

The Legend of Ipot-ipot

This story is about Ipot-ipot, a beetle, who suffered from the bullying of bigger animals. One day his world was covered by darkness because Bakunawa swallowed the sun god Adlaw. Despite being small and weak, he helped in rescuing Adlaw and restoring the light in the world.

The Legend of Ipot-ipot

Once in an already forgotten time in the island of Pan-ay, there lived a tiny young beetle named Ipot-ipot.

One day, while Ipot-ipot and other insects were looking for food in the forest, Kabog came and bullied Ipot-ipot.

“Hey, Ipot-ipot! What are you doing here?” Kabog asked brusquely.

Kabog was a mouse-like creature with wings. His pointed wings were not covered by feathers but by thin skin.

“We are looking for food,” answered Ipot-ipot.

“Me too. Hek hek hek! In fact, my food is in front of me right now,” Kabog sneered as he stared at Ipot-ipot with hungry red eyes.

“Why are you bullying me?” Ipot-ipot demanded.

“Why not? I am big, and you are small. I can do to you whatever I want because you are weak,” Kabog smirked as he flew towards Ipot-ipot to catch the beetle.

However, before Kabog could pounce on Ipot-ipot, the whole world suddenly fell into darkness.

“What happened?” Kabog shouted in fear.

The other creatures were also in panic.

This had never happened before. The island of Pan-ay was always illuminated by the sun god Adlaw. Thus, until then there was no moment of darkness in the magical island of Pan-ay.

“This is a disaster!” another creature exclaimed.

“What happened to the almighty Adlaw?” Ipot-ipot wondered.

Suddenly, there was a loud voice that rang out loud. It was the voice of Bulan, the moon god.

“Bakunawa swallowed Adlaw!” Bulan shouted. Her dark pock-marked face clearly showed the worry and anger she felt.

Ipot-ipot shuddered in fright when he heard Bulan. Bakunawa was a six-legged serpent with a large drooling mouth, black shiny scales, and fiery bloodshot eyes. He was feared by many creatures.

“If Bakunawa ultimately killed the almighty Adlaw, we will live in darkness forever,” Ipot-ipot realized that it will be hard for them all. “We will die of accidents or hunger in such a dark world.”

Ipot-ipot saw great despair on the faces of the other creatures when they heard Bulan.

“Let us all fight Bakunawa to bring back light to the island!” Bulan exhorted the creatures.

However, Ipot-ipot and the other earthly creatures were afraid of Bakunawa.

“How could we fight Bakunawa?” the creatures responded. “He even defeated the powerful sun god Adlaw.”

Ipot-ipot realized that the other creatures were correct. They were all powerless against Bakunawa.

“I will fight Bakunawa despite his great power!” Bulan said.

“But I want you to look for Adlaw and free him. I know Bakunawa cannot kill Adlaw. He simply imprisoned him somewhere.”

After that, Bulan went to fight Bakunawa.

Ipot-ipot and the other creatures looked for Adlaw.

However, because of the pitch-black darkness, Ipot-ipot and his companions did not easily find Adlaw, and all the creatures stopped looking. All, except Ipot –ipot.

“I will keep on looking for Adlaw,” declared Ipot-ipot. “He is our only hope.”

“What can you do?” mocked the other creatures. “You are so small and insignificant.”

“Ha ha ha! You are making us laugh, Ipot-ipot!” Kabog sneered. “What can you do indeed? You are so small and weak.”

“I know I am small and weak, but finding Adlaw is important,” Ipot-ipot answered. “Without him, a lot of creatures will be endangered.”

“You are so naïve, Ipot-ipot,” Kabog countered. “We don’t really need Adlaw’s light that much.”

“Don’t say that. Adlaw will be angry with you if he hears you say those words,” Ipot-ipot warned Kabog.

“I don’t think Adlaw will come back anymore. I think he is already dead,” was Kabog insolent reply. “Your effort will be wasted.”

“No matter what, I will persist and do my best,” muttered Ipot-ipot.

So, Kabog and some other earthly creatures stayed back and cowered in fear while Ipot-ipot kept looking for the sun god. However, Ipot-ipot lost his way in the darkness.

At last, he asked the heavenly creatures, *bitoons*, to help him look for Adlaw.

“Lords of the heavens, please help me look for the great god Adlaw,” Ipot-ipot asked the *bitoons*. “With your sparkling lights, we will easily find Adlaw.”

However, the *bitoons* were unwilling to help Ipot-ipot.

“We are sorry, earthly creature. We have nothing to do with your problems,” the *bitoons* said.

So, the *bitoons* stayed where they were and simply observed what was happening.

However, Kabugwason, one of the heavenly creatures, presented herself to help look for Adlaw. She was so beautiful with her warm radiant light.

“I will help you look for Adlaw,” Kabugwason told Ipot-ipot.

“Thank you, Great Kabugwason,” Ipot-ipot thanked Kabugwason.

“You are welcome, Ipot-ipot,” Kabugwason answered.

Kabugwason gazed kindly at the daring Ipot-ipot.

“Despite your small size, I can see in you so much resolve and courage,” said Kabugwason.

Kabugwason and Ipot-ipot then went to look for Adlaw.

When they saw Bakunawa and Bulan fighting, they discovered that Bakunawa was apparently winning.

“Oh, no!” Ipot-ipot exclaimed. “Bulan is losing her fight against Bakunawa. Bakunawa is, indeed, powerful.”

Kabugwason soared high to evade Bakunawa, then she scanned the horizon to look for Adlaw. She wandered all over to look for a sign of Adlaw. When she saw a

reddish glow in the far south towards the direction of the island of Bugras, she flew that way.

Ipot-ipot tried hard to follow Kabugwason from below. He was able to follow the usually faint glow of Kabugwason since she glowed brightly in the otherwise dark sky.

“I don’t know what I can do to help,” murmured Ipot-ipot to himself. “But all the same, I will follow Kabugwason wherever she goes. I will persist and do my best.”

So Ipot-ipot followed Kabugwason as the latter flew south. He braved the strong wind across the sea with his tiny wings. Ipot-ipot was exhausted when he reached the island of Bugras.

“Kabugwason is so far ahead already,” mumbled Ipot-ipot to himself. “I can’t see her clearly anymore.”

Ipot-ipot had every reason to stop but he did not.

“Indeed, my wings are too small. Yes, I am too slow, yet I must persist and do my best.”

He continued following Kabugwason. Then, he saw that Kabugwason was heading towards a very high peak with a reddish glowing cap.

“I never saw or heard about this peak before,” thought Ipot-ipot.

What he saw was the place where Adlaw was imprisoned by Bakunawa. The newly formed peak protruded high in the air due to the barging of Adlaw in his effort to escape.

The peak was covered by a special door installed by Bakunawa. It can only be opened from the outside and remained closed despite Adlaw’s thrusts.

“So that’s where Adlaw was imprisoned by Bakunawa,” concluded Ipot-ipot. “Kabugwason is approaching it now and she could free Adlaw even before I reach that peak.”

Suddenly, a swift thing passed by Ipot-ipot. It was Bakunawa who rushed towards the peak to prevent Kabugwason from opening the door. The whirlwind that followed Bakunawa dragged Ipot-ipot towards the peak.

Kabugwason and Bakunawa fought, but it was a one-sided fight.

“You are no match to me, Kabugwason!” declared Bakunawa. “You should surrender now and take my side. Otherwise, you will soon die.”

Ipot-ipot was almost deafened by the booming voice of Bakunawa. Ipot-ipot was so near the place where Bakunawa was pounding Kabugwason.

Kabugwason’s light was fast fading, a sign of her weakened state. However, Ipot-ipot heard Kabugwason saying, “I will never take your side, Bakunawa.”

“In that case I will kill you!” Bakunawa shrieked with anger.

Ipot-ipot closed his eyes, dreading the next brutal pounding that Bakunawa was about to deliver.

Then, suddenly Bulan arrived and attacked Bakunawa. Her round and dark shadowy figure could barely be seen since she had no light of her own.

“I will not let you kill Kabugwason!” shouted Bulan fiercely.

“Ha ha ha!” Bakunawa laughed. “I will kill both of you and reign forever in this world of darkness.”

While Bakunawa and Bulan were fighting, Ipot-ipot went to help Kabugwason.

“Kabugwason! Kabugwason!” Ipot-ipot shouted.

Kabugwason could barely move. She slowly looked up to Ipot-ipot and said, "Don't worry about me. Free Adlaw! He is the only one who can stop Bakunawa."

Ipot-ipot glanced at Bulan and Bakunawa. He saw that Bakunawa had bitten off a large part of Bulan's rotund body. Bulan was barely half of herself now.

Ipot-ipot realized it was urgent that he open the door of the peak where Adlaw was held captive. So, he flew towards the peak and tried mightily to open the door.

"This door is so heavy. I can hardly make it move," Ipot-ipot grunted.

The difficulty of opening the door reminded Ipot-ipot of Kabog's words that he is small and insignificant. Ipot-ipot began to doubt himself.

"Will all our efforts be wasted because I'm weak?" Ipot-ipot thought.

He hesitated for a while, but ultimately decided to continue.

"I may be small and weak, but I will persist and do my best!" Ipot-ipot shouted as he pulled on the door.

The door did not move.

"I maybe young and naïve, but I will persist and do my best!"

Ipot-ipot kept on trying but failed to open the door.

On the other hand, Bulan was fast losing her fight with Bakunawa. When Bulan was about to lose the last thread of her life, Ipot-ipot was able to pry the door open.

Adlaw rushed out of the door and attacked Bakunawa.

With great effort, Adlaw vanquished Bakunawa. Adlaw then imprisoned Bakunawa at the bottom of the peak where Adlaw was previously imprisoned.

When everything was settled and the earth was once again illuminated, Ipot-ipot and the other creatures gathered to listen to Adlaw. The sun god expressed his gratitude to all who helped him.

“Bulan, because of your courage I will share with you the right to rule the sky.

“Half of the time I will hide myself and let you reign over the sky. I will lend you my light to show to everyone how thankful I am for your help,” Adlaw promised to Bulan.

“Thank you, Almighty Adlaw,” Bulan replied happily.

“You will roam the sky freely and will be the most beautiful thing there. Sometimes you will be full but sometimes you will appear as a crescent to remind everyone that you fought Bakunawa, bitten in half, and still went on fighting to the last thread of your life.”

Bulan was speechless with so much happiness.

Then, Adlaw addressed the *bitoons*.

“But you heavenly creatures! Since you did not even help in looking for me, you will be punished and be fixed in the heavens. You will barely be able to move through eternity just as you did nothing in time of dire need.

“However, praise be to you, Kabugwason! For your bravery, you will be rewarded to be the most beautiful *bitoon* in the sky during darkness.

“For your great effort in looking for me, you will be granted the rare privilege, together with Bulan, to freely move around the sky. You will be known as a heavenly wanderer and a goddess of beauty!

Kabugwason was speechless, and all she was able to do was to bow and beam with happiness.

“Also, let it be known that from now on Kabog will be banned from enjoying my light. He and his descendants will only live in darkness.

“Kabog declared he didn’t really need my light, so I curse him to forever not benefit from my light,” Adlaw swore angrily. “My light will blind Kabog’s eyes. He will not benefit from my light forevermore. Kabog will be known as a creature of darkness.”

Ipot-ipot sighed with relief when he heard Adlaw say those words. Ipot-ipot was thankful that he did not listen to Kabog.

“Lastly, Ipot-ipot, you brave beetle. You will be blessed for your heroic act,” Adlaw said lovingly to the tiny creature.

Ipot-ipot was surprised. He did not expect the great Adlaw to pay attention to him, an insignificant insect.

“Almighty Adlaw, I am just a small, weak, and insignificant beetle. There is nothing much I can do. I just persisted in doing my best,” was Ipot-ipot’s humble response.

“Yes, you are small and weak, but you are not insignificant, Ipot-ipot,” Adlaw replied. “You persisted and did your best and succeeded in freeing me. Thank you.”

“In gratitude, I will grant you your own small light.

“You will flicker as you fly around to remind everyone that, when the last ray of hope flickered on earth, you kept on fluttering and fought for what is right,” Adlaw said gratefully. “Thank you, my dear friend.”

Ipot-ipot cried with happiness. He felt so honored to be called a friend by the mighty Adlaw.

From that time on, Ipot-ipot and his descendants have glowed gloriously in the night. Whenever they are around, they remind everyone that everything is well in the world.

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