

# Wife Tricks Husband into Going Fishing

(as narrated by Wumbein in Chakping on 16/03/2022)

## Introduction

The following story presents a wife who takes advantage of her husband's blindness to get him to go fishing. According to the story, she lies that her genitalia has fallen into the river; so the husband goes to help search for it but ends up helping her to catch a lot of fish.

## Story

'My story is as follows:' Wumbein announces and proceeds thus:

*Ujoon* once got married. Unfortunately, at a point in the marriage, his wife was reluctant to sleep with him. She therefore told him a lie – which was that her genitalia had fallen into the river. On hearing this, the blind man went together with his wife to search for the genitalia in the river. Now, their *modus operandi* was that they were going to scoop as much water as possible from the river and splash it on the riverbanks. Hopefully, in one of the scoops, they would scoop out the missing genitalia.

When they got to the river, the woman stepped into the water and started scooping the water while singing as follows:

### Likpakpaln transcription

Pii pii chala,  
Pii chala.  
(5x)

### English translation

It's white everywhere,  
White everywhere.

But the husband got impatient and told the wife to step out since she wasn't scooping faster. On stepping into the water himself, he started scooping amid singing:

### Likpakpaln transcription

Dan buka buka.  
Dan bulgböö.  
(4x)

### English translation

Come in large numbers.  
Come in multitudes.

He soon got tired, so the wife took over and broke into her song again:

**Likpakpaln transcription**

Pii pii chala,  
Pii chala.  
(6x)

**English translation**

It's white everywhere,  
White everywhere.

There was still no luck. The woman got exhausted, so the husband took over again:

**Likpakpaln transcription**

Dan buka buka.  
Dan bulgboo.  
(5x)

**English translation**

Come in large numbers.  
Come in multitudes.

After a while, the wife told the husband to step out because he wasn't scooping fast enough. The man stepped out and the woman began scooping amid singing again:

**Likpakpaln transcription**

Pii pii chala,  
Pii chala.  
(4x)

**English translation**

It's white everywhere,  
White everywhere.

There was still nothing to show for their efforts. So the man took over again when the wife got tired. Now, unknown to the man, the wife's genitalia had not fallen into the river. The woman merely tricked him so that they would go fishing and catch fish for cooking. So ignorantly, the man stepped into the water again amid singing:

**Likpakpaln transcription**

Dan buka buka.  
Dan bulgboo.  
(4x)

**English translation**

Come in large numbers.  
Come in multitudes.

The river was soon empty, leaving all the fish at the mercy of the man and his wife. The two caught as many fish as they could. When they had caught enough, the wife told her husband that she had found her genitalia.

*'Maatiin muun ki lijool sakpiln na,'* Wumbein concludes his story.

## A Glossary of Likpakpaln Words

### **maatiin muun ki lijool sakpiln na:**

translated as, 'May my story grow as tall as a high mountain.' This is a shortened, atypical version of the standard conclusion, '*Maatiin gur ki m muun ke n-yaaja aagbem na*' (translated as, 'May my story diminish while I grow as tall as my grandfather's Kapok tree'). This standard conclusion is one of the numerous ways in which a Konkomba storyteller can end his/her story. The ending and its numerous variants suggest that Konkombas believe that storytelling (or entertainment in general) has health benefits, especially healthy physical growth. The association of storytelling with physical growth is so entrenched in the Konkomba belief system that it is even believed that when a child engages in storytelling in the daytime – for Konkomba storytelling sessions are held normally in the evenings after supper – he or she will suffer stunted growth. However, the above storyteller's conclusion or signing off statement clearly deviates from this communal belief when its focus is on the growth of the storyteller's tale rather than his own physical growth. This points to the flexibility inherent in the Konkomba storytelling culture – one must not always conform to normative structures

### **ujoon:**

Likpakpaln word for a blind person. Ujoon is one of the gender-neutral nouns in Likpakpaln. The gender of a subject (or a referent) is often derived contextually.