



Man and the Alan

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Intermediate
2 min read

A Tinguian was once walking along a trail in the wood when he heard a strange sound in a large tree near him, and looking up he was startled to see that it was the home of the Alan—spirits who live in the wood.

He stopped and gazed for a moment at the horrible creatures, large as people, hanging from the limbs of the tree with their heads down like bats. They had wings to fly, and their toes were at the back of their feet, while their long fingers, which pointed backward, were fastened at the wrist.

“Surely,” thought the man, “these terrible beings will eat me if they can catch me. I will run away as fast as I can while they are asleep.” He tried to run but he was too frightened, and after a few steps he fell face down on the ground.

At this the Alan began to wail loudly, for they saw him fall and believed him dead. And they came down out of the tree with gold and beads which they laid on him.

After a while the man gathered courage and, jumping up, he cried as loudly as he could, “Go away!”

The Alan did not move, but they looked at him and said: “Give us the one bead nagaba [a peculiar bead of double effect], and you may have the rest.” When the man refused to do this, they were angry and turned away, crying, “Then we are going to burn your house, for you are a bad man.”

Thereupon the man went home as fast as he could go, but very soon after that his house burned, for the Alan

kept their word.

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