

The Foolish Farmer and his Carabao

(An Ilocano Folk Tale)

By MAXIMO RAMOS *



A LONG time ago there lived a foolish farmer. He was a Filipino farmer and of course had a carabao. You may be sure the carabao could work all day pulling a plow over the field. Every year, when the season of planting was over and all the fields had been planted to rice, the farmer took his carabao to a place near his house and there fed him each day with four bundles of grass, and gave him six bucketfuls of water to drink.

One day, while he was thus feeding and watering his carabao, he thought, "I spend much of my time in cutting grass and in carrying water for this carabao. Perhaps I could teach him not to eat and drink. That would save much effort and I could then spend my

time enjoying myself in the village. What a wonderful thing that would be—a carabao that would neither eat nor drink!"

He began next day to teach his animal the trick of not eating or drinking. Instead of the usual four bundles of grass, he gave him only two. He also gave the animal only half the amount of water that he had given him previously. The carabao ate all the grass, drank the water, and looked at his master for more. But the master said, "Nothing more, sir. I shall teach you a wonderful new trick."

The following day the man gave his carabao only half the amount of grass and half the amount of water which he had given the day before. The

(Please turn to page 115.)



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WHEN SHORT-TAIL WENT TO THE FIESTA

(Continued from page 93)
er until I come."

Father drew his hat firmer on his head. Turning to Mother and Rita, he asked, "What color is the dress Baby is wearing today?"

"Pink!" they both said at the same time. "She also has a pink ribbon on her head," Rita added.

"Let's start the search," urged Carlos, after which they all went on their different ways.

Soon Father was talking with a husky and very dependable looking policeman.

"How large is she?"

"This high," Father showed him with his hand. "She is wearing a pink dress and she answers to the name 'Baby.'"

"We'll find her," assured the policeman. "I shall telephone the chief and every policeman will be on the lookout for her. Stop worrying."

Mother, at her post by the church door, was thinking. "Why did I ever let go her hand?" she said as she blamed herself.

Meanwhile Rita had begun a thorough search of the stands selling toys and dolls. Carlos soon had a Boy Scout helping him. They all searched for some time, but did not find the lost Baby.

Carlos returned to Mother first, so when Father arrived he found them both there. When Mother saw Father without Baby she was very frightened.

Suddenly they heard a fa-

miliar bark. Looking up, they saw Short-tail jumping up and down excitedly. A little way behind him was Rita carrying Baby. Carlos ran to relieve her of her burden. Mother ran to her too.

"Where did you find her?" asked Mother when at last she could talk.

"In that empty stall there—
—asleep on a pile of grass."

"Asleep?" Carlos asked.

"Asleep. And Short-tail was guarding her. There were some people standing by, and they told me Short-tail would not let them get near her. He saw me first."

"The best dog in the whole world!" cried Carlos hugging him. "And to think we tried to leave you behind," he whispered to Short-tail. "How glad I am that you got out of the house and came to the fiesta!"

THE FOOLISH FARMER AND HIS CARABAO

(Continued from page 94)
carabao ate and drank that in no time, and looked and looked for more. But the man said, "Enough, my friend, for I am going to train you not to eat or drink."

On the third day the farmer gave his work-animal only a very little grass and just a small coconut-shell filled with water. The carabao did not look at his master this time after drinking and eating, and the farmer thought, "See that now? My good carabao is about to learn the trick. I must be a very wise man,

for I can teach something that no other man has ever taught before. I think I am a wonderful teacher."

On the fourth day the man went to visit his carabao. The animal would not look at him to ask for food and drink. The simple farmer said to himself, "Surely he no longer cares for grass and water. He has learned the wonderful trick."

So he gave the animal only a handful of grass and just a mouthful of water. The carabao took a long time to eat the grass and drink the water. The man promised himself that he would not give anything to his carabao next day.

But when he came to see his carabao the following morning, the poor animal lay dead under a tree. "What a foolish carabao!" the man exclaimed. "What a foolish animal to die just as he was about to learn not to eat or drink! Now I shall have no carabao."

Was the carabao or the farmer foolish?

SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

(Continued from page 101)
Another difference between a band and an orchestra is that certain instruments are used in a band which are not found in an orchestra, such as a baritone horn, a euphonium, various sizes of the saxophone, etc.

Unless a band is a very good one, it generally sounds better out of doors than in a concert hall.