



Lola's Bahay Kubo

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Level 2

I dedicated this book to Sam & Abi, who love adventures and stories....



Abi was a little girl with wide curious eyes and a heart full of wonder. This Easter holiday, she wasn't going to the beach or a theme park. Instead, she was going somewhere special—*Owakan*, a quiet village in *Jimalalud, Negros Oriental*, the hometown of her beloved **yaya**.

She traveled with her **Mommy**, her **Kuya**, and her yaya's whole family: **Tita, Tito**, and her three daughters—**Ate Jena, Ate Jeje, and si Joe**.

They travelled around four hours using Ceres bus, then climbing the hill using ***habal-habal***. ***Habal-habal*** is motorcycle taxi commonly used in the Philippines, especially in rural or mountainous areas where roads can be narrow, steep, or unpaved. When they arrived, Abi saw a *bahay kubo*—a small, cozy house made of bamboo and nipa palm. “Welcome to Lola and Lolo’s home!” Tita smiled.





The next morning, Abi woke to the sound of roosters. She watched as Tito gently caught a **native chicken**. “This will be for lunch,” he said. Abi was amazed—they didn’t buy food from a store. They raised it!

Later, she followed Tita to the garden. “This is **sayote**, and here is **malunggay**,” Tita explained. “Very healthy. Good for the body.” **Sayote** is chayote and **malunggay** is moringa.

“Do they grow by themselves?” Abi asked. “We help them grow, but yes—they love our soil and sun,” Tita said, handing her a basket. Abi helped pick vegetables, feeling like a little farmer.



That afternoon, they ate lunch under the shade of the trees. The rice was from their own harvest. The food tasted fresh and full of love.



After lunch, everyone walked to the **river**. “Let’s ***ligo*** here!” shouted Ate Jeje. ***Ligo*** is taking a bath in Bisaya language.

Abi hesitated. She’d never taken a bath in a river. But the water looked so clear and cool. Splash! Soon, they were all laughing and playing.



“Look there!” Kuya Sam pointed. A **karabao** stood by the water, and on its back sat a **bird**. “They help each other,” he explained. “The bird eats the bugs on the karabao’s back.”

“That’s **mutualism**!” Abi remembered from science class. “Like teamwork in nature!”

She looked around. Everything here was working together—people, animals, and plants. It felt peaceful.



Each night, they gathered outside the bahay kubo. Lolo told stories about the old days. Lola taught them **Bisaya** words.

“Say ‘Maayong buntag,’” Lola smiled.

“Maayong buntag!” Abi shouted, proud of herself.

They also prayed together, thanking God for family and food. Abi learned that religion here was part of daily life—simple, sincere, and filled with kindness.



As the holiday ended, Abi hugged everyone tightly. “I don’t want to leave,” she whispered. “You’ll always have a home here, Abi,” Lola said. “Family is not just by blood—but by love.” In her heart, Abi knew she had found something special. She may be a foreigner, but in Owakan, she discovered a second home—a place where science lived in nature, where culture was shared with joy, and where hospitality made everyone belong.

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(English)

This story follows Abi, a 7-year-old girl who spends her Easter holiday in Owakan, Jimalalud, Negros Oriental, staying with her yaya's family in a traditional Filipino household. As a foreigner, Abi is touched by the warmth and love she experiences, and for the first time, she feels like she has found a second family in the heart of the Philippines. Her adventure begins in a simple bahay kubo on a hill, where life moves gently and food is grown in the backyard. She discovers the beauty of living close to nature—catching native chickens, picking vegetables like sayote and malunggay, and taking refreshing baths in the river. Through it all, Abi learns about Filipino culture, language, and faith.

This is a Level 2 book for children who recognize familiar words and can read new words with help.



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