

The Hunters
(The Story of Two Women Hunters Who Made a Pit Trap)

Every time the hunter caught [an animal], he always brought with him roasted [meat] for his children, for he deeply felt sorry for them, for their mother had died early.

One day, their father had a headache. And his children went about looking for herbs (or *vollat*, as the elders called it), to apply to his head, for they wanted their father to get better. *Hali*, they did everything they could for they were greatly worried. After three days, their father's headache worsened, and sometime after that, he died.

Now the two orphans were pitiful having already lost their mother, they also lost their father. And so they still carried on for there was nothing else they could do for their parents were gone. While there were fellow villagers around, it was not the same as having their father with whom they often could be mischievous at times, for he was their father after all.

And when the men went to make pitfall traps, they thought of making one too. So they went to make a pitfall trap. But [in making a] a pitfall trap, they [trappers] would build a stonewall around it so that the prey couldn't get out. And they [the children] painstakingly dug a pit. But because they were women, their work was slow.

And it is said that one night, their father appeared to them in a dream [saying]:

“For the trap you are making, go get wax and spread it over its mouth, so that it will not erode, and can be easily reached by wild animals.” Now this particular wax was in the forest. [The wild animals] would not be scared because they were used to passing by it.

So they went to find wax. And for the trap they made, they waxed its mouth, the opening of the trap. And when their fellow villagers would visit their traps, they would also visit theirs. Their fellow villagers would be stepping on the wild animals for they had made a lot of traps. But their [the children's] trap was effective. Whenever they visited their trap, they would always get prey. And so they never ran out of meat whether it was wild pig or deer. So they always had supplies.

Then again, their mother, er, father again felt sorry for they didn't know how to slice, butcher a deer or a wild pig that they caught. Their father again appeared to them in a dream saying:

“This is what you do. Initially, after you cut it open, remove the innards first. Then, after the innards are removed, take off its chest, take off its legs and split the pair, the back which are the two spines. And this is also what you should do to the chest so that it will not be separated from the head to the neck. That is the thing and if you arrive home, then you slice it up. And to save on your food, cure it. Get bamboo and apply a little salt on the meat and put it there. So you can regularly mix it with vegetables,” he said for there still was their swidden farm from which they would get taro stems, yams, and sweet potatoes which was like their supplies, which were their food supplies.

So there, that pitfall trap is in between Valvalasang and Gina-ang. And the hunters of old, they sometimes reached that pit which they called a woman's pitfall trap. So today in which guns are increasingly used, they no longer dug it up, it was filled up. The pitfall trap is no more.

So that is the story of the two women, the story of one man who loved his family especially his two daughters and he did not forsake them for it was like he would teach them [through] dreams. When he appeared in a dream, he would teach the best thing they should do. Even when it comes to farming, he would also teach them to put up fences so that the wild pigs couldn't intrude, the deer wouldn't intrude for there were plenty of wild pigs and deer back then. Even if you would farm beside the houses, wild pigs would still break in for there were plenty of wild pigs before. It was because there were still no guns then. They used snares, pitfall traps to catch prey, and that was when the two orphaned siblings set up a trapping pit.

That is the story that was told about a man who loved his family, especially his two daughters.

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