

Dear Children:

We are a happy group of barrio boys who live in a farming neighborhood. We often play together during the moonlight nights. Our ages are from seven to thirteen years. Do you like to hear some of our exciting and interesting experiences? Here they are!

The Players

I. NEW MOON

WHAT a night! It was All Saints' Day. We decided to go around the neighborhood to sing the traditional songs. We started late in the evening when the new moon poured forth its light on the dark shadows of the nipa houses, fields and trees.

From "Ba Tebän," the grand old man of the village, Luis borrowed an old guitar. He began playing it to the tune of a religious song. We sang the song many times from one house to another. The song was like this:

List to the song of spirits
Our songs of agony and pain
Spirits will be wandering
The graveyard to see once again.
If alms you should care to give us,
Please do so as fast as you can,
Lest before we reach the heaven
Its door may no longer be open



MOONLIGHT

By LINA M. SANTIAGO
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(English Translation of rhymes
by LULU DE LA PAZ)

We found our neighbors to be very kind and good to us. They offered us some centavos for our songs. Others invited us to their houses to enjoy spoonfuls of "guinatan," pieces of "calamay," "tinumis at puto," and some "suman" which were purposely prepared for the hungry little souls who traveled in the cold black night.

Then we rested awhile, returned the guitar we borrowed, and walked our way along the muddy road to the cemetery. Stories of ghosts and goblins crept into our imagination. We were very much afraid, so we ran as fast as we could. We reached the cemetery perspiring and cold.

Our fear was lessened when we saw bright lights everywhere in the place. It was coming from the "sulo" or bamboo torches locally made by the farmers in their homes. We went around the graves of the young and the old. We found out that they were decorated with flowering plants and vines which looked like small gardens with white fences.

Midnight was near. We heard the call of the "tuko" or gecko coming from the bamboo thickets around. We remembered the evil spirits that ran after children at midnight. The more we became afraid, the more we could not start for home because our little feet would not carry us farther. In our hurry to go home, we jumped into an empty cart nearby, crowded ourselves together, and suddenly fell asleep.

To our surprise, the next morning we found ourselves still in the cart but in another place. We all rubbed our eyes and exclaimed: "Really, did the ghosts bring us here?" "Where are we?" "Why?"

2. FIRST QUARTER

WHEN the moon was on its first quarter, we were very anxious to see a "moro-moro" play. We borrowed the cart of Mario's father and the carabao of Luis' father, and off we went to town. We sat inside the roofed cart while Luis who acted as our guide rode on the carabao's back. In order to spend the time happily, we planned to sing some country songs.

PRANKS

Luis said, "Each one of us shall sing the song he or she likes best."

"Agreed," we all shouted.

"I shall begin," interrupted Luis, and he sang the words of the "Paro-parong Bukid"—(English translation).

Flutter all the daytime
Little Pretty-Wing
Flutter all the playtime
Little merry thing:
Flutter from the meadow
Where the path lies,
There's a bit of shadow
For the gay butterflies."

"That's fine!" and we clapped our hands with delight.

"Let us hear another melody. Mario shall be the next," said I. So Mario began with the tune of "Si Ali Kong Nena": (English translation)—

"Farewell, my friends, I say
I am going far away
To see my sugar cane
If it is sweet again.
It may be like the cheat
That has a root of sweet
But at the top no taste,
Indeed, a bit of waste."

"Well and good," we remarked jokingly.

Then we requested the other children with us to render their contributions. They gave folksongs too. They were very pleasant to hear.

Maria sang this piece:

Oh Big Sister, big sis,
Of San Fernando Lake
Betis and Bacolod
Of Manila is a piece.

"Stop!" exclaimed Luis, and he continued, "Let us hear another piece."

Putting aside my shyness, I stood up, and sang:

Leron, Leron my love,
Climbed a papaya tree—
A basket he did take
To put the ripe ones in.
But when he reached the top,
He came down with a flop—



Oh—what a bitter luck,
Go hunt for another.

"Fine! Let us have another one," said Pedro. But all eyes went to him. He was expected to give a better one. So he scratched his head and said: Once as I walked along an Ilaya road,
What would I find but a little piece of wood.
I took it home with me, a guitar I made of it
It was Maria who danced while Pedro played.

We did not know that we had reached the town until Luis said, "Here we are! To the moro-moro we go!"

We went to the plaza and saw the play or "comedia" as the town people called it. There were so many people who witnessed the show. The story was interesting. It was about a prince, a princess, several attendants, and gallant soldiers in armor. The players were brave, good, and truthful. There

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BOYS AND GIRLS OF OTHER LANDS

by gilmo baldovino

SIAM
HAVE you ever seen a Siamese in the Philippines? Perhaps you have seen one but you really do not know if it was a Siamese or a Chinese. Most Siamese look like the Chinese: some look like Malaysians.

Siam is a small country located south of China. Much of the country of this nation is a great river delta. Siam is a rice producing country. There are so many rice fields that if you stand in one end of the fields you cannot see where they end. They resemble a great ocean of green.

In this country, boys and girls have brown or yellow skins. They have flat faces with high cheek bones. Their eyes are dark while their hair is straight and black.

Siam is a hot country. People who do not live in cities wear very little clothing. And because of this hot climate, in some parts of the country, children are left alone to play with no clothes at all. The simplest and most popular way of clothing oneself in this country is to twist a strip of colored cloth around the waist.

Most of the Siamese houses are built of teakwood. As floods are frequent in this country, the houses are constructed high up on stilts.

The Siamese boys are helpful. They help their parents in plowing the fields. Most of them take care of the water buffaloes or carabaos.

The Siamese are religious. Their temples are among the wonders of the world. Their religious ceremonies are very different from ours.



Incredible, But--

By A. B. L. R.

Proportionally, more Filipinos during the Spanish times marry than at present.

Francisco Balagtas suffered financial losses in the publication of his immortal masterpiece, "Florante at Laura." Few read his book and those who read it criticized it bitterly. It was only fifty years later, when he was already dead, that the public began to appreciate and realize the greatness of "Florante at Laura."

In Benguet, Mountain Province, there are caves which contain mummies placed there in a squatting position. Those caves were used by the mountain people as burial places and the mummies which could still be found there prove that several hundred years ago, they already knew the science of embalming.

During the Spanish regime, on big celebrations or "fiestas," along the street which is now called Escolta in Manila, the Governor General and the Archbishop were escorted by a procession. This gave the name *Escoltà* (escort) to Manila's most famous street.

During the Spanish times, a foreign commercial house once offered to answer for all the expenses of the Philippine government provided it was granted the tobacco monopoly in the Islands.

MOONLIGHT PRANKS

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were many interesting sword fights accompanied with merry music. The courageous soldiers were always given their due reward. Each character spoke very clearly in the dialect.

We were very much satisfied with the "moro-moro" that we even repeated some of the selections on our way home. We selected only the

funny portions of the play:

Love me, oh love for bold and brave
one I.

When each corner gets dark sending
me on errands don't try.

But when I hear the clatter of our
china plates,

Like lightning I run lest no more
food be left.

For I am Mr. Frog.

Son of his highness, the Count

Short

When I fail to drink buri sap—
After you I shall run amuck.

I am Sir Cucumber
Who went hither and thither
All I'm looking for—
Is Sir Onion who can't be found
here.

We laughed heartily at the jokes
contained in the selections. We
reached home very happy.