



Manda's Well

WORKSHOPS

STORY:

Manda's Well

COUNTRY:

Croatia

AGE:

7 - 9

MATERIALS:

Photographs of Zagreb and Manda's well, blank papers, pencils, crayons, cardboard, blackboard, computer.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

Explore differences and similarities between legends and myths.

Describe the characters from the story.

Illustrate the story.

METHODS:

Listening, storytelling, creative writing, drawing.

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Manda's Well

The mist was lazily lifting off the ground and creeping up the slopes with a few grey wisps that trailed behind and swayed in the wind like a torn rag. The first sunrays cautiously peeked through broken clouds, lovingly touching the leaves of lonesome trees. Growing warmer and warmer, they glistened playfully upon the roofs of closely built tiny houses. Faint, sleepy voices of people soon turned into a hustle and bustle, and joyful screaming of children filled the yards. Women grabbed their jars and buckets, then hurried to a nearby water-well. Briefly exchanging good mornings, they filled them with water and dashed home.

Only a girl named Manda seemed in no hurry. She was the last to set off towards the well, taking tiny steps, stopping every now and then. Lifting her eyes up to Gradec and the city walls, she turned to the south and gazed at the stone road that was disappearing in the plain. Barely discerning a vague outline in the distance, she paused to shield her eyes from the bright sunlight and have a better view. Someone was coming down the road: a lonely rider on a tired horse. From the distance, she could tell the animal was exhausted by its heavy trudge and its low dropped head. When the horse reached her, the girl looked at the rider more closely. Exhaustion showed on his face too. Once glamorous vestment was now covered with a layer of dust, as a telling sign of long travelling; his sword that was laid

down upon the saddle bore witness to numerous battles he had fought.

When the horseman bent down close to her, the girl shrank away, yet for some reason she felt her fear dissipate and decided not to run away.

'What is your name, girl?' asked the horseman in a hoarse voice.

'Manda,' she replied.

'Mando, dušo, zagrabi mi vode!'* (Manda, honey, please scoop me some water from the well!)

In an instant Manda forgot all her fears and discomfort, and she reached for a scoop of cool water for the unknown knight who was plainly ready to drop. When the worn-out rider and his horse quenched thirst, the girl now emboldened, spoke:

'Do you know what they say about this well? Whoever drinks its water will always stay close by.'

'There's nothing I'd like more than that,' said the knight smiling at her, 'for I have journeyed near and far, and nowhere have I seen a girl so beautiful, nor tasted water so sweet and cool.'

And so the knight settled at the foot of the hill on which the "Upper Town" Gradec was situated, and soon enough he wedded beautiful Manda. Many a time have

they retold the story of their first encounter. Glowing with happiness, she would recall the way he approached her: *'Mando, dušo...!'* (Manda, honey...!) So, in time, people named the well Manduševac.

He, on the other hand, used to talk about the place where Manda scooped (*zagrabila* in Croatian) water with such great fascination that the whole area around the well became known as *Zagrab* and later on Zagreb.

Many years have passed from that time, many stories sank into oblivion. The city walls around the old town Gradec crumbled down too, but Manda's well, along with the names *Manduševac* and *Zagreb*, the white city live on to this day.

**In Croatian, dušo is a term of endearment as e.g. honey or sweetie. The base form of the verb zagrabiti used here is grabiti, meaning to scoop something.*

ACTIVITIES

STEP BY STEP WORKSHOP

Activity 1:

The facilitator reads the story to children. The pictures of Manda's well and the City of Zagreb can be presented on the blackboard (or using ppt. on a computer). After listening to the story, children discuss about the characters and their moral and ethical values.

Questions for self-reflection:

- How would you describe Manda?
- Is she behaving like other people?
- Would you stay alone by the well?
- What did she see in the distance?
- What did the lonely rider look like?
- Did she run away? Why?
- Would you be afraid and run away?
- What did the rider ask from Manda?
- What did she warn the rider about?
- Would you dare to drink the water?
- Is it reasonable to be afraid of unknown things?
- Why did the rider drink the water anyway?
- How was he rewarded?

Activity 2:

The facilitator discusses with children about legends and myths.

- What is a legend?
- What is a myth?
- What is typical for a legend?
- Who are usually the characters in legends?
- Do you know any legend related to your city?
- Do you know how your city got its name (or does it have a meaning)?

Activity 3:

Facilitator organises children in groups (3-5) and each group has to use their imagination and write down their description of the characters, city walls and houses.

- How do you imagine the city walls of Gradec?
- What do the tiny houses look like, draw them.
- Describe what Manda looks like (colour of her hair, her dress).
- Describe the knight and his appearance (garment, sword, horse).

Activity 4:

Children can choose what they would like to do:

- Write your own story where you are the main character (e.g. the story takes place in your town and is related to a town legend, values of the character).
- Illustrate the story.
- Make a puzzle based on the story (characters or the city).