

“Tilin, the Rice Bird”

Name: _____ Date: _____

One day when a mother was preparing rice to cook for supper, her little girl ran up to her and cried:

“Oh, Mother, give me some of the raw rice to eat.”

“No,” said the mother, “it is not good for you to eat until it is cooked. Wait for supper.”

But the little girl kept asking until the mother cried:

“Be still. It is not good for you to talk so much!”

When she had finished preparing the rice, she emptied the rice into her basket and covered it. Then she went to the spring to get water.

The little girl liked going to the spring with her mother to play in the cool water while her mother filled the jars. But this time she did not go. As soon as the woman was out of sight, she ran to the basket of rice. She moved the cover and reached down to take a handful. As she was reaching, she fell into the basket. The cover fell back on top of the basket.

When the mother returned to the house, she heard a bird crying, “King, king, nik! nik! nik!” She listened carefully. The sound seemed to come from the basket, so she removed the cover. To her surprise, out hopped a little brown rice bird. As it flew away, it kept calling back:

“Goodbye, Mother; goodbye, Mother. You would not give me any rice to eat.”

Adapted from Cole, Mary Cook. “Tilin, the Rice Bird.” Philippine Folk Tales. Chicago: A.C. McClurg & Co., 1916. Project Gutenberg. Web.
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