

The Legends of Mt. Mayon

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Like all Philippine legends, there's more than one story that attempt to capture the essence of the majesty that is Mount Mayon. Mayon is derived from "Magayon", which means beautiful in Bicolano.

There's the story of two lovers not unlike Romeo and Juliet, as told by Laura Agpay, a native of Bicol:

Once there was a princess named Daragang Magayon (Daraga means lady, Magayon is beautiful) who lived in Bicol. She's so beautiful. She came from the family that reigns over the entire Bicol.

Because of her beauty and influence, warriors, princes and datus from different parts of the country desired to have her as their wife. But Magayon fell in love with a warrior named Handiong, a prince who came from a tribe that was, unfortunately, the rival of Magayon's tribe. The two suffered so much from their respective family's attempts to separate them that they finally decided to flee. Unfortunately their families found out and fought a bloody tribal war. This caused the young couple so much pain they decided together to commit suicide.

The tribes buried the lovers separately. Months passed when Magayon's tribe saw a volcano growing in the place where Magayon was buried. They named it for Daragang Magayon. "Bulkan Magayon" describing its perfect shape like their beautiful Daraga.

And then there's the story of an uncle Magayon*, whose anger depicts how violent the mountain can become.

It seems that there once lived a very beautiful native princess who had an uncle named Magayon. He was so possessive of his niece that no man dared to challenge his wrath by courting the favors of the young maiden. One day, however, a brave and virile warrior was so smitten by the princess that he threw all cares to the wind, clambered up through the window of the royal chamber and enticed the girl to elope with him.

With Magayon at their heels, the couple prayed to the gods for assistance. Suddenly from out of nowhere, a landslide buried the raging uncle alive. Local folks now claim that it is Magayon's anger bursting forth in the form of eruptions.

(* now I don't know about you, but having a male name that means beautiful would definitely evoke such anger in me. *joke, joke, joke*) 😊

I heard still another story that tells of Daragang Magayon's lover being killed by her family that she fled from them in anger. The next day, a beautiful but angry mountain grew where Magayon was last seen.

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