

THE DEMONIC SNAKE
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THE DEMONIC SNAKE

Under the scorching sun, an elderly man staggered toward a tree that was almost dead. He had no choice but to rest for a moment in that place.

His vulnerable body was propped against the large tree trunk. The old man's mind wandered into the past when his wife was alive. Since her death, the old man had had to support their son La Upe. To earn his livelihood, the old man could only sell grass and dry twigs. Every other day, he had to walk a few miles to earn only a little sum of money.

Although the old man's income was only meager, he was very concerned with his son's education. He was willing to work hard as long as his son could finish his schooling. He realized he had nothing to be passed on to his only child. He tried his best to send his son to school to become a successful and useful person to others. La Upe's father argued that knowledge was more valuable than inheritance. Knowledge led people to a glorious life, while inheritance often caused people to become ungrateful. Treasures could be exhausted in an instant, but knowledge could be taken to the grave.

In the afternoon the old man had to get home soon. He thought of his son who was waiting for him at home. His footsteps felt light

again after he rested for a moment. Today he had to be grateful because his grass sold so well that he had enough money to buy food for his son.

La Upe welcomed his father's arrival. He heated some water for his father to bathe, and also warmed the food his father brought home.

"Father, do you want to eat now or later?" asked La Upe.

"Later, son," replied his father as he went into the bathroom.

"Aren't you using the hot water for your bath?" asked La Upe again.

"No, save it for drinking water. I see our drinking container is empty," his father replied and went on bathing. After taking a bath, the father called his son and advised him.

"Son, life is getting harder, so we have to struggle. Be honest and patient all the time. Do not hesitate to help anyone who needs help and do not forget to always pray." With a serious face, La Upe listened to his father's advice. He promised to heed and follow his father's advice in earnest.

Years passed by, and La Upe grew up into a handsome and kind young man. He did all his work with pleasure, without having to wait for orders. His village's people were very fond of him. The young man was helpful and always polite to anyone. He was well

known to always honor and respect people older than himself.

In his school, his teachers also loved him because he was intelligent and very good-natured. Despite his many jobs, he never neglected his lessons. His father was very pleased and satisfied with his only child. They lived happily and loved each other even though their life was very simple.

One day after returning home from school, La Upe did not see his father in front of the house as usual. He wondered, "What has happened? Is he hurt?" With his heart pounding, La Upe came into the house.

La Upe greeted, but found no answer. He repeated it again. This time there was a very weak answer from inside the house. La Upe was sure it was his father's voice. He quickly searched for his father's whereabouts. La Upe was shocked to see his father lying weak on the couch.

"What happened to you, Father?" La Upe asked with anxiety. Then, very carefully he touched his beloved father. Feeling that his father's body was very hot, La Upe was getting worried. "You should seek treatment, so that you can recover quickly," said La Upe.

"No, I'll get well soon. I only caught a common cold." "You're not usually like this." "Don't worry about me. I will be fine. Now you change your clothes first!"

La Upe came into the room and lay down on the bed. His mind was fixed on his lying father. La Upe was afraid to be left behind by his father. He did not want to lose his parent for the second time. He was not ready to live alone. La Upe hurried over to his father. "Today you should take a break, let me replace you and do your job," La Upe said. His father did not answer, he just nodded his head.

Slowly, La Upe went into the kitchen. He was already hungry and needed to eat something. However, he did not find any food. Apparently his father had not cooked yet. Without being ordered, La Upe took the rice and cooked it into porridge. La Upe was no longer awkward to do it because he often helped his father. After cooking, La Upe brought the porridge to the place where his father was lying.

"You eat first. You must've not eaten anything yet since this morning." La Upe spooned porridge to feed his father. "Let me eat by myself. I'm still strong." His father tried to get up from his bed, but his head still felt dizzy.

After feeding his father, La Upe tidied up the abandoned homework. La Upe just came to realize that the homework which so far seemed easy to him was actually quite time-consuming and also needed much time to deal with. La Upe promised to always help his father.

The next morning, La Upe got up early. That morning he did not attend school. He had to replace his father doing his job. He provided porridge and hot water for his father, then excused himself and departed. "You eat first. You have not eaten anything since this morning." La Upe spooned porridge to feed his father.

La Upe's father watched his son begin to grow up. He remembered his late wife who was also very attentive to him. In fact, La Upe's father did not want to burden his son with the tasks he was responsible for. However, he was helpless at this time. There was no tear in his eyes. He hugged his son and said something to him.

"Forgive me, son! I make you have to work. "

"It's my duty as a child, Father," La Upe said as he said goodbye to go to the market.

By late afternoon, La Upe was back from the market. He used the money he earned from the sale in the market to buy some herbal medicine and food for his father. Upon arriving home, La Upe approached his father.

"How are you doing today?" La Upe asked as he kissed his father's hand.

"Nothing has changed," replied his father with his eyes still closed.

"You have to take medicine to be healthy, but you have to eat first. Here is your favorite dish. Try it! I'm sure you like it," La Upe passed the food to his father.

The old man looked at the food his son brought, but he lost his appetite. If only he did not get sick, he would immediately eat up the food.

In order not to disappoint La Upe, he tasted the food. La Upe was glad to see that his father was willing to eat although only a little.

As long as his father was sick, La Upe's daily routine was to provide porridge and hot water for his father. Afterward, he just went looking for grass to sell to ranchers. Sometimes he also collected dry twigs for sale to neighbors who needed them or he brought the dry twigs to be sold in the market. After earning money, he usually bought food for his father.

Despite his heavy work, La Upe never complained or regretted his fate. He believed that everything happened at the will of Almighty God. One day, his father called La Upe. "Son, please get the box under my bed!" La Upe looked under the bed, but did not see the box his father meant.

"I see nothing, Dad!"

"Please take a closer look one more time. If I'm not mistaken, I keep it in the corner of the bed." La Upe went under his father's

bed and looked for the box his father meant. He had trouble finding the box because it was dark under the bed. However, he finally found the box.

No wonder La Upe had trouble finding the box because the box was covered in a black cloth. La Upe took the box very carefully, then handed it to his father.

"Is this the box you mean?" asked La Upe.

"Right, sit close to me! There's something I need to tell you about this box. This box concerns your future."

La Upe approached his father, then sat down beside him. He wondered about the relationship between him and the box. Before La Upe dismissed his surprise, his father had already opened the box. Apparently, it contained money. His father took the money, then handed it to La Upe.

"My son, make the most of this money."

The old man took a deep breath. His eyes fixed on his son and he seemed to have something in his mind to talk about.

"Son, I do not think I will live any longer. I advise you to be patient in living this life," his father said in a very weak voice. After catching his breath, La Upe's father resumed his words.

"Leave this village and be on your way! God willing, God will

bless your life. Remember my advice! Mind your behavior and do not hesitate to help others who need help."

After delivering the message, the old man's body fell limp. La Upe tried to wake him, but the old man did not react in the slightest.

"Father ..., Father ..., wake up! Do not leave me," La Upe shrieked, crying. Long enough La Upe cried. He was aware when he saw his father did not wake up. To make sure whether his father was alive or dead, La Upe went to his nearest neighbor Ambo Enre.

"Sir, please see what happens to my Dad. He has fainted for a long time and hasn't been conscious! " "Where is your father now?" Ambo Enre asked in amazement.

"At home." "Come on, let's see!" La Upe followed his neighbor from behind.

Upon arriving home, La Upe saw his father lying awkwardly. Ambo Enre held his wrist. He paused as he watched La Upe's face.

"How's my father, Sir?" asked La Upe curiously.

"Your father is dead. You have to accept this fact wholeheartedly so that your father will rest in peace in the hereafter."

"Dead?" La Upe asked in disbelief when he heard his father's death.

"Yes, accept this fact sincerely," said Ambo Enre.

After hearing of his father's death, La Upe tried to be strong and steadfast. Assisted by his neighbors, La Upe buried his father's body in a public cemetery. Every night, he never forgot to pray for his parents.

Since his father's death, La Upe no longer went to school because he had to support himself. It was hard for him to leave school, but he had no choice.

He continued his father's work as a fruit and vegetable seller. Every day, early in the morning he had to go to the fields. When he could not obtain any fruits or vegetables, he bought them from the neighbors and resold them. Some of his income was set aside for his next journey just as his late father had advised him.

One day, La Upe fell asleep on a bamboo cot after a day's work. He dreamed of meeting a beautiful girl. The girl was playing in the garden surrounded by the ladies. La Upe could only look at her from afar.

La Upe's curiosity toward the girl brought up his courage to get acquainted with her. When the girl was alone, La Upe approached her.

The girl was surprised to see La Upe's presence suddenly. "Oh, who are you, Sir?"

"My name is La Upe. What's your name and where do you come from?" asked La Upe as he extended his hand to greet and get acquainted with her. "My name?"

At the time the girl was about to mention her name and her origin, La Upe was already awakened by the noise of the crowd in front of his house. Apparently, the noise came from children who were playing hide and seek.

"Ah, you kids! I'm just having a dream, and you're annoying me!" La Upe said silently. He sat pensively recalling his dream. He hoped that someday he would meet a girl like the one in his dream.

In the afternoon after taking a bath, La Upe left his hometown. He was already going to wander. Actually, he found it very difficult to leave the house that held his memories with both of his parents. However, he had to go according to his father's advice.

Before leaving, La Upe took time to visit his parents' graves. He prayed that all his parents' sins would be forgiven and his parents would be granted noble places by His side. He also cleaned the cemetery from many wild plants that grew around it. With a steady step and a round heart, La Upe was ready to lead his new life.

For many days he walked. He had passed many places, but he had yet to find a suitable place to stay in. In fact, his spared money was running out.

One night, La Upe reached the edge of a forest. No one was seen around the place. Only the voices of crickets and cicadas sounded so loud as to make the forest's edges spooky. However, La Upe was not afraid because he never did evil to anyone, be it animal or human. He also believed that God would protect him.

La Upe stopped in an old hut. He intended to sleep to release his fatigue. Just as he sat down, he heard a cry for help.

"Help, help!" The person shouted. La Upe searched for the direction of the voice. He was sure the voice was not far from where he was resting.

"Help, help!" The person shouted again. La Upe was getting closer to the source of the voice. Due to the darkness which was worsened by the leafy foliage, La Upe had trouble seeing around him.

"Oh, who is that? Please help me!" The person said upon hearing the sound of footsteps heading toward her. The person was apparently a grandmother.

"Where are you, Grandma?" asked La Upe.

"I'm near a big tree. Look not far from where you are standing!" she replied.

La Upe went according to the grandmother's instruction. Sure enough, he found the old woman sitting under a tree. She could not walk because her legs were sprained. La Upe felt pity to see the old woman's condition. He approached her, then asked why her legs were sprained.

"I was going to look for foliage and roots for medicine. I didn't realize that apparently I have walked deep into the forest," the grandmother told La Upe.

"Grandma, I will take you to a safer place. You can rest there."

La Upe carried the grandmother. He took her to a hut where he had rested before. Arriving at the hut, La Upe took the supplies out of his bag and gave them to the grandmother. "Why are you here alone, Grandma?"

The old woman answered in a low voice. "I fell, my legs stumbled on this huge tree root." "Please eat. You must be hungry," said La Upe while giving some pieces of yam. La Upe saw the grandmother eating with gusto. She seemed to have not eaten for a long time. La Upe asked the grandmother for permission to look for a sprinkling medicine.

"Grandson, make a concoction of ginger and lemongrass for me," said the grandmother.

Not too long afterward, La Upe brought some ginger sticks and a few lemongrass stalks. Both materials were pounded, then smeared into the grandmother's sprained legs. "Thank you. Who are you and where are you going?" asked the grandmother with a face that looked fresher because the pain in her legs had been reduced.

"My name is La Upe. I also do not know where to go. I walked along to where my feet are leading me," replied La Upe.

"Where are your parents?"

"I am an orphan. Before they died, my parents told me to go abroad if I wanted to succeed in my life. "

"I wish you good luck!" said the grandmother, and La Upe agreed. La Upe took care of her like taking care of his own parents. In the not-too-distant future, the grandmother's legs could be moved again even if she had to walk with the assistance of a walking stick.

One morning, the grandmother called La Upe and said something.

"My grandson, now is the time for you to seek a better life. Do not worry about me. Go now!" The grandmother said as she took a package and took out its contents. It turned out that the package

contained a box and an old stick. Grandma gave the box and the stick to La Upe.

"My grandson, you are a kind and helpful young man. In return for your kindness, I give you this box and this stick," the grandmother told La Upe.

La Upe received the box and the stick.

"I helped you not because I expect any compensation. I help people because my conscience calls me to help others," La Upe said.

"I know you're a good boy. So, I give you this box and this stick. I believe that only you are entitled to receive this box and this stick because these two objects are not just any ordinary objects. Both of them have supernatural powers."

"What powers do these two objects possess? Are not these things just ordinary things?" La Upe asked curiously while watching the two objects thoroughly.

"This box contains two ointments that have different uses. I named the ointments *La Mappadising* and *I Cennigrara* respectively. Both names are tailored to their respective properties. The ointment is made from a variety of plants. Apply the ointment to the part of your body which hurts. By God's permission, the illness will heal. The ointment *I Cennigrara* can

be used to beautify faces. Apply the ointment to your face, then you will turn into a handsome and robust man," said the old woman again.

"I named this stick *La Mappatunru*. This stick is efficacious in paralyzing the enemy," continued the grandmother.

After carefully storing the box and the stick, La Upe thanked her once more, then went on his way. When he came out and walked a few steps, he looked back. How surprised he was to discover that the old woman was no longer in her place. Again he looked around and around, but the old woman had completely gone. He rubbed his eyes to make sure whether he was dreaming.

"Ah, I couldn't be dreaming. If I am dreaming, both this box and this stick would not have been in my hand," La Upe told himself.

He really was not dreaming. He had actually met that wonderful old woman. Determinedly, La Upe continued his journey. He had to leave the dense forest, without the slightest fear. He strongly believed that God the Almighty would protect him.

After a long walk, La Upe arrived by the river. He took a break to unwind. The hot air pushed him for water to wash his limbs. Before he could go down to the river, he saw a fish sandwiched between a crocodile's pointed teeth. The fish rebelled and was about to release itself. However, the little creature was helpless against the savage crocodile. The crocodile's teeth were getting

deeper into the fish's body.

La Upe was very sorry to see the helpless creature's condition. He wanted to help, but he was powerless, he himself did not dare to fight the big, savage crocodile. Suddenly he remembered the grandmother's stick.

La Upe hit the stick at the crocodile's body. The big, savage crocodile released the fish in its mouth. However, the helpless creature was already in a very severe condition. La Upe smeared the fish with the ointment.

Gradually the fish recovered, then La Upe released the fish into the river and he continued his journey.

When La Upe was going on his way, suddenly he was startled to hear the heartbreaking scream. He was looking for the source of the scream. He saw a very horrible event. A big snake was winding around a white monkey.

The monkey was shouting and struggling to rid itself of the snake's increasingly tight coil. However, its efforts were futile because the snake tightened further its coil. La Upe did not have the heart to see the monkey suffering. He had to immediately help it because otherwise the monkey would suffocate. La Upe took the stick, then hit the snake with it. Instantly, the snake released the monkey from its coil.

He left the monkey in a weak condition. La Upe thought the monkey was dead, but apparently he still saw the signs of life in the monkey's eyes. La Upe was very happy because the monkey could still be expected to live. La Upe remembered the magic box given by the old woman. He then took out the box. La Upe treated the monkey with an ointment given by the grandmother in the forest. Instantly, the monkey recovered.

"Now, you're out of danger. Go into your habitat," La Upe said as if the monkey were someone he could talk to. La Upe let the monkey leave. Very quickly the monkey climbed up the tree. Then La Upe continued his journey, followed by the grateful monkey's sight.

Not long afterward, La Upe arrived to a bustling city. He saw a boy tying a bird with a rope. As the boy ran, he dragged the bird. La Upe did not have the heart to see the poor bird's condition.

"Uh, little brother, release the bird! Don't you have pity to see the bird is in pain? Imagine that you are the bird. Do you want to be dragged?" Asked La Upe while trying to catch the bird that the boy was dragging.

"Why pity? This bird does not know anything," the boy said. La Upe looked for a way to make the boy release the bird he was playing. He persuaded the boy with the lure of money.

"Sweet little brother, what if the bird is exchanged for money?"

The boy paused and asked, "How much money do you want to give me?"

"Fifty thousand rupiahs," La Upe replied. But the boy shook his head. La Upe and the boy bargained to agree on the price.

"How about a hundred thousand rupiahs?" La Upe said quickly.

"This is all my money left. Come on, my sweet little brother," La Upe cajoled once more.

Then, the boy replied, "Give me the money first, and I will give you my bird."

La Upe took the rest of the money out of his trouser pocket and exchanged it with the bird.

"You naughty boy. How dare you hurt this weak creature!" La Upe muttered to himself. Apparently the bird had long been hurt as could be seen from its body's pathetic condition. La Upe took *La Mappadising* ointment from the box and rubbed it into the bird's body. Gradually the bird's health recovered. La Upe let the bird fly to join the other birds.

The sun began to set when La Upe reached the city. He had to immediately look for lodging before continuing his journey again.

"Assalamu 'alaikum," La Upe said hello.

"Wa 'alaikumsalam," replied the mother who was the owner of the house, while opening the door made of rattan wood.

"Who are you? What do you need?" Asked the mother.

"My name is La Upe. If allowed, I would like to stay at your house. "

"Come in, do not stand by the door!" Said the owner of the house to let La Upe into her house. She hurried to the kitchen to get a glass of water.

"Where are you from?" Asked the mother.

La Upe explained his intent and purpose from the beginning to the end. Not a single event was missed. The owner of the house was amazed to see the young man who was in front of her. While other youths were still happy to play, this young man had struggled to survive and share with his fellow humans.

"You stay here tonight, but we're sorry we cannot provide a decent place."

"That you've given me a place to stay is something I should be grateful for. I do not know how I can repay your kindness, Ma'am and Sir."

"We should help each other. Do not think about how to return the favor. We sincerely help you. Stay in this place as you please. We

will be glad if you want to stay here, especially since we have not had children for a long time," said the father. La Upe was touched by the words of his newly acquainted parents.

Several days had passed, La Upe still lived with his adoptive parents. They had considered La Upe to be like their own son. Moreover, La Upe was a young man who was good at conducting himself and had good manners.

One day, La Upe asked his adoptive mother's permission to see the beauty of the city. When he arrived at the square in front of the palace, he was very surprised to see the crowd cheering. Pushed by curiosity, La Upe tried to break through the crowd. He wanted to know what was going on.

From a distance he saw a very nice horse-drawn carriage coming toward him. The carriage was drawn by six robust, strong white horses. La Upe was interested to know who was in the carriage. He was standing by the road waiting for the carriage to pass. As the carriage passed in front of him, he was amazed to see a middle-aged man and a beautiful teenage girl in the carriage. They were wearing magnificent garments complete with all their attributes. The middle-aged man was the king of the country and the girl sitting next to him was his daughter.

La Upe seemed to have seen the princess, but he could not remember when and where. He tried to remember, but he could

not remember. However, he was sure that he had seen the princess.

Along the way home, La Upe just kept thinking about the princess. Even in his sleep, his mind was always fixed on the princess. He had not been able to guess when and where he had met the princess. He tried to remember the experiences he had undergone, starting from persuading a boy to meeting the old woman possessing magical power, but he still could not recall a meeting with a beautiful princess. Until late at night, he was still thinking of the princess. As he pondered, he suddenly remembered his dream when his father had just died.

"I just remember now. The beautiful princess in the dream is exactly the same as the one I saw this afternoon," La Upe said in his heart.

La Upe wondered why he had dreamed about the princess before he met face-to-face with her. What did the dream really mean? Tired of thinking about the strange event that had just happened to him, finally La Upe fell asleep.

The call to dawn prayer just awakened him from his sleep. He immediately took a bath and performed ablutions. After the dawn prayer, La Upe did not immediately stand. He sat there thinking about the princess he saw earlier this afternoon. Apparently he had fallen in love with the princess. However, La Upe did not

expect much because it was impossible for an orphaned poor boy to marry a princess. He felt like a bird longing for the moon.

La Upe's anxiety was also noticed by his adoptive parents. They agreed to ask him.

"I noticed today that La Upe becomes pensive," said his adoptive father.

"That's right, he's usually cheerful. Maybe something troubles him. Let's ask him what causes him to be like this," his adoptive mother said as she approached La Upe.

"La Upe, we see that you become pensive. What are you thinking? Tell us. Do not be shy." La Upe was surprised to hear that unexpected question. He told them about his meeting with the princess and his dream. He asked who the beautiful princess was. "Oh, so that's what you think? The princess's name is Andi Tenripada, the daughter of Datu Makkulau. His father is a wise and prudent king."

"Is the princess married?" Asked La Upe curiously.

"Not yet. The princess is willing to marry someone if he can fulfill her requests. It does not necessarily mean that no one has ever proposed to her so far. Already dozens of young men have entered the contest. However, no one can fulfill the princess's requests."

La Upe felt a little comfort, hearing his adoptive father's words. He still had a little hope of having a dream princess.

"One more thing you need to know La Upe, Datu Makkulau promises to appoint anyone who becomes Princess Andi Tenripada's husband to become a king," said his adoptive mother continuing her husband's talk.

"Father, Mother, I will try to compete in the contest. Tomorrow I will go to the king. Hope it works," La Upe said confidently.

Both his adoptive parents were surprised to hear La Upe's words. They tried to prevent La Upe for fear that he might fail. However, La Upe remained steadfast in his determination. He was sure God would help him. Finally, La Upe's adoptive parents could only pray for their adopted son because his wishes were so strong that no one could prevent him again.

The next morning, La Upe picked up his magic box. He recalled the miraculous grandmother while reciting the incantation.

"Oh *Ceningrara*, bless me with your light." Then, he rubbed the ointment to his forehead. At that moment La Upe turned into a handsome and good-looking young man. La Upe's adoptive parents were very surprised and did not think the young man standing in front of them was La Upe. They saw a great light on the young man's face.

Before leaving for the palace, La Upe kissed the hands of his adoptive parents. He begged their blessings. Both parents escorted La Upe to the front of the house. Previously they were praying together.

About eight o'clock, La Upe went into the castle confidently. He was received by the king kindly. The king asked his purpose. La Upe explained that the purpose of his arrival was none other than to marry Princess Andi Tenripada.

The king suggested that La Upe cancel his intention because it would be useless. The king also told La Upe that many of the kings' children had fallen victim to the contest. However, La Upe insisted. He did not want to cancel his intention.

Finally, Datu Makkulau announced throughout the country that La Upe would marry Princess Andi Tenripada. Princess Andi Tenripada was also informed of the purpose of La Upe's arrival. She accepted the proposal provided that La Upe was able to fulfill her three requests. The king advised La Upe to come back tomorrow to listen to the princess's first request. After that, La Upe returned to his adoptive parents' home.

In the evening, La Upe could not sleep. He wanted the evening to turn soon into day so that he could hear the princess's first request. In the palace, Princess Andi Tenripada could not sleep either. She was waiting for someone to arrive.

Suddenly the door of the room was opened by a very scary creature. The creature was like a snake, but its head was like a human. The creature asked Princess Andi Tenripada.

"Dear sweet princess, what's the purpose of your telling me to come here this evening? Has anyone bothered you?"

"Right, Petta Tenricaca E Gau'na. This morning a young man came to the king to marry me. He agreed to the terms I submitted to him. What do you think I should do in order for him to lose this contest?"

"Oh, is that why you called me? That's an easy matter. Go later stealthily to the river that runs outside the city. Throw your ring into the river. Tomorrow morning, ask the young man to look for your lost ring. Give a one-full-day limit so that your request cannot be fulfilled.

Princess Andi Tenripada was very happy to hear her teacher's instruction.

"Thanks for your guidance, my teacher. Now I can just calm down."

"Tomorrow evening I will return again, my beautiful princess."

After saying so, the frightening creature left, while Princess Andi Tenripada quietly went out to the river to throw the ring on her finger. Afterward, she returned to the palace without anyone

knowing what she had just done.

The next day, many people had gathered at Datu Makkulau's Palace. They were curious to see a young man who dared to marry the Princess. They thought that the brave young man was surely the son of a great king. However, they were slightly disappointed because the young man was not wearing great clothes although his overall looks and posture were not disappointing.

Calmly La Upe walked over to the chair that was reserved for him. He sat opposite Princess Andi Tenripada. Not long afterward, the princess rose from her seat.

Then, the lady said, "Mr. La Upe, we accept your proposal, but you must meet our three requests. To meet each request, you are given a day and a night. If you cannot fulfill the requests, your head is at stake. Can you still do it?"

La Upe explicitly answered Princess Andi Tenripada's question. "Dear Princess Andi Tenripada, I will not retreat although my life is at stake."

Everyone was amazed to hear his firm answer. People were getting attracted to the authoritative young man.

Subsequently, King Datu Makkulau asked Princess Andi Tenripada, "My daughter Andi Tenripada, Mr. La Upe is ready to

execute a concluded agreement. Now what is your first request?"

Princess Andi Tenripada rose from her seat, then said aloud, "Mr. La Upe, our first request is to find my ring that fell into a river. Within a day and a night from now, you must have handed the ring to me. Now you can go home and come back tomorrow. We look forward to you here."

La Upe was surprised at the unreasonable request. How to get a ring at the bottom of the river, while he did not even know the ring's shape? Feeling sad, La Upe returned to his adoptive parents' home.

The people who were present also returned to their respective homes. They would be present again tomorrow to be witnesses.

In the afternoon, La Upe walked to a river to calm his heart. He sat on the river side thinking of Princess Andi Tenripada's request.

Suddenly he was surprised to hear a voice from the river.

"O my good lord, what on earth do you think? Tell us, maybe we can help you."

La Upe snapped out of his daydream. He did not see anyone around him. He could only see a fish he once helped. La Upe answered the fish's question.

"Ah, fish! I'm really grieving. Princess Andi Tenripada told me to find her ring that fell at the bottom of the river. How will I get that ring while I have never looked at it? Tomorrow, the ring must already be in her hand. If I cannot fulfill her request, my head is at stake. "

"Oh, that's what makes you miserable. You do not have to worry. I am the king of the fish you have ever helped. I will order my people to look for the ring in all the rivers. I hope you wait about an hour."

After saying that, the fish disappeared. La Upe waited an hour. Exactly an hour later, the fish appeared. It brought a beautiful and excellent ring. The ring was decorated with a large diamond and was very expensive. He handed it over to La Upe, saying, "My lord the kind La Upe, this is Princess Andi Tenripada's ring. Accept this ring and submit it to the princess in the morning. "

La Upe was delighted to receive a ring from the fish king. He thanked God the Almighty for having helped him out of trouble.

The next morning, La Upe got up early. Before leaving for the palace, he helped his adoptive parents tidy up the house. Afterward, he went to the palace. In the palace there were already many people, ranging from ordinary people to the palace officials. They would be witnesses of the event that would happen.

La Upe entered the palace so calmly. He was seated right in front

of the king and Princess Andi Tenripada. Princess Andi Tenripada rose from her seat, then said, "Mr. La Upe, are you ready to hand over the ring I asked yesterday?"

All eyes were on where La Upe was sitting. Everyone present was tense. La Upe stood up from his seat. He picked up an object from his pocket, then handed it to Princess Andi Tenripada. The princess was shocked to receive a ring from La Upe which turned out to be hers which was dumped into the river. With a loud voice Princess Andi Tenripada said, "Mr. La Upe, this time you successfully fulfilled our request. Come here tomorrow to listen to our second request. "

"All right, lady. I'm ready to receive your next order," La Upe replied, asking for permission to leave.

News of La Upe's success in meeting Princess Andi Tenripada's challenge spread to the corners of the country. Everyone was talking about that brave young man. So far, participants in this contest had never been able to solve the first challenge. Therefore, people were increasingly enthusiastic to know the next story.

In the evening, La Upe slept soundly. He was not afraid anymore because he believed God would protect him. In the palace, Princess Andi Tenripada was sitting pensively. She was sad because La Upe could fulfill her request. Suddenly a snake-headed creature came to Princess Andi Tenripada.

"Lady, you seem to be grieving. What are you thinking about? "

"Ah, Petta Tenricacca E Gau'na. The young man can fulfill my request. I am afraid the young man can fulfill my next request. If this happens, we will not be able to have more fun and partying. So what should I ask tomorrow that is impossible for him to fulfill?" Asked Princess Andi Tenripada.

"It's an easy matter," Petta Tenricacca E Gau'na replied. "Well, ask the young man for a guava called *jampu barakkae*. The guava tree grows on a mountain called *Bulu Tenriwawo*. The guava tree bears only one fruit. The fruit's price is very high as the price of gem. The person who keeps the fruit will be happy for his or her lifetime. However, no one can pick the fruit because the tree is guarded by wild animals and venomous animals. I'm sure it's unlikely that the young man can take the guava fruit in a day and a night. Now go to bed, you do not have to worry anymore. Tomorrow I'll go back to see you."

After saying that, the strange creature disappeared. Princess Andi Tenripada was able to sleep soundly.

Early in the morning La Upe had appeared before Princess Andi Tenripada. In the palace, many people had gathered to hear Princess Andi Tenripada's second request. La Upe sat in front of Princess Andi Tenripada. Princess Andi Tenripada stood up and said, "Mr. La Upe! Our second request is to find us a guava fruit

called *jampu barakkae*. The guava grows on Mount *Bulu Tenriwawo*. You must have got the guava within a day and night. How? Are you still interested in our challenge?" Asked Princess Andi Tenripada with a triumphant face. She was very confident that La Upe would not be able to fulfill her request.

"I am ready, my lady!" La Upe replied firmly.

Everyone was amazed at Princess Andi Tenripada's impossible request. They never heard the names of the fruit and the mountain the princess said. Neither did La Upe, he never heard the things the Princess mentioned.

Late in the afternoon, La Upe went for a walk to let go of his fatigue. He moved his feet at will. Once tired of walking, he sat on a rock. Suddenly there came twelve monkeys. La Upe was about to run because he thought the monkeys would attack him.

However, he was caught by the monkey leader and the monkey said, "Mr. La Upe, we have been looking for you for a long time. We would like to thank you. If you were not around, our race may have perished and fallen victim to snakes. Fortunately, the snake has been destroyed. Now our kingdom is safe again. I am amazed by your supernatural powers."

"Ah, don't overreact. It happened because of God, while I am just

an ordinary human being like anybody else."

"Then what are you doing here? We noticed that you have since been pensive. What are you thinking?"

"My friend monkey, I am thinking about Princess Andi Tenripada's request. The princess told me to look for the guava that grows on the top of the mountain. If within a day and a night I have not succeeded in bringing her the guava, I will be punished."

"Mr. La Upe, do not lose heart anymore. We will help you. We are residents of *Bulu Tenriwawo*. Now just go home, but do not forget to tell us where you live. Tomorrow morning, before sunrise, the fruit will already be in your hands."

La Upe described the location of his house to the leader of the monkey troop. Gladly, La Upe went home to his adoptive parents' home.

Early in the morning La Upe was already awake. The outside was still dark, but he noticed an object blinding his eyes. He approached the object. When he would take the object, La Upe was surrounded by dozens of monkeys. However, the monkeys did not disturb him. In the center of the circle, stood a white monkey holding a dazzling object. Then, the monkey king said, "My good lord La Upe, this is the *jampu barakkae* fruit. Accept this fruit and give it to the princess! "

La Upe picked up the guava and thanked the monkey king and his followers. He wrapped the *barakkae* guava with a handkerchief to keep it from disappearing. The monkey king and his followers returned to the forest, while La Upe returned to his home.

Before the call to dawn prayer, La Upe was awake again. He was getting ready to go to the palace, he could not wait to meet with Princess Andi Tenripada.

That day, the palace was filled with people who wanted to see La Upe. They wondered if La Upe could fulfill the princess's second request. Soon La Upe came in. All eyes were on him. La Upe walked calmly to the seat provided for him. Then, the princess rose from her seat.

With a loud voice the princess said, "Mr. La Upe! Did you get the *jampu barakkae* we asked for? "

Everyone looked intently at where La Upe was sitting. They wanted to know what was going on. Calmly, La Upe rose from his seat. He took the package from his pocket. Then, the package was handed over to Princess Andi Tenripada. Slowly the package was opened.

Suddenly everyone closed their eyes. They could not bear the glitter of the gem. Everyone was struck by the beauty of the *jampu barakkae*. Princess Andi Tenripada was no less shocked, she did not think La Upe could fulfill her request.

"Mr. La Upe, for the second time you can fulfill our request. Come back tomorrow to listen to our third request. If you can grant this last request, I am willing to be your wife. "

Everyone expected La Upe to pass the next test including the king. He desperately hoped La Upe could take his place because he had no son.

La Upe's success in fulfilling Princess Tenripada's second request became the talk of the people. He even became the people's idol.

At night, Princess Tenripada could not sleep. She worried that La Upe would be able to fulfill her last request. She summoned the strange creature to ask for help again.

"My lord Petta Tenricacca E Gau'na, what should we do then? If he can fulfill my request, I must be his wife. If that happens, I cannot hang out with you anymore. "

"Ah, that's impossible," said the strange creature with his arrogance.

"How could it be impossible? It is clearly proven that he can fulfill my two wishes."

"Just tell him, ask for the body part (scales) of Petta Tenricacca E Gau'na. I'm sure the young man will not be able to fulfill your request because no creature in the world can defeat your teacher

except a bird. The bird is called Petta Manurung E.” After saying so, the strange creature disappeared.

The next day, very early in the morning, La Upe was already in the palace. He sat opposite Princess Andi Tenripada and the king.

Princess Andi Tenripada said aloud, "Mr. La Upe, our last request is to bring us the body part of Petta Tenricacca E Gau'na. "

Everyone who heard the princess's request was shocked. They believed La Upe would not succeed because Petta Tenricacca E Gau'na the Princess meant was a cruel magic demon. Many of the people and sons of the kings had fallen victim to him. However, no one dared to fight him. Let alone fighting him, even of hearing his name they became terrified.

The only person who was not surprised to hear the name of Petta Tenricacca E Gau'na was La Upe. He did not know and never heard of the evil spirit. He was also not afraid of the strange demon. He only feared God the Almighty.

In the afternoon, La Upe strolled into town. He wanted to find comfort because he had not found a way out to defeat Petta Tenricacca E Gau'na. In the center of town, he sat beneath a leafy tree. That was where he unwound. Suddenly, he heard a voice from above the tree where he sheltered.

"O good La Upe, what are you doing here and why are you so

pensive?"

La Upe looked up at the tree. He saw a bird he had helped.

"Ah, bird, I am sad. Princess Andi Tenripada asked me to defeat Petta Tenricacca E Gau'na, while I've just heard of the name."

"Sir, do not grieve. I will help you. I am a bird called Petta Manurung E you ever helped. You wait here, I will hand you what Princess Andi Tenripada asks."

No long afterward, Petta Manurung E had returned with a package of snake scales. He handed the package to La Upe.

"Give it to the princess. Do not grieve anymore. Believe God will help the kind-hearted person. "

La Upe took the package happily. He wanted to say thank you, but the bird was gone. The next day after breakfast, La Upe went to the palace. People were eager to see La Upe. "Do you think he can get Petra Tenricacca E Gau'na's body part?" One of the visitors asked. "How could it be? Nobody has ever been able to beat him," replied the old man who stood at the front.

"Who knows he can meet the princess's request."

"Right, but this request is the most difficult."

"It's too bad that he should get a severe punishment just for not

being able to meet the Princess's last request."

"Sssh ..., do not be fussed! Look that the young man confidently meet the king and the princess!"

La Upe went inside the palace. Calmly La Upe walked to the seat provided for him. His eyes fixed on the beautiful princess. The figure of a beautiful girl who had once been in his dream flashed in his mind. Suddenly La Upe was surprised, unexpectedly the princess was standing in front of him.

"Mr. La Upe, we hope you will give us what we have asked for."

La Upe did not answer Princess Andi Tenripada's request. He was still stunned to see the girl's beauty.

"Sir!" Said Princess Andi Tenripada again interrupting La Upe's reverie.

"Is this what you want?" Asked La Upe as he handed a package to Princess Andi Tenripada.

Princess Andi Tenripada accepted the package with her heart pounding. Slowly she opened the package. Inside it were the scales belonging to Petta Tenricacca E Gau'na, her very powerful teacher.

"My lord!" Cried Princess Tenripada. Suddenly she felt dizzy and weak.

"Princess, princess, wake up!" The king and his ministers alternately called Princess Andi Tenripada's name. However, Princess Andi Tenripada was not aware yet. Everyone present was surprised and astonished to see the Princess's condition. They were waiting for what happened.

Not long afterward, the princess rose again from her seat and said, "Mr. La Upe! Three times you have fulfilled our requests. According to the agreement we've made, you have the right to be my husband. "

"Thank you for your willingness to be my future wife," said La Upe.

Happily, the king said, "My beloved people, today, we should be happy because the princess has got the young man of her choice."

That very day, the king had a very lively party. The people helped organize and enliven the party. All were happy and worked voluntarily. The whole city was decorated with a variety of beautiful banners.

La Upe was given beautiful and expensive clothes. He did not forget to use *I Ceningrara*, the beautifier ointment. La Upe was ready to be introduced to the people and the dignitaries of the country.

Before the event began, a servant came to La Upe saying, "Sir,

Princess Andi Tenripada called you!"

"What is wrong? Where is she now?" La Upe asked in amazement.

"There's something to talk about. Now she's in her room."

La Upe went into Princess Andi Tenripada's room. He was surprised there was no one in the room.

"Princess, where are you?" La Upe summoned Princess Andi Tenripada repeatedly as he searched her to the corner of the room. He did not succeed in finding his future wife. Suddenly, La Upe was startled by the presence of a large and venomous snake who could speak. The snake was ready to pounce on him, but La Upe could swiftly ward off the snake's attack.

"Come on, if you dare to oppose me!" Challenged La Upe while twisting his body. He was bracing himself by positioning his legs.

"Eeehh ..., how dare you challenge me! Soon I will crush your body!" Said the snake as he poked his head toward La Upe. La Upe quickly avoided the snake's attack. He ran behind the door.

The snake did not want his quarry to escape, he pursued La Upe. Suddenly La Upe felt his hand was bleeding.

"Look out, you!" Said La Upe furiously.

La Upe who already felt that his life was threatened, took out the stick *La Mappatunru*. The stick was struck down on the snake's body, but the snake fought back. La Upe did not want to give up, he hit the snake with his stick repeatedly until the snake was in pain. Suddenly, the snake disappeared from his gaze and was replaced by a woman dressed in black. She moaned in pain, holding her back. La Upe did not believe what he saw. He was not aware that he had beaten an innocent woman instead of a snake. "Take my blow!"

"Ooooh, pardon, pardon!" Shouted the snake begging forgiveness.

"I'm sorry, I do not know if you're human," La Upe said again. He did not think of the incident at all.

The woman did not say a word. La Upe did not recognize her because her face was covered in messy hair.

La Upe felt sorry for the woman's condition, then he took out the ointment and rubbed it against her back. Something strange happened, the clothes worn by the snake were stripped off like a snake peeling off its skin. Then the woman disappeared to be replaced by a beautiful princess, namely Princess Andi Tenripada.

"My lord, I am indebted to you. You have released me from the influence of magic cast by Petta Tenricacca E Gau'na. For years, I've been trapped in the magic of a demonic snake. "

"Why did that happen?" La Upe asked in amazement.

The princess began to tell the story. She said, "At first when I was playing by the river, I accidentally stepped on the snake's young. Seeing me terrified, the guards caught the snake's young and beat them to death. Suddenly, a big snake came pecking on me. It was angry to see its young die." Princess Andi Tenripada paused for a moment to take a deep breath and then continued the story again.

"At that time, I have tried to apologize, but the big snake would not forgive me. It demanded that a life be repaid with a life. It promised not to kill me if I could fulfill its request. "

"What's that request?" Asked La Upe curiously.

"I have to provide blood every full moon," replied Princess Andi Tenripada.

"And you agree?" Asked La Upe again.

"I do not know what else to do," said Princess Andi Tenripada bowing her head discouragingly.

"How did you get that blood?" La Upe asked more curiously.

"I got it from pets, like goats and cows."

"Apparently, the big snake stroke has hypnotized me. Unbeknown to me, I have done whatever the great snake wants. "

"I am grateful that you have escaped the influence of the magic. The demon must be destroyed."

"True, I believe that if it is still alive, our people may perish. It is not just a snake, but a snake called Petta Tenricacca E Gau'na."

"Now, you do not have to worry anymore. I will always be on your side," La Upe said. "I also swear to always be faithful and devoted to you," said Princess Andi Tenripada. Finally, La Upe and Princess Andi Tenripada married. The marriage was then followed by the coronation ceremony appointing La Upe to become the king.