

# ODON THE GIANT

## A tale from the Philippines

There once lived a giant named Odon. He was a mean fellow, always stomping and crushing anyone who was smaller than him. This amounted to just about everyone; people, animals, and insects alike. Unfortunately, no one was able to stop him.

Eventually a small picoy bird hatched a plan. He enlisted the assistance of four small creatures; a mosquito, a bedbug, a crab and an eel. It took almost a full day for the five companions to reach Odon's house. They arrived at sunset. Fortunately for them Odon was still out stomping and crushing. So, the bird, mosquito, bedbug, crab and eel worked their way up a bamboo ladder to get into the giant's home.

Once inside, the bedbug got into Odon's bed. The mosquito rested itself quietly on the back of Odon's rocking chair. The crab jumped into Odon's washbasin. The eel curled up by the front door; and the picoy bird settled itself into the cool ashes near the edge of the fireplace. Each small creature waited

patiently in their spot.

They didn't have to wait long. They heard the giant coming home long before he got there. Once inside, Odon sat on his rocking chair where he let out a giant sigh. He was happy with his day's adventures. Thanks to the five small creatures, Odon's contentment did not last long.

Almost immediately the mosquito began to buzz around Odon's head. First he buzzed in one ear, then the other. Back and forth he went, tormenting the giant. Odon tried to slap away the pesky mosquito but only managed to hit himself in the head.

Odon became so frustrated with the mosquito that he jumped up out of the rocking chair and ran to his bed where he closed the mosquito netting tightly around his sleeping area. Now it was the bedbug's turn to torment Odon. Soon the giant was squirming around in his bed trying to get away from whatever was biting him and making him itch. Because he could not, the giant got up and ran back to the other room by the fireplace. He wanted to light a fire in hopes of seeing what was going on in his home.

As soon as the giant leaned down by the fireplace, the picoy bird began flapping its wings. This caused ashes to fly up into the giant's eyes. As you can imagine, Odon was not

happy. He practically flew over to the wash basin to plunge his head into the water to clear the ash out of his eyes. At this point the crab took over. He grabbed Odon's lip and squeezed it hard.

Odon couldn't believe what was happening. He was convinced that his house was haunted. He ran to the door where the slippery eel was waiting. As soon as Odon stepped on the eel's tail, he flew up high into the air and then came down with a mighty crash. People for miles around heard that crash.

At this point, Odon, the giant ran away from his house as fast as his legs would carry him. He has not been seen since. And so it was that the small creatures of the land were no longer tormented by Odon the giant.

Adapted by Kathleen Simonetta.

Inspired by the following tale:

"Odon the Giant" found in, Nursery Tales Around the World, selected and retold by Judy Sierra. Illustrated by Stefano Vitale; NY: Clarion Books, c1996, pp 53-55

