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Activity: **A19 Popular tales (Latvia)**

**The legend about the Rose of Turaida**

During the Swedish – Polish War the secretary of the Turaida castle called Greif found a baby girl near to the Turaida castle. She was half-starving and almost dead. He adopted her, baptised and gave her name Maija. She grew up and was a beautiful and honest maiden. Victor Heil, the gardener of Sigulda, fell for Maija. In the evenings they met in Gutmaņa cave.

In August 1620 Maija got a message from Heil where it was said that she had to come to the mentioned cave in the afternoon because he was going to be busy that evening. Maija went together with the Greif’s eight years old daughter Lenta to the cave.

In the evening Heil ran to Turaida and let know that Maija had been killed. Lenta also had not returned. The local judge got the news already the same evening and in the next evening he arrived in Turaida.

Heil was suspected as a murderer although he was known as an honest man. The Lord of Turaida Shildheim who was ill then let the judge knows that he should pay attention to two Polish army deserters Jakubowsky and Skudrītis. They had been in service for two years in Turaida and were known as drunkards and imps. Skudrītis had visited the Lord of Turaida and wanted to give a testimony about the case.

Skudrītis was called to the court immediately. He told that Jakubowsky fell in love with Maija just after he had arrived in Turaida. Three months ago he had talked to Maija and had promised to marry her. She refused and told him she was engaged to Heil.

Jakubowsky was a very angry man and longed for revenge. Then he explained Skudrītis his idea. He wanted to lure Maija to Gūtmaņa cave. Both of them should rape the virgin there. Jakubowsky was the one who had sent the false message. Both had run to the cave and hidden in bushes.

When Maija had arrived, Jakubowsky placed himself in front of her and has told his evil intention with bad words. The young girl had tried to resist but Jakubowsky was very strong and threw her down.

Then Maija bagged him to let her free. For that she would give him a magic scarf that protects man from all injuries. If he doesn’t believe it, he can try to strike her with his sword. Jakubowsky had his sword with him and he stroke in a moment. Maija fell down and blood started to come out of her neck. At that moment Skudrītis heard scream behind him. It should have been the small Lenta.

After the murder Jakubowsky got very upset, ran into the forest and forbade Skudrītis to come close to him. This morning he has found him hung in the forest.

The guiltless Viktor Heil was let free immediately. Skudrītis had been in prison just for four months because even Heil and Greif asked to let him free.

*Old Latvian legend*