

The Tabfiad

derived from the narrative of
Arfonso Nacleo

“The Ifiallig are my brethren, for we are from Fiallig,” so declare the Isachanga because long, long ago, the ancient Ifiallig came to Masigi and Sachanga to flee from the Tabfiad.

The Tabfiad is a gigantic snake with legs. Nobody knows for certain where it comes from. But if one were to follow the trails it left behind, one would think it possible the Tabfiad came from Kadaclan. To this day, the path the Tabfiad crawled upon could be seen along the mountainside. The Tabfiad followed the river from Kadaclan to Fiallig, passing by Lias along the way. Many Ifiallig were devoured when the Tabfiad came to Fiallig.

Those who feared the Tabfiad fled for Masigi, while those brave enough decided to remain in order to capture and kill the Tabfiad. Those who remained in Fiallig conferred at the *ator* and devised a trap for the Tabfiad.

They gathered wicker shavings and cotton fiber. They wrapped the wicker shavings with the cotton fibers and placed a runt at the center.

Once the bait was set in place, they set the cotton fibers on fire and placed it by the riverbank. The runt yelped and was heard by the Tabfiad, which then charged and engulfed the sacrifice. So huge was the Tabfiad’s gaping maw that in one mouthful it was able to swallow the runt. When the conflagration reached the wicker shavings, a blazing inferno came to life within the beast’s belly. The Tabfiad writhed about in pain and convulsed to its death, its burnt corpse hardening into rock.

Although they had managed to slay the Tabfiad, the Ifiallig were worried that it might have a mate and they feared its vengeance. So, they followed their kin to Sachanga. Before they left, they buried their jars in the ground. As a landmark, they planted *chongra* on top of the site in the event of their return.

And though people no longer dwell where the Tabfiad once wreaked havoc, these jars could still be unearthed at that spot where the rivers crossed. To this very day, by the river at Kufiang lie the blackened stone remains of the Tabfiad.