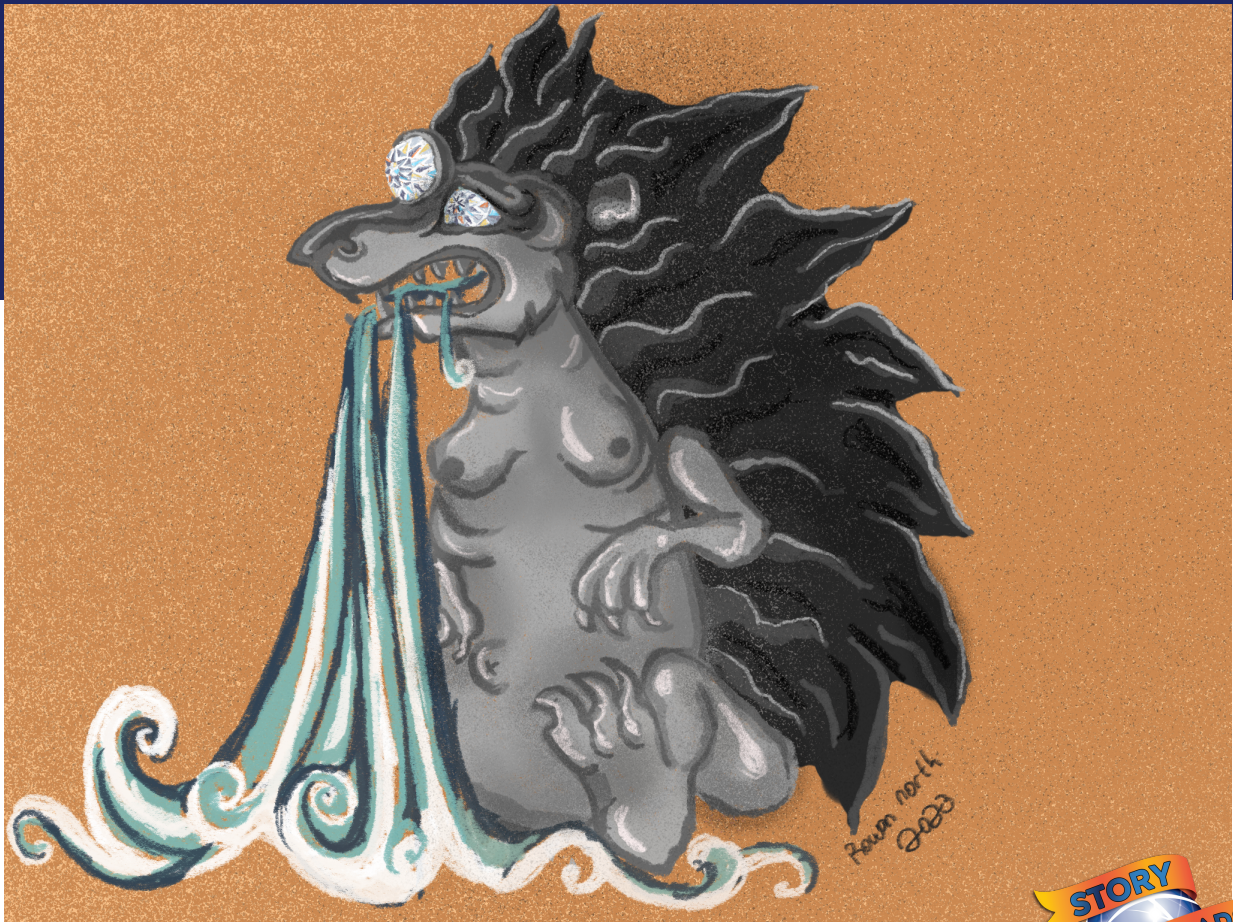


The Hedgehog Statue

Indonesia
Asia



COMMISSIONED ART CREATED BY ROWAN NORTH
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STORY OF THE MONTH - NOVEMBER 2023 - STORY CROSSROADS - STORYCROSSROADS.ORG

A farmer worked in his fields for so long that he was too exhausted to go home to rest. He looked for a place to lay down. As he sat down, something caught his eye that shone. No longer feeling tired, he walked towards the light. It was a hedgehog statue diamonds for eyes and another diamond in the center of its forehead.

The statue was small enough to carry home though still large enough to cause the farmer to stop and catch his breath. When the farmer's wife saw the statue, she wondered at the craftsmanship. She thought it best to sell the statue at the marketplace the next day.

While they slept, the farmer had a dream that a hedgehog came to him. The hedgehog pleaded to stay with the farmer. The hedgehog said, "If you stroke my head and have a wish, then speak aloud this prayer to start the wish. Then, say a different prayer to stop the wish. Always remember these words."

When the farmer told his wife about the dream, she wanted to see if the hedgehog statue would really grant wishes. The farmer stroked the statue's head and spoke the words shared in his dream to start the wish. As the farmer thought of what to ask, he looked at the empty containers that used to hold rice. It had been a long time since those containers were full. The farmer asked for rice. The diamond eyes shone brighter. Out of the statue's mouth, rice poured out. The wife rushed for the containers and laughed when rice continued to spill forth.

The farmer, not wanting the rice to go to waste, spoke the prayer to end the wish. No more rice trickled from the statue's mouth. The farmer and his wife asked for other supplies that they needed. Finally, they asked for gems and riches to save for the future. Within moments, the farmer and his wife became wealthy.

They turned their hearts to their neighbors as the farmer and his wife were not the only ones who had struggled for years. Despite being generous, one neighbor became jealous. He devised a plan to steal the hedgehog statue from them.

This neighbor asked questions of the farmer and his wife on how the statue worked. They told of the special prayer to start the wish. With this knowledge, the neighbor snuck in their home as they slept. He ran so fast from their home that he became thirsty. When he was far enough away, he set the statue down and spoke the prayer to start the wish. He then asked for water.

No sooner had he spoken these words when water gushed from the hedgehog's mouth. Faster and faster the water flowed. When the man quenched his thirst, he told the statue to stop. Still, the water rushed out. He called out in fear. Some people gathered. The man, not wanting to be accused of anything, ran away and was never seen again.

Others chose to run and warn the others of the water's increasing size. Some people, upon learning of the phenomenon, watched what formed. They saw that the water created a pond that then spilled into a river. As for the farmer and his wife, they continued to live with prosperity. While they could have ended the wish, they saw it was more important for that river to continue to provide hope for the struggling farms for many generations.

The water flows to this day. The people named it Hedgehog River (Sungai Landak) found in West Kalimantan, Indonesia.

