

## The Origin of the Coconut

The story about the origin of the coconut. Now this Banao version [of the story] which we heard from our parents [and] which had been passed on from generation to generation. In English, “The Origin of the Coconut.”

One day, there was a man who lived in Madlingan who was also named Vyanganan for coincidentally, they have the same name. And Vyanganan did swidden farming in Madlingan. And his plants were beautiful for he carefully weeded it. Vyanganan planted sugarcane, it is said, and his sugarcanes were big. And when his sugarcane multiplied, became mature, he would fix the fence for he feared being invaded [by wild animals]. For invasions [by wild animals] were rampant at that time. When the wild pigs invaded, the deer also went in for there were plenty of wild pigs and deer in the beginning for there was nothing that endangered them.

When he would go the next day, he would see that some of his sugarcane were destroyed. *Hali*, he went around, circling the the fence [trying to find] where the invaders went through. And he was puzzled. Because it went frequently like that, that he would always lose some sugarcane. One night, he went hiding at the base of the fence for he wanted to ascertain which ones were eating his sugarcane, if they were wild pigs or deer, or whatever they were. And he hid there and great was the moonshine. It was bright because the moonshine was intense. And later on, it is said, in the middle of the night, [those who] from the sky came down shimmering. And one of them, it is said, went to hang her clothes on the fence. As for the other woman, the other star, she hung her clothes close to where Vyanganan was hiding. But Vyanganan did not move. They went to the sugarcane and, *ali*, it is said they made crunching sounds as they cut to get sugarcanes. And Vyanganan, it is said, got the clothes and, clothes of the other one, and hid them. Vyanganan reportedly shouted, “So you are the ones who have been eating my sugarcanes! I have carefully fixed the fence [so tha] no animal could enter, but you who have wings, so you [are the ones] who are destroying my sugarcanes,” he reportedly said.

And *ali*, the what’s-it, scrambled to look for, get their clothes and flew to the heavens. Now the other one was running, it is said, [crying], “*Gadjiyu... gadjiyu...*,” she reportedly said, looking for her clothets. Later on, Vyanganan showed himself. “Your clothes are here, I

kept it. So you are [the ones] who have been eating my sugarcanes!” so said Vyanganan, and the beautiful woman who, what’s-it, did not speak, and Vyanganan took her [home]. “Let’s go to my house,” he said. So he took her to his house.

And later, when they lived together for Vyanganan married her, she gave birth. And *hala*, Vyanganan would take his wife along with him to the fields. They would go to the swidden farm, they would also go to till the soil, for there were no rice ponds or rice paddy fields at the time. So he kept on taking her with him. But when his wife gave birth, “Stay here for the child,” he reportedly said. When Vyanganan went to the fields, he was alone. And she would wait for him to arrive when it’s time for dinner. So then their child grew up. When Vyanganan went to the fields, [she] would return, er, his mother would send him [saying], “Go call your father to eat,” she reportedly said. The child would go call Vyanganan, it is said. And Vyanganan was happy because there was his child who would go to call for him when it’s time for dinner.

Now, one day, it is said, the child was playing by the hearth. And he kept on, there was nothing he would not pry open. Suddenly, there was [something] shimmering, it is said, which he found under the hearth and, “Mother, what could this be?” he reportedly said.

And his mother looked at it, “*Ey*, it’s just good he did not destroy my clothes. For those are my wings!” so said his mother. And his mother took it and wore it, the what’s-it, her clothes.

Vyanganan arrived, it is said. “Vyanganan, I thought your love is true. For if your love is true, you would have destroyed my clothes!” Now that I have found my clothes, you will have to bear it for I am leaving you. I shall go back to where I came from, I shall go back to the heavens. But as for our child, so that I will have no reason to return often, let us divide it [between us]. That part towards the head is yours, that part towards his feet are mine,” she reportedly said.

So then... but Vyanganan tried to dissuade her, pleading. “Please have mercy, don’t leave me!” he reportedly said. And, “That can’t be, for here are my clothes already. And we shall now leave, I and my son will leave. And when you look up to the sky when the moon is

bright, there [will be] a big star, and there [will be] one beside it that is small – those will be us,” so said the star.

And even if Vyanganan kept crying as he pleaded, no, the star would not listen and they flew to the skies. On the third [day], for Vyanganan placed the other half on top of the flat rock by the river, he would keep watch but on the third [day] his part almost perished and the star arrived, it is said.

“Why, you don’t know how to take care of your part? I’ll get it and plant it here,” she reportedly said.

She planted it at the yard, it is said, at the area above the river, the Jupagan river. And, “Take care of this. Take good care of this,” so said the star to Vyanganan and Vyanganan made it grow. After several months, there was a sprout that came out. And he did not touch it, but continued to take care of it. It grew and grew, it is said, that, what’s-it, that one, which was the coconut. And when it bore fruit, Vyanganan would not pick it for it was his child, after all. And now, what’s-it, he felt bad if he would, what’s-it... the coconuts had fallen to the side of the river. When it dried, it would fall. And when it rained or [there was a] storm, the water would carry, it is said, take these to the sea. But this particular coconut, it was widely known then, for it had been a story from a long time ago by our old folks in ancient times which was passed on. That particular coconut was no more but it multiplied for the river would take these to the sea, and the waves would take these to either shore which was the story of the coconut on the seashore for it came from that, the fruit of that particular coconut of the couple, Star and Vyanganan, in Madlingan. And there, that is the story of that coconut which the coconut came from, which is the Vanaw version.

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