

# *Lumawig on Earth*

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Philippine

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*Intermediate*

*7 min read*

One day when Lumawig, the Great Spirit, looked down from his place in the sky he saw two sisters gathering beans. And he decided to go down to visit them. When he arrived at the place he asked them what they were doing. The younger, whose name was Fukan, answered:

“We are gathering beans, but it takes a long time to get enough, for my sister wants to go bathing all the time.”

Then Lumawig said to the older sister:

“Hand me a single pod of the beans.”

And when she had given it to him, he shelled it into the basket and immediately the basket was full. The younger sister laughed at this, and Lumawig said to her:

“Give me another pod and another basket.”

She did so, and when he had shelled the pod, that basket was full also. Then he said to the younger sister:

“Go home and get three more baskets.”

She went home, but when she asked for three more baskets her mother said that the beans were few and she could not need so many. Then Fukan told her of the young man who could fill a basket from one pod of beans,

and the father, who heard her story, said:

“Go bring the young man here, for I think he must be a god.”

So Fukan took the three baskets back to Lumawig, and when he had filled them as he did the other two, he helped the girls carry them to the house. As they reached their home, he stopped outside to cool himself, but the father called to him and he went up into the house and asked for some water. The father brought him a coconut shell full, and before drinking Lumawig looked at it and said:

“If I stay here with you, I shall become very strong.”

The next morning Lumawig asked to see their chickens, and when they opened the chicken-coop out came a hen and many little chicks. “Are these all of your chickens?” asked Lumawig; and the father assured him that they were all. He then bade them bring rice meal that he might feed them, and as the chickens ate they all grew rapidly till they were cocks and hens.

Next Lumawig asked how many pigs they had, and the father replied that they had one with some little ones. Then Lumawig bade them fill a pail with sweet potato leaves and he fed the pigs. And as they ate they also grew to full size.

The father was so pleased with all these things that he offered his elder daughter to Lumawig for a wife. But the Great Spirit said he preferred to marry the younger; so that was arranged. Now when his brother-in-law learned that Lumawig desired a feast at his wedding, he was very angry and said:

“Where would you get food for your wedding feast? There is no rice, nor beef, nor pork, nor chicken,”

But Lumawig only answered, “I shall provide our wedding feast.”

In the morning they all set out for Lanao, for Lumawig did not care to stay any longer in the house with his brother-in-law. As soon as they arrived he sent out for some tree trunks, but the trees that the people brought in were so small that Lumawig himself went to the forest and cut two large pine trees which he hurled to Lanao.

When the people had built a fire of the trees he commanded them to bring ten kettles filled with water. Soon the water was boiling hot and the brother-in-law laughed and said:

“Where is your rice? You have the boiling water, but you do not seem to think of the rice.”

In answer to this Lumawig took a small basket of rice and passed it over five kettles and they were full. Then he called “Yishtjau,” and some deer came running out of the forest. These were not what he wanted, however, so he called again and some pigs came. He told the people that they were each to catch one and for his brother-in-law he selected the largest and best.

They all set out in pursuit of the pigs and the others quickly caught theirs, but though the brother-in-law chased his until he was very tired and hot he could not catch it Lumawig laughed at him and said:

“You chase that pig until he is thin and still you cannot catch it, though all the others have theirs.”

Thereupon he grasped the hind legs of the pig and lifted it. All the people laughed and the brother-in-law said:

“Of course you can catch it, because I chased it until it was tired.”

Lumawig then handed it to him and said, “Here, you carry it.” But no sooner had the brother-in-law put it over his shoulder than it cut loose and ran away.

“Why did you let it go?” asked Lumawig. “Do you care nothing for it, even after I caught it for you? Catch it again and bring it here.”

So the brother-in-law started out again, and he chased it up stream and down, but he could not catch it. Finally Lumawig reached down and picked up the pig and carried it to the place where the others were cooking.

After they had all eaten and drunk and made their offerings to the spirits, Lumawig said:

“Come, let us go to the mountain to consult the omen concerning the northern tribes.”

So they consulted the omen, but it was not favorable, and they were starting home when the brother-in-law asked Lumawig to create some water, as the people were hot and thirsty.

“Why do you not create water, Lumawig?” he repeated as Lumawig paid no attention to him. “You care nothing that the people are thirsty and in need of drink.”

Then they quarreled and were very angry and Lumawig said to the people, “Let us sit down and rest.”

While they rested, Lumawig struck the rock with his spear and water came out. The brother-in-law jumped up to get a drink first, but Lumawig held him back and said he must be the last to drink. So they all drank, and when they had finished, the brother-in-law stepped up, but Lumawig gave him a push which sent him into the rock and water came from his body.

“You must stay there,” said Lumawig, “because you have troubled me a great deal.” And they went home, leaving him in the rock.

Some time after this Lumawig decided to go back to the sky to live, but before he went he took care that his wife should have a home. He made a coffin of wood and placed her in it with a dog at her feet and a cock at her head. And as he set it floating on the water, he told it not to stop until it reached Tinglayan. Then, if the foot end struck first, the dog should bark; and if the head end was the first to strike, the cock should crow. So it floated away, and on and on, until it came to Tinglayan.

Now a widower was sharpening his ax on the bank of the river, and when he saw the coffin stop, he went to fish it out of the water. On shore he started to open it, but Fugan cried out, “Do not drive a wedge, for I am here,” So the widower opened it carefully and took Fugan up to the town, and then as he had no wife of his own, he married her.

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