



## The Lost Journal of Alejandro Pardo: Creatures and Beasts of Philippine Folklore

*Budjette Tan, David Hontiveros, Kajo Baldisimo (Illustrator), Bow Guerrero (Illustrator), Mervin Malonzo (Illustrator)*

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To Whom it may concern:

There are strange doors that, once opened, can never be closed again.

Secrets and mysteries that crowd the shadows, that wail and scream at the coming of the light.

Things that were once spoken of in wary whispers by those wise enough to fear the dark.

Things called kapre and malakat, tikbalang and batibat, tiyanak and mandurugo.

There was once a man who studied these mysteries, who catalogued and chronicled the truth of their existences.

His name was Alejandro Pardo, and this book is a strange door that contains words and pages from his writings, a strange door that leads to the truths behind the layers of rumor and misconception.

Are you ready to open it?

## **The Lost Journal of Alejandro Pardo: Creatures and Beasts of Philippine Folklore Details**

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## **From Reader Review The Lost Journal of Alejandro Pardo: Creatures and Beasts of Philippine Folklore for online ebook**

### **Aviecayl Uy says**

**"The Lost Journal of Alejandro Pardo: Creatures & Beasts of Philippine Folklore"** by *Budjette Tan, Kajo Baldisimo, Bow Guerrero, David Honiveros and Mervin Malonzo* has been a fascinating read about the "truths" about creatures that we thought we already knew. The illustrations match their respective descriptions, which makes the book more interesting to devour. It has been an informative read that I annotated every page. Recommended for readers who would like to read about Philippine mythological creatures!

My actual rating for this book is **4.25/5 stars**.

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### **Dominic Mendoza says**

This was a exciting Book. I would recommend it my friends.

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### **Tays says**

I have to say that they did well with the target audience in which they had originally intended on reaching to. But to cite differences, unlike the young adult books where they try to lead you in a fantastic adventure of the main character - this book tried to ward away from it. They did this in an informative approach where we have a main character getting his hands on a lost journal, or chronicle as our speaker likes to call it. From there, we are being taken into an encyclopedic writing of the beasts that composes the Philippine folklore. We get introduced to a list of local cryptids one by one and along with it, the mystery of these documents from Alejandro Pardo that our speaker gets a hold of. As much as I like to tell you more about where it goes, I really don't want to ruin the whole book for you. So you might as well just get it if it somehow manages to poke your interest.

As for the art style, the artists I think did well in accurately depicting the creatures they're meant to describe. Away from his signature black and white art styles in Trese, Kajo did well in this. Likewise to Mervin Malonzo, even without his painting like art signature from Tabi Po. Now I can't say much about Bow Guerrero's work since this is my first time owning a book that he was a part of, so I can't really put judgment on how his art style is naturally. Never the less, all the artists managed to meet halfway and somehow it came up a little more fetching in terms of all the images they tried to convey with all the imaginative descriptions their writers put up within this universe. All the same, the layout for this book was done magnificently and well rounded up and that - I personally believed is what I fancied the most out of this book. The sequencing was done in an orderly fashion and systematic all at the same time.

It's a good informative book for the youth who haven't had some good touch with the local folklore. A good book targeted to the younger audience. A good little scare for the kids, I must say. Especially when those kids have a very pragmatic imagination inside their little heads that is.

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### **Otakore Literantadodist says**

This book has a very good illustration of cryptids and other unnatural beings of the Philippines.

To read my complete review for this book, just follow this link.

Thanks!

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### **Randy says**

A fun take on Philippine lower mythology.

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### **Jobert says**

Okay lang.

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### **Gieliza says**

5 stars for the art, 2 stars for the text. Overall = 4 stars (because this is a bestiary type of book so I put more weight on the art).

The art is superb, no question about that. But the text was bland. This could've worked well enough as a bestiary type of book but for some reason, the creators thought it would be cool to frame it as historical journal by the eponymous Alejandra Pardo. I mean, if you're gonna put in a protagonist, at least make him relatable if not likeable and Alejandro Pardo sounded like a self-obsessed and self-serving jerk. I wanted to smack him. And really, I wouldn't care if he was eaten by a ta-awi. There was the bit at the end that hints there were dark things afoot haunting the men who discovered the journal and decided to publish their find so I'm guessing there will be more of the framing story in the next volumes.

Still, if you're interested in Philippine folklore, I would recommend this for the excellent artwork. Some prints from this book deserve to be framed, they were that good! It was really nice to see good artistic illustrations of all these local folk creatures. I would keep this volume for that alone. Kudos to all the artists who worked on this: Mervin Malonzo, Kajo Baldisimo and Bow Guerrero.

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### **Chesca says**

RTC!

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### **Trevor says**

This is a collection of accounts of Philippine mythological creatures, loosely tied together by a fictional framing structure. It does a lot of work trying to make the myths internally consistent, which I find appealing and frustrating at the same time. The art is good but, like the prose, it may try a bit too hard to make the creatures horrific, which is appropriate for many of them but not all.

Overall, it's great to see people writing books about Philippine mythology and I'm really happy that this book exists.

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### **D says**

Beautifully illustrated, sometimes cheeky, rather informative (but ofc some of the facts have been twisted to tell the tale I guess?), overall a beautiful book. I wish there was more about Alejandro Pardo, what we do have of his character makes him sound like an interesting person, but I wish there was more storytelling than just presenting us the different traits of so and so Philippine lower mythology creature. I was expecting more meat from the actual journal, but those are pretty short.

I guess medyo hilaw pa for me 'yung actual book. Sana medyo parang yung *Ambergris* novel ni Vandermeer, but all in all still a good read.

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### **Sheryl says**

Wow! The graphic illustrations of each creature and beast in this work is just superb! ? This was the missing element I was looking for in "Fantastic Beasts..." I must say that this is top-notch work from the best of the best. Our local artists deserve more recognition. Plus the descriptions and background were also written so well. Definitely looking forward to exploring more local works from these authors. :)

Around the World in 52 Books: A book about a thing that goes bump into the night - 21/52

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### **Nicolo Yu says**

This is definitely for the YA audience; as it is done in the manner of Newt Scamander's seminal volume, *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*. This reader was drawn by the talent attached to this book and though the illustrations are top-notch, I found the accompanying text and descriptions of said mythical creatures to be lacking. Still, images of said beasts are the stuff of nightmares.

As a reader, I would probably be more receptive if the writers created a compelling backstory and character to the eponymous Alejandro Pardo. This is supposed to be his journal, so there should be a lot of him in the pages. Sadly, this reader found the character unlikable; he appears to be a misanthrope and chauvinist as one could infer from these pages.

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### TinTin Kalaw says

An interesting take on showcasing Philippine mythological creatures. It's definitely targeted towards a younger audience as it's presented like Newt Scamander's Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them.

Out of the 36 cryptids included in this bestiary, I am only familiar with or heard of 10 of them. And what's also interesting is that some of the information about these 10 doesn't match with what I was told when I was a kid. Of course, it's understandable that certain characteristics of these creatures vary from region to region. Take the *aswang*, for example. I didn't know that swallowing a black chick was involved to turn someone into an *aswang*. Apparently *tikbalangs* have worms for its mane and if you eat said worm, you're linked to that *tikbalang* and can control it for a limited period of time. So yeah, it was fun to learn more info about these creatures. It's interesting to also note that a *lot* of these cryptids love to eat human corpses XD.

Personally, I would have wanted the more fleshed out story described in the afterword. Instead, what we have is a listing of 36 creatures with brief descriptions and characteristics. Every other page or so has some of Alejandro Pardo's commentary and notes. From these snippets, we get a feel on what kind of person he is. Like any Filipino, he loves his #hugots...

*"Then again, I have encountered many beautiful women who have done me more damage than any aswang and have left me with a wounded heart."*

But overall, he is such a jerk :/

*"Obviously, I was not the one to attempt such a feat [touch the santelmo]. I made one of my colleagues do it (which took some convincing, since he was concerned about his drawing hand; so I told him to use his **other** hand)."*

*"I confess, the strangled, hacking noises the old man made as he spewed forth his bloodied, tainted phlegm profoundly irritated me, interfering most pointedly with my concentration."*

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### Anne says

Being a Philippine mythology and folklore enthusiast, I have to say this creature compendium is a great resource for those who are interested in knowing more about our "creatures of lower mythology", especially if you want a more detailed description of what these beings look like. They are not any different from the creatures itemized by Dr. Maximo Ramos in his books as they were the main references in the creation of this compendium. But it's interesting how the writers and illustrators brought their own spin to the creatures with their visual and textual descriptions.

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### Vida Cruz says

This was an excellently illustrated compendium of some well-known and not very well-known creatures from Philippine Lower Mythology. Belongs on the shelf of local lore lovers, next to the books of Maximo D. Ramos and "101 Kagila-gilalas na Nilalang." Imagine if Hiccup's dragon manual from "How to Train Your Dragon" and Dipper's journal from "Gravity Falls" were actually printed, and you have this book. Something that really tickled me was how science was convincingly mixed in.

The book actually has three layers of narrative. The first one is written by the unknown person who collated and transcribed the notes of one Alejandro Pardo, an ancestor of the former's colleague. This narrative is entirely contained in Foreword and Afterword bookending the book's entries.

The second layer is the short, often sexist notes of Alejandro Pardo, an eccentric expert in the field of the Philippine supernatural.

The third layer are the descriptions and annotations written by the unknown transcriber. They often shed more light on the beasts and weapons (and yes, there are some three weapons and a ritual included at the end) than Pardo's notes.

My only criticisms of the book also come in three. The first is that it's too short, even at 125 pages--there are definitely more mythological creatures than those documented, but I imagine it's already expensive enough having to print these sepia-colored drawings on glossy paper.

The second is that the descriptions of the monsters could've been improved by indicating which regions they're found in. I managed to guess in the few times certain tribes were mentioned, but the rest were found via google-fu. Maybe accompanying map(s) would've helped, too.

The third is that the three narratives mentioned above could've bled into each other or extended a bit more. They're very well-written, however.

Hope there's a next installment!

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