

Kulintang

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In Mindanao, a young girl named Amira discovered an old Kulintang, a row of bronze gongs. When she struck them, their voices shimmered like stars: “I was once the heart of gatherings,” the Kulintang whispered. “I brought villages together at weddings, feasts and parades. Long ago, it was mostly women who played me with movements as graceful as water flowing in streams. Today, both women and men share my songs, and I’m glad for this”.

Amira practiced each day. Soon, the whole village gathered. The elders remembered how the Kulintang once carried messages across the mountains, because there were no telephones, no smartphones and the

messages were sent through the rhythm of the kulintang, and children used to dance...But the Kulintang sighed: “Then, many forgot me to sing and listen to foreign songs, especially modern American songs”.

Then Amira heard joyful news: “But... in faraway lands, famous musicians and professors have carried Kulintang music across the world! Students everywhere, even those not Filipino, are learning kulintang music! They brought kulintang back home and many are learning to play kulintang now!”

The Kulintang’s gongs played proudly, ting, tang, tung! and Amira promised: “I too will keep your voice alive.” And so the music could be listened to again, uniting people near and far.