



The Vistula River

Polish National Tale
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In the old days, the mighty king of the mountains named Beskid lived in a large castle. The king had a wife, Borana, the queen of forests, and three children, Lan, Białka and Czarnocha.

The royal couple ruled in happiness and peace for many years, but the day came when they all mourned, because King Beskid had died. It was then that Borana called her children to her, to hand over power to them, in accordance with her husband's will.

- Beloved children, it is time to divide the power and properties of your father between you. - Saying this, the queen took the scepter and, lifting it up, said, "Let the mountains be wild and unbridled, so that no one but my husband may ever have power over them." - After these words, she aimed the scepter at her son - Lan, you are given power over the fields and meadows. Make them always fertile so that those who will use them never miss anything.

Then she pointed the scepter at her daughters.

- Białka and Czarnocha, you get power over the water. Distribute it so that Lan's meadows are always fertile, so that people and animals have enough to drink, and that the valley is never dry.



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Now go and use power over what has been given to you to rule. - The queen concluded and sat on the throne.

Full of life and joy, Białka ran out of the castle and quickly ran down the mountains into the valley, leaving a stream of water behind her. Cautious and prudent, Czarnocha descended the rocks in a safer place, also leaving a stream of water behind her. When the sisters met, they decided to continue their journey together. But a huge rock stood in their way, guarded by knight Czantor.

"Why do you want to leave our land, royal daughters.

Isn't it beautiful here? What do you look for in the unknown countries of the Far North?" Said the knight, urging the girls to stay in his valley. The sisters, fascinated by this unusual place, decided to disperse the water over it to make the place even more beautiful.

The watered Earth ordered the knight to let the girls pass so that they could carry water to the world. But the knight, fearing that he would never see the beautiful sisters again, gave them an idea.



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"The north is dangerous, don't go any further, but send a wave there to see those lands and come back to you with a message." The sisters agreed with the knight's advice and when he moved the rock away, they sent the first wave to the north, which they called "Wyszła (it went out)" and ordered it to return with the news at midnight.

It walked out across the plains, past forests and rocks, slowly forgetting its mission. Delighted by the charms, the land in which it found itself pushed forward, increasing its current and joining new rivers. Once it tasted salt water, and a huge sea stretched out in front of it. Delighted by this sight, it allowed itself to be carried away by the sea wave and never returned to its ladies. The sisters waited in vain for its return, and they launched new waves in vain. None of the waves returned, because the charm of the Baltic Sea stopped them for good. Over time, two mountain rivers were named the Biała and Czarna Wisetka in honor of the royal daughters, and the river that arose from their connected streams is called the Wisła (Vistula) after the first wave.



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