography Abilities and/or skills
- The student is able to use English at the B1/B2 proficiency level, in accordance with CEFR, using a variety of grammatical structures, vocabulary, and idiomatic expressions.
- The student has advanced receptive skills – reading and listening as well as productive skills – speaking and writing as well as basic translation skills.
- The student is able to select and use the available materials, resources and teaching methods in order to plan and effectively carry out various tasks in the game
- The student is able to participate in a debate, discussion, exchange of views about various topics and performed tasks The student is able to make decisions and solve problems in a limited time, with limited access to relevant information

- The student is able to plan his/her activities and prioritize tasks
- The student is able to evaluate various opinions and attitudes, discuss them in English and his/her native language; s/he is aware of the value of reflecting, compromise, and responsibility in the context of forming opinions and judgments as well as adapting measures connected with the process of learning
- The student is able to overcome obstacles related to the game itself as well as communication problems and solve problems in a limited time
- The student is able to be creative and dynamic in realizing various tasks in the process of learning as well as playing a cooperative/competitive game
- The student is able to recount whatever
- s/he has learned about Polish culture during the role-playing game Social competences and attitudes
- The student is ready to critically assess his/her English language competence and understands the need to constantly improve his/her skills.
- The student is ready to actively participate in the process of learning English
- The student is ready to recognize the significance of knowledge and language skills in the process of solving cognitive as well as practical problems in social situations, gaming as well as within his/her chosen professional field.
- The student is open to various cultures and personalities, and, consequently, always acts in accordance with the principles of ethics and law.
- The student is ready to respect his/her own cultural heritage as well as the heritage of other cultures
- The student understands the value of Polish cultural heritage represented by places, objects, customs and stories, as well as artefacts used in the game

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