

Lada Luzina

UKRAINIAN WOMEN'S MAGIC TRADITIONS

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писатель

Preface

My favourite example! Following the tradition, in the early hours of Mokiiv the Wet (24th May according to the Gregorian calendar) a woman would take off clothes and, being naked, would run about her garden bed of sunflowers three times (see “Naked Days”). However, any person who would notice her naked knew perfectly well that she was not a witch, but a kind Ukrainian housewife, who sought to have a good harvest!

In other words, though Ukrainians themselves were waiting for magic results from their rituals, they did not consider those to be magic, but rather a dialogue with Mother Nature. For us establishing this dialogue will not come amiss as well.

We can call all these either good old customs of our ancestors, or magic — in both cases you will be right and wrong at the same time.

However, one thing is definite!

Folk rituals of our great grandmothers are so much related to magic, that undoubtedly, they are real festivals and rituals that became the basis for the commonly known legends and fairy tales of Kyiv witches.

Today reading stories about Ukrainian women’s magic traditions, we cannot but stay astonished by the unique skills and knowledge of our ancestors! What special and unique role women played in the Ukrainian community! These customs go back to ancient times!

Unfortunately, in our hectic contemporary world we have forgotten most traditions of our land.

In addition, we have forgotten ourselves — our inherited individual features, uniqueness and magic. It is hard for us to understand ourselves, our feelings, wishes, capabilities, as long as we do not see the unified link to the past.

If, as a result of the total amnesia, the person cannot recollect his or her name, the name of their children and parents, home address, their country and the reason why they live here... no wonder that it is difficult to answer the question: who are you?

The same goes with the magic traditions of our foremothers... we will be able to recollect the main thing without them: who we are!

Your Lada Luzina

P.S. Stories included in this album are just clearly not exhaustive. More details on the magic of our ancestors and on the origins of that magic will be available in my books to be published “Ancient Gods and the Saints of Kyiv”, “Kyiv. The City of Witches”.

P.P.S. For your convenience, I will try to provide all dates of festivities according to the Gregorian calendar.





ЗАПОВІДЕЙ НЕЖОНАТИМ

Заповідь ДЕСЯТА.
Не одружжайся з довготелесою
бо і поцілувати жінку не зможеш

How Ukrainian girls proposed to young men

Having visited our country in the early XVII century, French engineer Guillaume Levasseur, sieur de Beauplan described an extraordinary custom:

“In Ukraine, unlike all other nations, it is not the lads who propose to girls, but the girls propose to them and seldom fail... They are assisted by a special superstition”.

Unfortunately, monsieur Beauplandid not specify what day of the year Ukrainian girls were so successful in conquering fiances. However, the very historical fact of the female proposals was definite and repeatedly evidenced in our history. Till the XVIII century a Ukrainian woman could even save the life of a person convicted to death — it was enough for her to declare that she was ready to marry him. In that case, the execution would be cancelled... and the man would be sentenced to the lawful matrimony! Therewith, he was not entitled to refuse from it, like any other young man asked to marry, if the girl dared to make that desperate step and came to the beloved with matchmakers, to reject the girl’s proposal was considered a non-forgivable sin.

This wonderful folk tradition is mentioned in the song below:

*Here comes Marusya, she stops at the bed:
— accept me, mama, let me be your daughter-in-law.
Here comes Marusya, she stops at the table:
— accept me, mama, as I love your son Mykola.
Here comes Marusya, she stops in the corner:
— accept me, mama, like your own daughter.*

In fact the girl would come with the witnesses to the young man’s house; she would sit down on the bench and demand the wedding until his parents agreed.

That girl’s self-proposal was also shown in the Old Russian epic “Solovey Budimirovich”, where Zabava Putyatichna, the beloved niece of Kyiv Prince Volodymyr, proposed to the foreign merchant she liked.

And since the exact day of the female proposals is unknown, let us consider that, if necessary, each of us can do this any suitable day.

Who will criticize us?

We are just reviving original Ukrainian traditions!



**V. Vasilyev
Bride’s dressing up in Ukraine**