

I Am an Apple (Synopsis)

Tall, dark, and handsome Abet tells the story why he became an apple when he was eight. He was crushed when his parents told him he was adopted. The prospect of kite flying with his three best friends suddenly turned blah. He confided to Pedro, in the latter's tree house, why he had been crying. Suddenly, Adora (a six-year-old *balikabayan*) arrives to give Pedro a *pasalubong*: a big apple that looked like a ball!

Adora proudly explained to Pedro, while Abet eavesdropped from the tree house, that she herself was an apple—*A as in apple, A as in adopted*. She proudly said that her parents picked her—like the delightful task of picking an apple!

After Adora left, Abet and Pedro took their kite and the apple to meet Ramon and Carding, who both thought the apple was a ball. But Abet explained, mimicking Adora—*A as in apple, A as in Adopted*. Then Abet proudly said, “I am an apple!”

His three friends wondered why he had to change “adopted” to “apple” since “adopted” is a good word. He repeats what Adora said, “apple is nicer and more delicious!” At that moment, Abet realized that being picked like an apple is a wonderful thing!

Now a successful adult, Abet says that Adora has turned into a lovely lady and a dear friend. He teases the readers by asking them if he should marry her!

I Am an Apple

Nothing about me looks like an apple. I am tall, dark, and ahem, handsome! So why should I call myself an apple? Let me tell you about that one day when I was eight . . .

* * *

I blinked back my tears ten times. Then I wiped my eyes with my shirt sleeve again. I didn't want my friend Pedro to know I'd been crying.

“Abet! What took you so long, come up now!” Pedro called out from his tree house. “I'm done with our kite!”

When I entered the tree house, Pedro held up the yellow kite, “Ta-da!” But I couldn't smile. Although I loved kites, that day I didn't.

Pedro asked, “What's wrong, Abet? Your eyes are all red! Are you sick?”

“I'm not sick!” I snapped at him.

“Oh, you've been crying!” Pedro guessed right.

“Of course not, boys don't cry!” I lied, but my eyes began to moist again and I blinked ten more times so my tears won't fall down my cheeks. Then my mouth moved, “I have no parents!”

“What?! Something happened to your *Itay* and *Inay*?”

“They are *not* my real parents. They told me last night that I am . . . I am . . . *adopted*,” I whispered the word and turned my back on Pedro so he won't see my tears.

“Hey, ” Pedro tried to reply, but he was interrupted by a little girl's strange voice from below.

“Peyd-row! Peyd-row! Where are you?”

“It's Adora, our *balikbayan* neighbor from the US,” he explained. “I didn't know she'd be back again so soon!”

“Peyd-row, yoo-hoo!” Adora called out one more time. “I have a *pasaluuu-bowng* for you!”

“Hold this, Abet,” Pedro rushed, handing me the kite. “Adora has a ball for me!” Pedro was so excited to go down he didn't notice my wet eyes. I hid in the tree house and watched them through a small hole.

“Oh, Peyd-row, you have a tree house now! Really, really neat!” Adora said, holding a big red ball.

“You brought me a red ball from the US?” Pedro gushed. Like me, Pedro loved playing ball next to playing kites.

Adora giggled as she handed her *pasalubong* to Pedro, “This is not a ball. It’s an apple!”

“Apple?! B-but it’s too big!” Pedro's eyes popped out.

My eyes popped out, too. I'd never seen an apple that big before!

“Th-thank you for this ball, er, apple!” Pedro said. I could tell he was disappointed.

“I brought you an apple ‘cuz I am an apple!” Adora said, beating her chest proudly.

“*You* are an apple?! You mean, your head is round like an apple?!” Pedro asked the questions I would have asked myself.

“No, *I* am an apple! A—as in *Apple*; A—as in *Adopted*!” she said gleefully as she sat on the tire hanging from the tree. “Neat swing!”

My nose flared and so did Pedro's. Our noses do that when we're confused.

“You don't know what *adopted* means, do you Peyd-row?” Slowly she explained, “My dad and mom—they picked me. Like picking an apple! You have to really, really choose what you really, really like! So you'll be really, really happy with your pick.”

“I know what *adopted* means!” Pedro replied. “I *adopted* a dog! I picked it because I like it very much!” Then Pedro called out, “Bilog! Bilog!”

Bilog, white and fluffy like a big cotton ball, bounded in, “Arf, arf!” Pedro knelt down to cuddle him.

“Oh, that's your apple doggie!” Adora was so delighted she jumped down from the swing. “May I touch it, Peyd-row? A cutie apple doggie!” She clapped her hands in between petting Bilog. “Is Bilowg the *apple of your eye*, Pedro? My dad and mom always say I am the *apple of their eye*!”

“Huh?” Pedro's nose flared again. He didn't know what *apple of your eye* meant. Neither did I! I thought children from the US spoke funny. But Pedro asked the question I wanted to ask, “Why can't you call yourself *adopted*?”

Then Pedro said something more that surprised me, “*Adopted* is a real good word!”

Adora giggled again. “I know! But apple sounds sooo much nicer and more delicious. I really, really love apple! And also, both my dad and mom said they really, really love me . . .”

Pedro replied, “Hmmm, you're right. I love Bilog.”

“That's why mom and dad named me Adora,” she replied. They say they really, really adored me!”

HONK, HONK! A car beeped and Adora's *lolo* appeared. “Adora, *apo*, let’s go! Pedro, Adora will come back here tomorrow. Meanwhile, I need to bring her to our relatives. The whole clan is excited to see Adora again!”

“Gotta go!” Adora said, running to her *Lolo*. “Peyd-row, next time I come, I will bring you two apples. One for you, and one for your really, really cutie apple doggie!”

Her favorite word is “really!” I said silently, laughing. After Adora left, my eyes were dry and my normal voice came back. “Pedro, I'll bring the kite down now. Ramon and Carding are waiting at the park.”

“Take that big apple with you for *merienda*. Have fun, kids!” Pedro's mother suggested from inside the house.

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Ramon and Carding did a high five when they saw Pedro and me, with Bilog running behind us.

“Pedro, you finished making our kite!” Ramon shrieked.

“Abet, you brought a ball!” Carding squeaked.

“Hey, we can play ball first before playing with our kite!” both yelled.

“This isn't a ball,” I said. “It's an apple!”

“Apple?!” Ramon and Carding both exclaimed. “Where did you get it?” They never saw that big an apple before!

“An apple gave it to Pedro,” I said.

“An APPLE gave Pedro an APPLE?!” they roared, their noses flaring.

“Yes, from our *balikbayan* neighbor from the US—she's an apple,” Pedro added.

“WHAAAAT?” they were really confused now.

I had to make them understand. “Yeah, A—as in *Apple*; A—as in *Adopted*!” And I was surprised my voice was big as ever. I announced clearly, “Just-like-me. I am an apple, too!”

Pedro stared at me. His nose flared again. Well, who wouldn't be confused? Earlier, I was crying and now here I was, talking and grinning.

By this time, all three of my best friends were totally confused. Ramon and Carding asked, “A—as in *Apple*. A—as in *Adopted*?!” Then they said exactly what Pedro told Adora, “But *adopted* is a real good word. Why change it to apple?”

I had the perfect answer. “Oh, apple is sooo much nicer and more delicious!” And I told them about what my *Itay and Inay* said the night before. “Picking you as our son is the nicest blessing we have ever received!” Naturally, my friends' noses flared again and I took the chance to add, “But if you want to call me *adopted*, it's okay, too.”

Ramon and Carding mimicked what I (and also Adora and also Pedro) said earlier, “Oh, but apple is sooo much nicer and more delicious!”

“Abet is an apple,” I said, just to make it clear.

“Bilog is an apple!” Pedro added.

“Bilog is an APPLE?!” Ramon and Carding asked, confused one more time.

“Why, yes! I am not his parents. I adopted it, remember?”

“Raaaaayt!” they said, giving each other a high five. They laughed and roared while Bilog jumped all around them.

I stared at the apple, and I promised myself, *When I go home, I will tell my Itay and Inay I like being an apple.* Well, I would have wanted to sound fancy like Adora and say, *I am the apple of your eye*, but I didn't know what that meant yet.

“Hey, why don't we eat the apple first before flying our kite!” Pedro suddenly suggested.

“Lets!” we all said.

And we all bit into the sweetest, juiciest apple in the world! Bilog barked, “ARF, ARF!” hoping to have a taste of the apple, too.

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That was the day I understood what my *Itay* and *Inay* had told me, “Abet, you were such an adorable baby, there were eight parents who wanted you! But God picked us.” That was the day I turned into an apple.

P.S.

Adora has turned into a really, really lovely lady and a dearest friend. Shall I, ahem, ask her to marry me? To be continued . . .