



# The Little Manobo Guardian

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Deep in the emerald mountains, Luwa stands among the towering trees, her eyes closed as she listens to the whispering leaves and the melodic songs of hidden birds. The morning light filters through the canopy in soft, dusty beams, highlighting the rich textures of the lush forest.



A vibrant tangkulo bird with feathers as red as embers flutters down to perch on Luwa's shoulder. The girl's face lights up with a gentle smile as the tiny creature chirps a secret melody into her ear, signaling that it has something important to show her.



The bird leads Luwa to a hidden clearing where the vibrant green has faded to a sickly yellow and the plants droop toward the parched earth. Luwa kneels by the quiet riverbank, her expression filled with worry as she touches the wilting leaves of a once-strong fern.



Luwa gazes in sorrow at a massive, ancient tree that has been felled, its thick trunk lying across the forest floor like a fallen giant. The tangkulo bird circles the stump anxiously, its bright red wings a sharp contrast against the dark, damp earth and the shadows of the woods.



Remembering the wisdom of her elders, Luwa stands tall with a look of fierce determination in her dark eyes. She places a hand over her heart, vowing to find a way to heal the forest and protect its sacred life, proving that her courage is much bigger than her size.



Under the shade of the canopy, Luwa carefully arranges smooth stones, vibrant leaves, and clear river water in a sacred circle on the ground. As she whispers a gentle prayer to the spirits of the forest, a warm, golden breeze begins to dance around her like a protective embrace.



Following the tangkulo bird's guidance, Luwa discovers a trail of small, muddy footprints leading away from the clearing and toward the water. She follows the path through the ferns, realizing that the person who hurt the tree might have made a mistake rather than acting out of malice.



By the edge of the rushing river, Luwa finds a young boy sitting on a mossy rock, sobbing into his hands with a small wooden axe resting at his feet. She sits beside him quietly, offering a look of compassion and understanding as he explains his wish to build a toy boat.



Together, Luwa and the boy dig into the soft earth to plant a delicate new seedling exactly where the old tree once stood. The tangkulo bird watches from a nearby branch, chirping a song of hope as the two children work side by side to mend the broken forest.



As the sun dips below the mountain peaks, the entire forest glows with a magical, warm light and the river hums a song of gratitude. Luwa and the boy stand together as the new guardians of the wild, their hearts full of peace and the enduring spirit of the Manobo people.