



Where
Oh Where
Did the
Moon
Go ?

by Joem Antonio

Gibo, Coco, and Nel sat on the beach outside their village, watching the sea under the moonlit sky. No clouds were in sight, just the moon in all its fullness. Back then, way back then, the moon had always been full. The waves crashed rhythmically against the shore. The horizon was nothing but sea, except for a little island directly underneath the moon.

“I bet I can throw a pebble farther than any of you,” said Gibo. He picked up a pebble and threw it as far as he could. The pebble bounced against the surface of the water and

Skip skip skip skip skip skip...

The three friends looked on as the pebble skipped on and disappeared beyond the horizon.

“Beat that,” Gibo said.

“Is that it?” replied Coco. He picked up a pebble and threw it as far as he could. The pebble bounced against the surface of the water and...

Skip skip skip skip skip skip...

The three friends looked on as the pebble skipped on and disappeared beyond the horizon...

and hit Gibo at the back of his head a few minutes later.

“It can’t get any farther than that, Nel.” Coco said.

“Wanna bet?” replied Nel. He picked up a pebble and threw it as far as he could. The pebble bounced against the surface of the water and....

BOUNCE!

Flew high up in the sky and hit the moon.

“Far enough for you?” asked Nel.

“That’s higher, not farther,” replied Coco.

“What’s the difference?” asked Gibo.

It was then that they heard a big CRASH and everything went dark.

The people in the village started lighting up their torches. “Where did the moon go?” everyone asked.

“Uh oh,” said Nel.

“We’re in trouble,” said Gibo.

“Let’s go then and put the moon back,” said Coco.

“Race you to the moon!” shouted Gibo, as he jumped into the sea.

“Last one is an old *pawikan!*” shouted Coco, as he jumped into the sea.

“That’s definitely not me!” shouted Nel, as he jumped into the sea.

They all made it to the island where the moon had crashed. There they found the moon at the foot of a hill. In many pieces.

“You were the one who hit the moon. It’s your fault,” said Gibo to Nel.

“You were the one who challenged me. It’s your fault,” said Nel to Coco.

“You were the one who thought of this game. It’s your fault,” said Coco to Gibo.

And so the three argued until Nel finally said, “The moon won’t go back by itself.”

Coco nodded, “We’ll have to put it back ourselves.”

Gibo agreed, “We’ll just help each other out.”

Gibo, Coco, and Nel took turns climbing up the hill and putting the moon back in its place in the sky, piece by piece.

It took them many nights to put every single piece back in the sky.

Far from the island, across the sea, people wondered where the moon went.

Then they saw a sliver in the sky.

And the sliver grew thicker.

And thicker.

Until, after many nights, the moon became full once more.

“Whew!” said Gibo.

“That was tiring,” said Coco.

“Zzzzz! Ngork!” snored Nel.

After many nights of lifting the pieces of the moon, the three friends fell asleep. They fell asleep for many days.

But the moon was already broken and the pieces would not stick. One by one, the pieces fell again.

Far from the island, across the sea, people danced under the light of the full moon.

Then they saw the full moon grow thinner.

And thinner.

Until it became a sliver.

Until the sliver disappeared.

“Where did the moon go?” people asked. Again.

When Gibo, Coco, and Nel woke up, they saw the pieces of the moon at the foot of the hill again.

“We’re back to where we started,” said Gibo.

“Time to put the moon back,” said Coco.

“The one who backs out is an old *pawikan*,” said Nel.

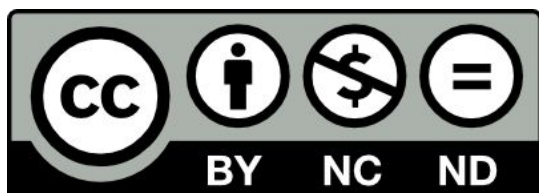
Again, Gibo, Coco, and Nel took turns climbing up the hill, putting the moon back in its place in the sky, piece by piece. It took them many nights to put every single piece back in the sky. Then they'd fall asleep and, piece by piece, the moon fell again, until the friends woke up to put it back up.

Far from the island, across the sea, people saw the moon wax and wane, month after month, until they stopped asking where the moon keeps going.

And Gibo, Coco, and Nel keep putting the moon back, month after month.

And if the three friends haven't given up trying to fix the moon, we'll still see the moon wax and wane even today.

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