

The Legend of Lanao Lake

In ancient Lanao, there once lived a giant called Umacaan. He was so enormous that when he spread his arms sideward, they spread as far as thirty kilometers apart. Almost anything was within easy reach, best of all, men whom he loved to eat. Men flee at the sight of him. No one dared come out to the mountains for fear of losing their lives at the hands of the man-eating giant.

In no time, news about Umacaan reached as far as the kingdom of Bumbaran and came to the knowledge of its brave princes, Rajah Indarapatra and Rajah Soliman. They swore to kill the monster. The next day, they both set out to slay the man-eater. However, they didn't leave at the same time. Rajah Soliman went ahead and reached Lanao to fight. Umacaan tricked Soliman into cutting him into several pieces, each piece becoming another giant Umacaan. The prince simply proved to be no match to the creature.

Some time later, Rajah Indarapatra reached Lanao. As soon as he arrived, he was informed by a spirit-queen of his brother's fate. Angrily, he swore to avenge his brother's death. Before he went on his way the spirit-queen gifted him with a magic sword to enable him to defeat the giant. Later that same day, the two combatants met near the shores of Lanao Lake.

When the fight began, Umacaan pulled several trees and hurled them at Rajah Indarapatra who was quick to dodge and got out safely. Next, the giant reached for some soft clay and formed big round balls out of it and threw them successively at the prince. Once more the quick Rajah Indarapatra made swift plunges to avoid getting hit by the round clay balls so that some of them fell into the lake while the others landed on the plains and turned into hills and mountains that surround the famous Lanao Lake. At any rate, when Rajah Indarapatra had his turn, he held up the magic sword that could wound any opponent by merely pointing at him. As he did, Umacaan yelled in pain until he fell down to his death.

Up to now, if one were to visit Lanao Lake, one will easily notice small floating islands all around the lake. Some of the islands are big enough to accommodate a number of families, while the others are too small for even a single nipa hut to stand on. These islands were believed to have formed out of the clay balls Umacaan threw at Rajah Indarapatra that fell into the lake, while the hills and mountains that surround the lake came from those clay balls that landed on the plains and dried over time, as the legend had it.

Reference:

APA: Astorias, N.P. (no date published) " Myths and Legends 3: Take a journey back in time".

Ref.: <http://mikomichiko.blogspot.com/2010/07/legend-of-lanao-lake.html>