Sands & Coral

2019-2021

The Editors Issue

aida l. rivera ○ cesar j. amigo ○ lugum uka ○ reuben r. canoy ○ claro r. ceniza ○ kenneth r. woods ○ leticia n. dizon ○ james m. matheson ○ graciano h. arinday jr ○ maria luisa e. centena ○ carminia a. yaptenco ○ eugenio alexis r. baban ○ eliseo p. bañas ○ erlendo o. constantino ○ raymond l. llorca ○ williamor d. marquez ○ rhoda b. galima ○ myrna peña-reyes ○ roberto j. ponteñila ○ rachel p. gadiane ○ edgar libre-griño ○ david c. martinez ○ nancy i. teves ○ elsa victoria martinez ○ merlie m. alunan ○ rowena l. tiempo ○ carlos o. aureus ○ jaime l. an lim ○ ma. paloma alburo ○ pearl gamboa-doromal ○ anthony l. tan ○ leoncio p. deriada ○ christine godinez-ortega ○ erlinda k. alburo ○ marjorie m. evasco ○ antonino s. de veyra ○ noel c. villalba ○ dinah rose m. baseleres ○ shielfa b. alojamiento ○ victor john t. padilla ○ douglas c. crispino ○ ian r. casocot ○ misael p. ondong

Silliman University

Rebecca de la Torre Lady Flor Partosa Andrea Gomez-Soluta
Editors

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Lady Flor Partosa
Andrea Gomez Soluta
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With a Foreword by
Cesar Ruiz Aquino

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INTRODUCTION

In 2018, we conceived the idea of a special project for the *Sands & Coral*—which would be spearheaded by the English and Literature Department and the Edilberto and Edith Tiempo Creative Writing Center—as a tribute to the past editors of the *Sands & Coral* to mark the literary folio's 70th anniversary. For this special issue, we would feature a bionote and a corresponding literary work (found in the *Sands & Coral*) of all editors starting from the first issue in 1948 to the latest in 2013. This seemingly straightforward goal spawned months of planning, compiling information, gathering puzzle pieces as it were, and ultimately making final decisions for the project to take shape. The information about the editors, for instance, was based on students' projects and assignments on local writers and Silliman's literary history. On the other hand, for some bionotes (particularly those of editors from older issues), we relied on documents available from the Sillimaniana digital collection, such as newsletters and The Portal (the University yearbook). All literary works featured in this issue came from previous *Sands & Coral* publications and were chosen by the editorial board. These were then lovingly and carefully encoded by the faculty of the Department.

Interestingly, the most recent issue (Celebration: An Anthology Commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the Silliman University National Writers Workshop), which was published in 2013, was also a project that celebrates the legacy of the Workshop through the works of fellows featured in the issue. In the same manner, we also celebrate and dedicate the issue to the literary folio's past editors who have given their time and talent as young student writers to Silliman, contributing to the growth of literature and creative writing culture on campus. However, in this issue, we also aim to make a stride to future possibilities of using our very own history and heritage as venue for research. Such expanded interest to our own local heritage, we hope, will pave the way to more critical inquiry that probes the past as well as the current and possible subsequent events for the locality.

On behalf of the editorial board, Dr. Andrea Gomez-Soluta and Prof. Rebecca de la Torre—as well as our colleagues Kaycee Melon, John Rubio, J Marie Maxino, Gemmella Tebio, Hellene Piñero, Deo Mar Suasin, Flordeliz Mate, and Philip Van Peel—we would like to offer this special issue of the *Sands & Coral*. Truly, this *Sands & Coral* heritage project is the product of a collective labor of love, from all of us—students and teachers.

Lady Flor Partosa
Editor

FOREWORD

"What are writers for in a catastrophic time?" If we may rephrase the question quoted by Heidegger from Holderlin, substituting the more inclusive 'writers' for 'poets' and replacing 'destitute' with 'catastrophic.'

Of the many possible answers to that question, I may not find one as endearing to a writer as that implied in The Plague, a novel by Albert Camus. Set in the Algerian town of Oran contemporaneously with the author's time, the novel is an allegory of the actual plague that struck the town in the nineteenth-century.

Fifty-year-old Joseph Grand is a poorly paid government clerk whose wife left him and who is engaged in writing a novel. To say that he is making very slow progress with his ambition is an understatement: he can't go beyond the first sentence that he keeps revising and revising, driven by an instinct for perfection. In the midst of a plague!

But no ivory tower dweller, Joseph Grand joins the collective fight against the pestilence. Not from heroism or idealism but from common sense. He catches, goes down with the disease – but not out. He recovers and his recovery marks the turning point in the plague. Oran survives. So does Grand's grand novelist's ambition - he persists.

Heidegger's recalling of Holderlin was contemporaneous with the writing of Camus' novel; both were done in the World War ll decade – the former in 1948, when defeated Germany lay in ruins, and the latter so close to the German occupation of France that the novel could be read as a metaphor for that agony.

Sands & Coral, whose name was extracted from Pol Doltz's 'Silliman Hymn' by the poet Ricaredo Demetillo, came into being in the self-same World War ll decade as that terrible decade was drawing to a close.

Look closely: 1948 above was the same year *Sands & Coral*, with Aida Rivera-Ford as editor, came out – or, more precisely, came to be. Surely we shall hear echoes, catch glimpses. The war experience, the trauma, the nightmare cannot just fade away like a harmless dream from some siesta. At the least, some chance articulation of a forgotten. unconscious devastation is to be expected.

It will take generations to piece together the remnants of a once

lovely place and a new sun

- Graciano H. Arinday Jr. The Street of Nights
1955 editor

Flies crawled over the feces and dysenteryand malaria victims sprawled everywhere./ Death. Death was all around./ “Are you trying to murder the 40,000 Americans and Filipinos in this camp?

- E. O. Constantino Darkness at the Top End of the Line
1960 editor

Flap-flap-flap. Flap-flap-flap. Flap-flap-flap. The sinister sound came from the millions of whirring brownish wings and the people trembled in shock and fear. Some thought it was a sign the world was coming to an end. And then the locusts descended.

- Leoncio P. Deriada The Day of the Locusts
1976 editor

Listen, my angels have come to chant
songs of despair
their voices are muffled by screams
of four-wheeled armies inundating streets

- Jean Claire A. Dy Lost Sun
1997 associate editor

The Four…. That the rest – thirty-nine in all – do not echo the theme or subject we are at brings us back to the figure of Joseph Grand. Plague or no plague he does not abandon the writing of his novel, though he can’t get beyond the struggle to come up with the first sentence. Thus we do not know what the novel he has set himself to write is but it seems certain that it is not about the plague which, as a matter of fact, it precedes. Nevertheless the writer is engaged in writing it while fighting the pestilence. at the same time.

There's an anniversary something to this issue of *Sands & Coral*. And its publication comes at a time when, as if indeed to echo the Second World War, a pandemic has cast a pall upon the planet.

'Poetry makes nothing happens,' the English poet W. H. Auden wrote, as if to echo Holderlin and Heidegger.

In reply we quote John Keats: 'Poets are God' spies.'

Reuben Canoy's immortal emblem or seal for *Sands & Coral* is less hard to decode. It shows a human figure, decades ahead of Marvel Comics, looking very like the Silver Surfer, poised skyward or heavenward but clearly bonded with Gaia, the air, the earth, the ocean, the sands and coral.

Cesar Ruiz Aquino
Resident Poet


Remington Standard

Aida L. Rivera

1948 Co-editor and 1949 Editor

Aida L. Rivera was born on 22 January 1929, in Jolo, Sulu. She earned her Bachelor of Arts in English, *cum laude*, at Silliman University in 1949 and her master's degree in English and Literature at the University of Michigan in 1954 as a Fulbright scholar. In 1958, she married Donald R. Ford, with whom she has a son. She taught at the University of Mindanao (from 1963 to 1968) and at Ateneo de Davao University (from 1969 to 1980). In 1980, together with National Artist Victorio Edades, she founded the Learning Center of the Arts in Mindanao at Davao, now the Ford Academy of the Arts. She also became the director of two National Commission for Culture and the Arts [NCCA] Mindanao-wide creative writing workshops and two University of the Philippines National Writers Workshops. In 1997, she was the president of the Mindanao Foundation for Culture and the Arts. Because of her contribution both to literary arts and to culture and education, Aida Rivera-Ford received various awards and recognitions: the Datu Bago Award in 1982, the Philippine Government Parangal for Writers of the Post War Years in 1991, a Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) Literature Grant for her collection of essays also in 1991, the Outstanding Sillimanian Award for Literature and Creative Writing in 1993, and national fellow for fiction by the University of the Philippines Creative Writing Center in 1993. Rivera-Ford has published various books, including essay and short story collections (*Now and at the Hour and Other Stories* with Benipayo Press in 1958 and *Born in the Year 1900 and Other Stories* with University of the Philippines Press in 1997) as well as a compilation of plays (*Heroes in Love: Four Plays* with Anvil in 2012). She also wrote a book about Davao history published in 2010, *Oyanguren, Forgotten Founder of Davao*. Her book *Aida Rivera Ford: Collected Works* was also published in 2012 by C and E Publishing, Inc.

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The Bridge to the Morrow

The quiet that fell over the hacienda was unholy. There was no moon that night, but an evil luminousness lighted up the lot where there should have been a house, throwing into relief the lonely water tower which shot up into spectral tallness against the brooding sky.

Over on the south side, beyond a grove of trees, an innocent-looking bridge yawned idly in the darkness. It was one of those little dirt bridges, common in the country, which have a single cement tube, no more than a meter in diameter, running through them. During the rainy season, waters swelled from the mountains and sent a little ribbon coursing jauntily through the bridge, but the rains had not come yet and only dark fear dominated the mossy tube; for, tonight, its confining narrowness sheltered a man, a woman, and a baby.

It was pitch black in the tube. The man could not even see the blonde of his wife's hair, though her head rested on his shoulder. He was listening intently to all sounds as he sat with his long legs doubled up uncomfortably. It was some time since he had heard the roar which told him that the big house had fallen; but now, nothing unusual stirred outside. He could tell that his wife had at last fallen asleep, because he could feel her heavy breathing. The bundle on her lap was so quiet that he put down his hand gently to reassure himself that there was warmth in it. "Brave little baby," he thought, "it wants to live too… And next Sunday, we were going to celebrate its first month in the world--"

He wondered if there would be a next Sunday—if there would be a tomorrow—but he put away the thought and decided he would think only of the years behind them. Of the time he had brought Skit home, and the way she had exclaimed at what he described as "the little farmhouse". Of the way his mother's little brown face crinkled up when "Skeet" told her about the baby—"Thank God she was in the other hacienda. Suppose she had been with us— ". . . He sought his mind for other things to remember. The projects they had worked on, for instance. There was the basketball court where the young hired hands vied to outdo him—their Señorito

Vicente. The workshop where his clothes got all greased up, to Skit's despair. The school for farm kids on the ground floor of the house. The house again. . .

"God—why can't I stop thinking?" he muttered under his breath as he strove to shut off the wicked flames that danced before his eyes whenever he thought of the house. He wished rather unreasonably that Skit would wake so that he could at least feel his thoughts run with hers, but she was insensible to all fears now, for her healthy body had shut off her mind in a dead sleep. He felt very much alone.

"Don't think," he told himself. "Just listen—listen to the night." He concentrated on the soft purring of a cat outside; but after a while, even that died away. The cold walls of the tube made him imagine that he was back in the tiled bathroom where they had sought shelter from the bullets that had sputtered on the house without warning. The same question he had asked himself then came back to tease him. "Who? —Who—Who had tried to kill them? The Japs? . . . But the pass is guarded. The colonel promised to give a signal. . . Bandits, then? . . . Self-styled USAFFE ? What would they want—supplies? Why had they not asked for them? Why? What have we done? Why kill us? Why? ..."

He gripped his head hard, as if to shut out the scenes that came flooding into his overtaxed brain, but they poured in like an inexorable flow that sought out every crevice of his head. They surged through him and swept him along, forcing him to live over the events of the night. Now he was rushing out of the bathroom with his family, after the smell of smoke and gasoline told them why the shooting had stopped. Told them that the enemy had decided to burn them! Out in the smoke-filled room, he stood—bewildered, trapped—the tongues of flame licking out greedily from the hall. The iron-grilled windows mocked him as he turned from the flames. There were the servants screaming in hysteria. And the terror in his wife's eyes. No—No— this could not happen! They must reach the dining room where the windows were screened. Where there were no iron grills to imprison them!

They were tugging at each other now through the blazing hall, fighting against the coughing and the choking that threatened to overpower them, beating out the flames that clung to their clothing and their hair—groping their way to a room which may also be in flames. But somehow they had gotten through, and were tearing at the screen at a

point where trees hid them from view. Now they were taking the leap without stopping to look from the height of the house. He had jumped last, clasping the baby with both arms, the impact crashed into his left foot, sending him rolling on the ground with his body bent over to protect the baby.

As the memory of the impact came back to him, his foot twitched involuntarily. The movement sent a pain knifing through his body, and he leaned back panting. He wondered now how he could have made his way to the bridge with only Skit to drag him along, the servants having disappeared in panic.

The pain had rid his mind of the dreaded scenes, but as the excitement of the night wore off, bitterness crept in.

"Dirty scoundrels," he muttered, "they think we are dead, do they? They think they've roasted us in. Well, we aren't dead, yet. But if the servants are found—" Suddenly he was swearing aloud in rage at his own pursuers and at his own selfishness. His wife woke up with a start and questioned him softly. He felt better as he thought of how he had put one over on her again. He had made a game of swearing in Spanish to see how soon she would recognize the words, and now he had unconsciously used a Spanish oath.

He was still smiling in the dark when scuffling steps jarred the stillness. He felt for the revolver beside him and listened. He could hear two men talking now and, as they came closer, he caught a few dialect words. Suddenly he recognized one voice as that of Pedro, a simple-minded but well-meaning tenant. The other voice, however, was gruff and unfamiliar. They had stopped a few paces away—under the talisay tree, he guessed—and he could hear the conversation clearly now. The gruff one was speaking:

"Ay, Pedro, never mind about your 'ñorito. He's not your 'ñorito anymore. Besides, he's dead—even the Americana. She was very proud, was she not?"

"No," Pedro protested, "she was good. . . 'ñorito also. She always smiled even when she did not understand me—only when she spoke in Visayan, it was very funny."

"Well, they had to die." The unfamiliar voice was blustery now. "That should teach every one that when we say something, we mean it. We are in command here now, and no hacendero or even an Americana can stand in

our way. We only asked for twenty sacks of rice, but they would rather roast than give it. Maybe they thought we were joking when we gave the ultimatum."

The last word was said in English and Pedro did not understand it.

"What is an ul-ti-mah-toom?" he asked.

"You wouldn't understand, Pedro. But we in command know all about those things. Anyway—that letter I asked you to give them contained an ultimatum. You didn't forget to give them that, did you?"

"Oh no, I gave it to the Americana herself." Pedro said with some pride. "I said to her in English . . ."

The men had moved away until they could not be heard. After a while Skit whispered almost imperceptibly—"Vicente, what were they saying?"

"It's about a letter. . ."

"A letter that Pedro gave me? Was that the ultimatum they mentioned? . . . Oh, Vince. I placed it on your desk with some bills. Pedro just smiled when he gave it; I didn't know. . ."

"Shh—"

The men were coming back, for it seemed that the gruff one had left his rifle by the tree. Now, he was saying that he would call his men away; and at last he was going—going off for good.

Already the light of dawn gleamed through the opening. Vicente and Skit held their breath as the steps shuffled away.

Suddenly a broken whimper, faint but clear in the cold air, broke the stillness. Skit gave the baby her breast quickly, but the men had heard the sound. The cold metallic clink of the bolt of the carbine shrieked its way into the hearts of the fugitives.

In the silence that followed, Vicente uncocked the hammer of his revolver—and waited. All his muscles tensed as he strained to detect the direction the men would take. He had instructed Skit to run with the baby as soon as he gave her the sign, but if the enemy approached from her side. . . "No—" his whole being cried. "Not on her side. . . not on her side. . . Please…"

A harsh voice just outside the tube so unnerved Vicente that he almost pulled the trigger.

"Why—it's the cat only." The gruff one blurted with an uneasy laugh.

"What cat?" Pedro asked.

"There—don't you see it? It sounded like a baby. . . I was fooled for a while." The bluster was gone from his voice. "I really need some sleep," he added.

"Yes, let's go home."

As the last sounds disappeared, Vicente turned to his wife. Through the bluish dawn-haze that filtered in, he saw a soot-blackened face, incongruously framed by a mass of blonde hair. His eyes widened for a moment, then his frame shook convulsively as laughter tinged with hysteria broke out from his chest.

"Vince. . . Vince!" Skit cried, horror in her eyes. "Oh, Vince, what is it?"

Gasping for breath now, he looked away from the twin globes of blue on her funny black face to keep back the mad laughter of relief which threatened to shake him again. Suddenly, his eyes fell on a wispy gray form silhouetted against the eerie light at the opening of the tube. As he looked, it gave out a whimper, soft but clear—a whimper like a baby's—and was gone. "Listen, it's the cat. . . Skit, do you hear—it's the cat! This time it really is the cat. . ."

And again Vicente laughed—louder and louder.

Sands & Coral 1948

Cesar J. Amigo

1948 Co-editor

Cesar Jalandoni Amigo was an essayist, critic, film director, and scriptwriter. He was born in Dumaguete City in 1924, and graduated from elementary school in 1935 and from high school in 1939 of what was then Silliman Institute. At Silliman, he was elected as the Vice President of the Silliman Literary Guild in 1941 and as vice-commander of the Red Shield Fraternity (ROTC) from 1947 to 1948. He earned his pre-law degree in 1942. He also published essays, short stories, and poetry in the *Sillimanian Magazine*; in 1948, he became one of the first editors of the first *Sands & Coral* issue. He soon migrated to Manila to pursue a career in film and soon became a sought-after screenplay writer and director, winning several awards from the Filipino Academy of Movie Arts and Science (FAMAS). Amigo was awarded the Best Screenplay by the FAMAS for *Buhay Alamang*, *Hanggang sa Dulo ng Daigdig*, and *Kadenang Putik* in 1952, 1959, and 1961, respectively. In 1964, he was also nominated as Best Director for the film *Sa Atin ang Daigdig* in the FAMAS Awards. Because of his achievements in film, he was given the Outstanding Sillimanian Award in the field of Film Production and Scriptwriting in 1974. He died on June 5, 1987.

Ideals and the Man

The man who considers his ideal as a thing apart from his actual being, a distant goal, makes a perilous mistake. For the ideal is forever enmeshed with the courses of our lives. It never leaves us. A man may indulge in gluttony, but invariably he will despise another glutton because the perception of it revolts his innate principles of abstinence, which is only a factor of a more complex *Ideal*. In this case, the ideal manifests itself in a physical reaction, as it does in the more superficial motions and opinions of a human being.

Let there be no mistaking it: *No man can isolate himself from the Ideal*. He may be unconscious of it; he may despise ideals. But there is not a single human being of a sane mind, however stupid or dissipated, who does not erect (consciously or unconsciously) a standard of behavior, a *Principal Attitude*. What is this standard? An Ideal.

Sands & Coral 1951

Lugum Uka

1950 Editor and 1951 Co-editor

Lugum Uka earned his Bachelor of Laws from Silliman University in 1952. As a student in Silliman, he was involved with campus writing through the *Sands & Coral*, of which he was editor in 1950 and 1951. Along with Reuben Canoy, he was also a member of the law debating team from 1951 to 1952. Later on, Uka would play a key role in national legislation. He was appointed as Chairman of the Commission on National Integration on 10 July 1959, and was also selected by President Carlos P. Garcia in 1960 to be a member of the National Committee for the celebration of the Fourteenth Anniversary of the Republic of the Philippines. He was also significantly involved in the drafting of the 1987 Philippine Constitution as the representative of the cultural community of Cotabato and the Muslim community as a whole.

A Deer for Jesus

I can still see the forty-six naked youngsters staring at me with very wide eyes as I spoke of the age-old Christmas story to them one morning. It was in the pagan Bilaan Settlement Farm School in the remote barrio of Malungon; and I, a Moslem teacher, was talking nostalgically of the customs of the Christian world. That in itself was bound to produce the unexpected.

It had been a most lonely life during my first year of teaching. As December approached, I remembered with almost a wave of home-sickness Christmas seasons at the Normal School. Then I conceived the plan of introducing a program for the children.

Forty-six pairs of Bilaan eyes snapped and danced as I told them that they, too, were to have a party and a Christmas tree upon which they might hang anything which they wished to give to their friends. And I meant anything, for our mountain school was hundreds of miles away from the towns and sea coast.

Christmas day came and we had prepared painstakingly for the first Christmas program that would be held in that remote Moro-land. We began with a beautifully symmetrical tree no more than two meters high. Our decorations were wild varicolored flowers strung together and arranged on the tree. As the children brought in their gifts, the tree grew heavy with corn, wild honey in bamboo tubes, ripe bananas, corn cakes, roasted camotes. It began to sag alarmingly as the collection of taro, papaya, pineapple, wild fruits, and sugarcane streamed in. The fauna too was represented liberally by four parrots perched on the tree, a wild rooster, one small monkey, and a large edible iguana tied to its base. It might not have been the most elaborate Christmas tree, but it certainly was the most unique and naturalistic. Jesus would certainly have smiled to have seen it. At the base of the tree was a last, loving contribution—a baby deer with this tag dangling about its spindly neck: "To Jesus and Mr. Lugum Uka. Merry Christmas to you two! From Mandoen Katuan, Grade III."

The program that followed reached a hilarious climax as the children began a Bilaan dance. One of the class exhibitionists, a little drunk with glory, tripped over his feet and sprawled headlong on the floor. Violent gales of laughter greeted this spectacle. As the crowd rocked and swayed, almost crying with mirth, sudden hysteria broke out under the Christmas tree. Simultaneously, the deer, the monkey, the lizard, and the wild rooster bolted from the tree, the room, and the Christmas program in wild panic. In complete disbelief, we watched them stamping and tugging at the tree, which with their combined efforts soon gave way. They raced from the schoolhouse, dragging the tree with them at the rate of fifteen miles an hour.

Everyone raced after the tree, but when it was recovered, only two parrots were left of all the animal offerings. The children picked up most of the fruits and vegetables in the bushes on the hillside. The monkey, the lizard, and the wild rooster were nowhere to be seen. Gone too was the deer which was addressed both to Jesus and to me. Who knows but that it preferred to be with Jesus alone. I have no regrets.

Sands & Coral 1949

Reuben R. Canoy

1951 Co-editor, 1952 Editor, and 1953 Co-editor

Reuben Rabe Canoy, who was from Cagayan de Oro, studied law at Silliman University obtaining his degree in 1953. In the same year, he passed the Bar and married Solona Torralba. Canoy also engaged in filmmaking, working with Eddie Romero for *The Passionate Strangers* in 1966 as one of the screenplay writers, and the screenwriter of *Mad Doctor of Blood Island* in 1968. As screenwriter, Canoy also teamed up with fellow Sillimanian Cesar Amigo for the films *Babae sa Likod ng Salamin* in 1976 and *Sa Dulo ng Kris* in 1977. Canoy has led a very active life in public service. During the presidency of Ferdinand Marcos, he was the Deputy Minister of Information, then undersecretary of the Department of Public Information, and then Presidential Action Officer for Northern Mindanao. He was also Mayor of Cagayan de Oro from 1972 to 1976, and was elected Regional Assemblyman for Region 10 in 1978. He founded the Mindanao Independence Movement in 1986 and ran for the presidency under the Social Democratic Party in the same year. Canoy is the author of *The Quest for Mindanao Independence* (Mindanao Post Publishing Co., 1989) and *The History of Mindanao* (International School Press, 2003). In 2013, he was one of the winners at the Genre Film Scriptwriting Competition—organized by the Film Development Council of the Philippines—for his script "The Unbelievers." Recently, Canoy—an advocate for federalism—was appointed as a member of the consultative committee to study and recommend amendments for the 1987 Philippine Constitution.

Wardrobe Item

The formal black of death becomes me
Only its stiff collars and tight vests
Impart the quiet dignity
That I, in life, have been denied.
Thus, when the purple invitation comes for me
To stand before high ladies and their gentlemen
Correctly clad by Fath or Dior, in chambers ventilated
By their own puffed estimates, I shall be wise
To put aside my coat of many colors, lest my brothers, Envious of the recognition given me by trembling stars, Should counsel darkly to remove me from the scene
For showing lack of proper taste.
If day can mirror my vulgarity,
How much more so, they ask, would night reflect
The crude and common pattern of my ways?
(I cannot dispute this.)
Yet why should human beings dress at all?
For whose account do we display these trappings
Which the moth, willed by a greater will,
Would soon corrupt? For shame?
I have my share of shame; but it is part of every glory
That I owe from God, and I have no desire to cover it.
For beauty? To my mind, my shape and speech and movements
Bear the mark of him who is the greatest artist of us all!
Naked, I become his counterpart,
And I am one with him, immortal and complete.
The only coat that I shall ever want to wear
Is that which clothes the universe
Woven of the threads of darkness,
And when once put on
Would never have to be removed again.

Sands & Coral 1952

Claro R. Ceniza

1951 Co-editor

Claro Rafols Ceniza, a native of Oroquieta, Misamis Occidental, finished high school at Silliman University in 1947, where he also obtained his LL.B. degree in 1953. He passed the Bar in 1954, placing 17th among 3,000 bar candidates. Also in 1954, he published in mimeographed form a book entitled *The Rational Basis of the Problems of Philosophy*, an initial reflection of his enduring interest in Philosophy. In 1958, he published *The Relation of Man's Concept of Space to Metaphysics*, which became the first part of a longer work published in 1965 entitled, simply, *Metaphysics*. He quit the practice of law in 1965 and joined the Silliman University Department of Philosophy faculty. In 1968, *Silliman Journal* published *Metaphysics* in full. Ceniza and his wife pursued their graduate studies at Syracuse University in New York. He eventually earned his M.A. in 1970 and his Ph.D. in Philosophy in 1972. After his graduate studies, Ceniza taught in various schools in the Philippines, including the Philippine Dominican Center for Institutional Studies and Philippine Christian University, He was also a visiting professor at Drury College in Springfield, Missouri, and an exchange professor at Waseda University in Tokyo. After his teaching stint at the University of Santo Tomas, he returned to Silliman where he taught until 1977, then transferred to De La Salle University from which he retired in 1993. Prior to his death in 2001, Claro Ceniza left a string of publications, mostly original works worthy of inclusion to the country's corpus of Filipino philosophy, such as *Metaphysics: A Study of the Structure of Metaphysical Inquiry* and *Thought, Necessity, Existence: Metaphysics and Epistemology for Lay Philosophers*, which were both published by De La Salle University in 1984 and 2001, respectively.

Silver: At Sunset

A blue speck
In a cube of sky glass.
  Which I, too,
        Was;
For I was the cube of glass
Holding a leafy twig.
And within me were you,
A tiny, tiny speck in me,
The cube of glass.
Your red skies were within
Me, passionate within me,
O passionate within me,
And burning, loving,
Agonizingly loving.
And I held you there
Like a bird you were
In a loving cage.
          And above
Where the silver skies:
For I am a man:
Must needs be silvered,
My hair and head
Be silvered,
Ere the cube be.
          My love,
I am your man, silvered—
Sweet-honeyed over silver—
And within me are you,
Red-burning,
Like a tiny ember
In a cube of glass.

Sands & Coral 1950

Kenneth R. Woods

1953 Co-editor

Kenneth R. Woods was co-editor with James Mattheson for the 1953 issue of the *Sands & Coral* and was also the literary editor of *The Sillimanian* in the same year. Reuben Canoy described him as "chemist by profession, a writer by inclination." Woods was a prominent campus writer, with one article from *The Sillimanian Magazine* in 1953 describing him as member of the "student literary elite," which included *Sands & Coral* editors like Graciano Arinday Jr., Reuben Canoy, Leticia Dizon, and Claro Ceniza.

Wanderjahr

The street was a black thing. It stretched with many alleys from the waterfront into the heart of the city. He hurried along, feeling his way by the silent grimy walls on either side of the street. And because he was alone, and the sound of his footsteps was loud in his ears, thought came to him. And Carl's weak, myopic eyes floated in the darkness before him: "You got to promise to see them, George. You got to." And, smiling assurance, he had promised. But now he knew himself to be a fool, for they probably wouldn't be there.

A snow-chilled wind knifed its way through his thin jacket front and made him pause, head down. "Fourth bar from the corner, Shanghai Grill." There were lights ahead, little amber pools that spilled out from glass-paned windows onto the broken pavement. He pulled up the collar around his neck and went faster so that after a short while his shadow lengthened under his feet, and he was no longer alone. Where the lights began to merge on the sidewalk, he slowed down to read the signs that stuck out from the sides of buildings. The Shanghai Grill was the fourth bar all right, and he ambled towards it, not quite sure that he wanted to go inside. He should have been back on the ship. But Carl, he had promised Carl…

He lit a cigarette, holding the warm smoke in his mouth as long as he could before breathing it out through his nostrils. The ash was about an inch long when the door tinkled open, and a wall of sounds and smells ushered two men out. They recognized him immediately.

"George!" The two voices chortled. "Howdidja get off the ship? Thought you're on watch."

Sheepishly, George turned back into the doorway, his seamed face pinched blue with the cold. "Oh. I didn't see you. Benny stood my watch. I gave him ten dollars."

The two regarded him quietly, their eyes narrowed in calculation. Then the taller one broke the silence. "Yeah. Well, that's good. Where ya goin' now?"

George didn't answer. He puffed his cheeks full of smoke. The tall one said, "What I mean is, if you got no place to go tonight, why you can come with us. We got something all lined up. Ain't we?" He nudged his companion, who nodded, grinning, "Yeah, sure. All lined up."

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George shuffled his feet impatiently, suspicious of their sudden affability. "Now, that's real nice of you and all, but I got something of my own all planned. Some other time maybe, Buck." This was addressed to the tall one.

"You have? Where?" Buck flipped his matted hair back over his head and hunched forward. "Come on, tell us."

"Now look, you guys keep out of this, understand? This is my own. I don't want you messin' it up."

Buck snickered and straightened up. "Now, I think I know what's it all about."

George bit his upper lip hard, feeling it go numb.

"Yeah, now I remember," the thin, little man beside Buck gestured excitedly. "That German fruit that George used to hang around with in Manila, his folks live here in Shanghai somewhere, don't they? I bet that's where George is goin' now, ain'tcha, George? I even bet they got a good-lookin' daughter, hey George?"

George reached out with a stubby finger and hooked it in the little man's shirt front. "Look, Callaghan, I wantcha to understand this. Carl ain't no fairy, s'help me, and where I'm goin' is none of your business, but just so you don't go getting' the wrong ideas I'll tell you. Inside that bar is a little French babe that I been workin' on, tryin' to make for a week. Tonight's the night. Now do you understand?"

"Jesus, George," Callaghan squirmed under the thick finger, "you don't have to get so excited and, anyway, you shouldn't go in there. Ain't that right, Buck?"

"Right," echoed Buck, wiping his nose with the palm of his hand.

"Yeah, why not?" George released Callaghan with such force that the little man dropped sprawling onto the hard pavement, a hurt expression on his face.

"Well," Buck said, "I was just goin' to say that the last time I was there, a Russian babe gave me a dose, and now ain't no time to go and get burnt, not with the way the cap'n feels and all."

George stomped his feet hard. "Well, I can't stand and talk all night."

"Yeah. Well, just be careful, George. Just you be careful," Buck warned. "Ah, say, George… couldn't lend me, say, ten, could ya? Just for tonight, honest—"

But George, walking towards the door of the Shanghai Grill ignored the thin pleading voice.

"Ah, let him go," Callaghan whined. "All I hope is the bastard gets a dose and the old Joe all in the same throw."

The cold had seeped into his body, and he could feel the numbness even in his brain. With eager anticipation he grasped the door handle and braced himself for the expected rush of warm air that the light promised. Just as soon as the door had opened a crack, a long, painted hand snaked out and coiled its tapering fingers around his wrist.

"Look what I got!" a voice shrieked on the other side.

The door creaked wider, and then a tinkle. Red-tipped nails dug into his flesh. "Come on, honey. Don't just stand there! Buy me a drink!"

He blinked his eyes several times in the glare and wrenched his arm free from the woman's clutch. The powerful odor of sweat, tobacco and cheap perfume swirled about him thickly. Loud, raucous laughter rode on the crest of conversation. With one swift glance his eyes took in the low-ceilinged, narrow room, the tin-plated bar, scaly booths belching forth smoke and sprouting nude female legs, fly-specked window-panes, a few tattered curtains.

Reigning over this cluttered domain was a fat, benign Buddha of a man, who sat at the exact center of the long bar mirror. The girl who had tried to pull him in had skulked back to the bar, and was needling the man into giving her a drink, but a Buddha-smile was all she got.

Then he saw them in a dimly-lit corner of the grill, trying very hard to please an indifferent audience with their music. They were playing "Home on the Range." The fragile old man with a sad grey face was bent earnestly over the piano, while the woman beside him, who held a violin, stared blankly through steel-rimmed glasses and looked, without actually seeing, over the sliding bow into space.

Slowly, he found himself drifting closer to the piano. When he was near enough, the music stopped and he could hear the old couple heave a sigh of relief. The woman let her arms dangle lifelessly by her sides, so that the violin touched the floor.

"Excuse me," George said, combing his fingers through his hair.

"Hein? You like request, ja?" The woman's head bobbed up, her eyes shining with interest.

"Well," George watched the old man get up from the piano stool. "Maybe there's something you could play for me." He looked down for a while, his forehead lined in thought. "Would you know Rachmaninoff's Concerto No. 2. . . the andante movement?"

"Papa! Papa, you hear the man! He knows music!"

Papa shuffled forward to peer at him. His eyes were moist. "An American. Ja, maybe he knows our Carl, Mama."

"You are foolish, Papa. America is big, not all Americans know our Carl." She faced George and shrugged her shoulders despairingly. "You

must excuse Papa. He is always asking the same question of the Americans."

"That's all right." George felt himself flushing, embarrassed by her kindly expression and the soft, quavering voice that seemed to reach out like a gentle caress. She stared at him intently for a moment, her eyes searching out the crisp, unruly curl in his hair, the firm, weathered jawline. And after she was finished, she sighed audibly. "Now we play." She nodded her head twice at Papa, tapped her bow gently and tucked the battered violin under her delicate chin. Papa struck the first chords and ran his fingers lightly over the yellowed keyboard. And then Mama sneaked in with the violin, so quiet and careful that it was hard to know just where she had joined Papa.

The aproned bartender approached George with a scowl on his face. "Music like that will drive the customers away. What will you have?"

"Anything, a bottle of beer maybe."

The bartender went to the bar and came back with a black bottle and a frosted mug, which he set on the table beside George. But George didn't touch it. He watched the woman while she played, her eyes closed, the wrinkled fingers of her left hand trembling on the strings, and the soft, fluid music flowing out of the dark, stained wood. And Papa, sitting dignified before the piano, his arms moving freely with his old body which seemed to have acquired new strength and poise. He continued to listen and didn't know that they had stopped until the screech of laughter and the steady hum of conversation brought him back to the present and the room.

"That was nice, Mama," he said simply.

Mama he had called her! Carl would have liked that. "If you do get the chance go and see them, will you? You don't have to tell them about me, George. Just talk to them. They really think that I am in the States, you know. I give all my letters to a guy on a boat who mails them for me." Then Carl had laughed, sort of harsh and giggly. He always laughed at what he said, but lately his laughter had become more frequent; too frequent, George thought.

Someone tugged at the sleeve of his jacket. He caught a glimpse of bright red fingernails. "Watcha matta, cancha hear? You're not drunk, are ya, honey?"

George did not even hear the girl. He raised his head and stared at the old couple. Mama had put her violin down and was frowning coldly at them. The girl looked at George for a moment, then hastily withdrew her hand.

"Well, you don't have to look so sore, honey. I wasn't goin' to bite ya or nothin'," she said, and walked away pouting, her hips loosely swaying towards the nearest booth.

"Slut," Mama snapped through clenched teeth. She smiled at George. "You are good boy. I know, I can tell. This filth is not good for you. But hein, we drink now, then Papa and I play for you."

George nodded his answer, and immediately they climbed on the stools beside him. The bartender brought two cups of hot, steaming tea and slopped these down in front of them without making any attempt to conceal his hospitality.

Papa turned to George and in a dry whisper asked, "You travel much, hein?"

"Some," George answered. "Mostly just here in the Orient." Fascinated, the little man watched George's lips form the words, then he nodded, satisfied. That was all he asked, and George suspected that it was Papa's only knowledge of English, the one clause he had practiced so carefully and then tried whenever the opportunity presented itself in conversation. Mama was more proficient.

"Papa is always liking to talk about travel," she began, shaking her head sadly. "But we travel so much." Now she looked at George, and he saw how the little wrinkles pinched her face. "For a young man like you, that is good maybe. Ja, the wanderjahr is good for you. Papa and I have the wanderjahr, too. Then our country go mad with marching and guns and that man who is bad for my people. Then we leave. Here," she lifted her small, fairy-like hands and formed a cup, "we carry all that belong to us. Petrograd, Smolensk, Harbin, Tientsin, and now, here."

George felt a lump growing bigger in his throat. Mama sat, silent, hunched over the bar, and it seemed that the mere recollection made her tired. Papa squinted at his teacup and would not look at George. A bead of light glistened where a teardrop had streaked the side of his nose. George felt nervous and embarrassed. He hadn't wanted to hear the story, hadn't wanted to hear it at all. The music was all right, but maybe he had been foolish to make that promise to Carl.

"Yeah," he muttered. "I guess it can be pretty bad sometimes." He suddenly felt like he was trapped, hemmed in. Their misery wasn't his, and yet there it was already growing in his throat. I'm lonesome, he thought, that's all it is. Maybe if I got myself a dame… Desperately, he began to search around the room. Then he saw Buck, standing in a corner and talking to the girl with the red fingertips. Callaghan was with him.

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Mama took a deep breath and blinked her eyes to remove the moist film that made seeing difficult. Then she smiled, "Ach, if you talk about trouble, you have more trouble. Is that not so?"

"You're right," George said in a loud, matter-of-fact voice. "Mama, that sure is the truth. I guess you'll have to start playing now, so I won't stop you. Anyway, there's a friend of mine over there. I'll just go and sit with him for a while." The words poured out and tumbled over each other in a rush. Easing himself off the stool, he pulled out a bill from his pocket and laid it on her lap. "You just play some more and I'll listen, O.K.?"

Mama gazed at the money, and then at George who suddenly seemed so anxious to get away. Papa patted her hand, and together they went back to their place at the piano. They had not said anything, but George had seen the look on their faces, had seen that they understood, if not fully, then in part. And that was always enough for the eyes of little old men and women in the wanderjahr, who knew so much but spoke so little with their lips. And a deep anger rose within him.

Buck was glad to see him. The girl scowled and sidled close to Buck as George came near. "Come on," she said, jabbing her sharp hip-bone at Buck's ham, "let's park in one of those booths."

Buck ignored her. "Yeah, sure, George. I thought I'd freeze to death lookin' for you."

When they were crowded inside a booth, Callaghan said, "Where's that French babe of yours, George?"

"She wasn't here."

"Why worry, George?" Buck guffawed and slapped the girl on her thigh. "One bag less ain't gonna kill ya."

"Yeah, you're right, but you know somethin'? I feel good tonight. What do you say we all go out and raise a little hell?" Buck's face fell, and Callaghan's too. "Well, what's the matter, Buck? Why don'tcha say somethin'?"

"Yeah, Sure, George, we'd like to raise hell with ya. Only thing is we're a little short on cash."

"Who's talkin' about dough? I'm your friend, ain't I?" George stood up and waved to the fat man behind the bar. "Hey, Buddha, bring three of the biggest bottles of what you got!" Then he turned to his friends. "And how's about some music? They can play anything you want."

"Say, they can?" Buck said.

"Sure, how about 'Home on the Range,' ya like that?"

"It's O.K. with me, George, but I thought you always liked that highbrow crap."

"You're nuts, Buck. Ya never heard me say I liked that stuff. Hey, Mama!" He banged loudly on the paneled wall, and the booth shook from his pounding. "How about that 'Home on the Range'? Let's have that again." George sat down and grinned broadly at the others. "Jesus, but I'm goin' to get stinkin' tonight. You just watch and see if old George don't get stinkin'."

Sands & Coral 1953

Leticia N. Dizon

1954 Editor

A native of Magalang, Pampanga, Leticia Naguit Dizon graduated with a baccalaureate in Christian Education, major in Bible Teaching. She was the literary editor of The Sillimanian in 1953. From 1953 to 1954, she was the executive secretary-treasurer of the Silliman Writers Guild and the Press Relations Officer of the United Seniors. In 1954, she became the associate editor of both *The Sillimanian* and *Portal*. Also, in the same year, she was editor of *Sands & Coral*. Her works include two short stories published in the literary folio, “Her Haunted House” in 1953 and “A Place for Mourning'' in 1954.

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Her Haunted House

It was not a beautiful house. What made me look twice was a little knowledge I had about the people who had lived in it, four generations of them, of the tradition that the great grandfather of the family had wanted to hand down to every generation, an heirloom in a bride's hopechest, no slight repair should spoil its form or shape, so he had desired.

Seeing the slowly decaying wood of the house, its sagging framework, I thought of it as a proper memorial to its dead. It stood like a lonely outpost on the wide open grassy space of the several acres of the Fernandez estate. From the high church tower, it was a solitary dot on the vast green of the estate, for it had been painted white again out of respect to the old man's wishes.

The house was large and roomy, typical of those built during Spanish days. Now, the very last tenant, Sara, was rumored to be reselling. She was selling a memorial, doing it without the knowledge of the dead. Her great grandfather would have raged at the mere thought of it, as she knew the tradition of moral uprightness and family pride, which was in the pith of everything he thought or said. No stain, no suggestion of a dot, must his growing boys and girls leave on the family honor. And he doubly made sure with the girls, doubly sure.

So, back of the aloofness of the family was a philosophy. And he saw to it that his children were free from the vulgarity, the common- placeness, the ill-breeding of the children that ran loose, like sows and chickens, in the streets.

The old man was religious. Spanish priests had taught him many things which he kept in his heart as dearly as a prayer book.

It was a delicate matter with him, marriage. So was it with Sara's father. Sara had not married because of that, had rejected the suit of a certain Leo, now dead.

Marriage approvals were not easy to get. The old man demanded that the men and women his children would marry were good. Good, meaning everything that the word meant in his own terms. Otherwise, there was to be no marriage.

As a result of this unbending demand, his two elder daughters joined a sisterhood, which to him was sacred, therefore best. Nothing was more virtuous, he said, than to wear the stiff, chaste robe of a nun.

Another daughter, Dolores, possessing a stronger will than the rest of her sisters, attempted to risk an elopement, whatever she would become in the eyes of her father. It was a sad story that followed. The old man vowed to forget his daughter completely to regard her as nothing more than an illegitimate burden that must be disowned with shame and guilt. No peace could pass between them, and Dolores never returned to brush with her shadow the gate of the old house again.

So, Sara, the youngest of the great granddaughters, was sent to the usual old-fashioned school, like the rest of her female kin.

She grew up in the familiar atmosphere of the convent. She knew it only too well, that atmosphere. There were the conservative Sisters whose hard-starched, uniform robes rustled past her all day, while hers swished against legs that discipline could not quite still at that time.

And there were the girls whose little pleasures consisted of the secret sessions they held whenever possible. How the girls relished them, with all the thrills and suspense of getting caught. Conversation was carried on in muffled whispers and giggles, for inevitably their thoughts would turn to boys and all the other things that girls of Sara's bewildering age got excited about.

The familiar atmosphere, Sara had known well. Shame, guilt, and punishment were drilled into her life, until even the giggles and whispers that once she enjoyed with the rest, made her blush in embarrassment. She knew the beads of her rosary as intimately as the sound of the wake-up bell —the bell that gradually disciplined all of her.

There was no escaping from herself, when she misbehaved or "sinned." "You're guilty," the Mother Superior or one of the Sisters would pronounce. You had to know that you were guilty; guilt was a terrible thing that you had to absolve yourself of.

Sara was guilty once. It was purely a feminine offence that she had done. When the Mother Superior told her she was guilty, her mouth opened in a horrified O and her long pigtails shook lightly in apprehension.

"Is it true, Mother?" Her hand twitched behind the skirt of the a la jumper uniform.

"Do you understand your question?" The Mother Superior's low voice tried to sound gentle.

"I mean is it wrong?"

"What? Writing a love letter to Teresa? Would your father approve it?"

Her father. Of course, he would not approve, she thought. Turning to the Mother, she said, "Then, you can do anything to me, Mother. Please,

anything. I'll gladly suffer. Please don't write my Papa." And there kneeling in a corner, she suffered for one whole day, her head bowed in happy humiliation, her hands clasped together as in prayer.

After the death of her father, Leo called on Sara several times.

Where Sara was, there he sat. At such times, she would recall her father's stubborn face, how it looked when he said, "Child, make the rest of my days happy." She knew what he meant. It was Leo, that she must not see him. "I suspect that he is not properly brought up. I know it from his looks." And Sara would meekly answer, "Yes, Papa, I promise."

Yet, now that her father was dead, she would wait for Leo every evening. She would wait on the porch, staying long in the dark—she should be good and not be afraid—watching the stars shine coldly till he would come.

One evening, on the porch, Sara said to him casually, "My grandmother would come here every evening, when the weather was fine. Her face would relax beautifully in contentment. She would watch the stars long and I often would wonder if she did not want to hold the stars in her hands and possess them."

Leo edged closer towards her. "I feel cold tonight," he remarked, as he held her hand.

Out in the gloom, the whine of a dog stirred the night. Sara heard it and felt shivery. "I do not feel well tonight, myself," she said as she stood up to excuse herself.

Leo went home with bowed head that night.

Still, he came every evening after that. At every visit, Leo and Sara would do exactly the same things. Quietly, properly, as two well-brought up persons must, they would sit together, play out their fortunes in card games, drink black coffee to force sleep out of them, talk till things would come out irrelevantly. Some evenings they would read and read, stopping only to ask a question like what the French word affair d'amour meant or what was funny about a certain remark. About nine, Leo would get up to say good-night, then the house would be still. And when Sara closed the door, she would wait a while, her hands resting on the doorknob, and listen to the faint sound of his receding footsteps and then, when he had reached the deep river, to the creaking of the old bamboo bridge.

Then Paula would come shuffling behind her with a draughty candle, shadows moving in the hollows of her face. Paula was her only companion and helper; Sara's family had loved her, for to them she was charity: she was blind. She belonged to the house now, was part of it, and the swish of her black dress spoke of the things that Sara knew and remembered: days

in a convent, the stern and correct face of her father, whom Paula mourned in her quiet way.

With Paula, the pattern of Sara's life remained unchanged, the thread unbroken. And it was easier then, for she had herself also become a part of the house.

When Leo came back one day for his final answer, Sara found it hard to say anything. She could hardly bear to see the hurt on his clean, young face. Leo had drank his coffee and fidgeted with the cup, and the tall clock beat out the passing of time, until again it was proper to leave. Paula's uncertain footsteps could be heard in the kitchen, her beaded slippers scraping softly on the floor as she set about to light another candle.

"Have you thought about it now?" he said. "Will you marry me?" Still the freeing words would not come to her because really she was thinking less of his clean young face than of her own self, who had so much to answer for. And when at last she had seen how futile it was to keep him waiting, she turned a shadowy face at him and said, quietly, "No, Leo. No."

But why? Why? His eyes asked.

And in her mind: I can't cheat my father now.

He got up from his chair in what seemed a long time, forgot even to set the cup down on the table. Paula's candle-light was reflected on the ceiling through the latticed portion of the wall that separated the sala from the dining room. When Sara closed the door after him, her hand lingered on the knob, not entirely out of habit; but that night the old bamboo bridge did not creak, and she wondered about it.

Elegantly dressed in black—she must mourn for him as she had mourned her father. Sara faced the problem of selling the house and getting away from it. She would go to a far place, perhaps. Then, in the self-same breath, she knew that whatever she wanted to leave behind would always catch up with her. But how was one to sleep when the very walls whispered with familiar voices, and the screen window slapped noisily? And while she paced in her room, intimidated by the darkness that possessed the house and by the sounds she made, Paula would come holding the bobbing candle. Seeing her, Sara would feel ashamed. She could not get away from the house now.

Sands & Coral 1953

James M. Matheson

1954 Editor

Born on June 8, 1939, James M. Matheson is an American mestizo who grew up in Dumaguete City. In 1948, Matheson finished his secondary education at Silliman University and subsequently took his Bachelor of Arts in English in the same year. During his college years, he was an active campus writer, contributing stories and essays in various school publications such as *Silliman Newsletter*, *The Sillimanian Magazine*, and *The Sillimanian*, from 1949 to 1959, serving as editor or associate editor for these publications. He was editor of *Sands & Coral* in 1954 and associate editor of the Portal in 1955. He became campus-wide famous for his column in *The Sillimanian* simply titled "Diary." Aside from his writings, Matheson also contributed cartoons to *The Sillimanian* and once became the cover artist for the 1957 issue of *The Sillimanian Magazine*. Matheson was known for his pen names JM, Jamat, and Jimmy. He also became the circulation manager at the Silliman Library. After graduating in 1952, he married and also pursued his Master's degree, still at Silliman. He later became part of the University's Publicity and Publications Office in 1959, and the Information and Publications Office the following year.

Rain, Says the Gecko

"Papa Pablo, what is the matter with Mama Petra?" little Antonio asked, pulling at his father's pants. Antonio was only four years old and he could not understand what was going on in his house. He wanted to know why everybody---his father, Pablo, and his two unmarried aunts, Rosa and Anna, both elder sisters of his mother---looked very unhappy, and why the neighbors, particularly the women, came with sad faces and seemed to have trouble with their eyes after they had gone to see his mother in her room. He did not like the way some of them kissed and took him to their bosoms, saying, "Oh you poor, poor child!" Besides objecting to the buyo-flavored kisses and the moldy copra smell of the fat, middle-aged women, he felt that they were all up to something suspicious.

Placing the forefinger of his hand against his lips, Pablo said, "Shh. Be quiet, my son. Your mother is sleeping. You know that she doesn't want to be disturbed when she is sleeping."

Antonio knew that his mother's eyes were closed and that she was lying very still and flat on her back on her special mat. To his knowledge, this was the first time his mother ever slept like that. Usually she slept with her eyes only half closed and her mouth partly open, snoring without restraint, and her arms and legs pointing in all directions. Sometimes she even spoke while sleeping. But now she was perfectly quiet and motionless and very straight, and her hands were entwined on her abdomen holding a dried palm leaf cross. Her face, unnaturally pale, was quite blank and meaningless, as though it had been drained dry of dreams. And then she was wearing her best dress, of white shiny silk and lace, and her only pair of shoes. And even from her blanket, clean and neat and drawn up to her armpits, she borrowed an air of one prepared for travel. Antonio could not help being curious and puzzled.

"If that is so," he said, scratching his head, "why do you let all those people go in and look at her as though they had never seen her before?"

"Because they don't ask a lot of useless questions," Pablo replied, trying for infinite patience. He rolled his eyes upwards as though to search the rafters for divine deliverance. He saw instead the ugly and loathsome tokô clinging upside down on the bamboo ridgepole. It seemed to be waiting for someone to use as a target for its foul droppings. Then Pablo had the odd feeling that the lizard was watching him with its malignant

stare, mocking him, and he felt a sudden upsurge of murderous rage for the pestilent creature, as though for a moment it represented everything he hated in the world. Someday he would kill it and beat it to a pulp. Once, some perverse will had led him to ask the tokô about the outcome of his wife's illness, as people often did about the coming of rain, and it had told him what he already knew but did not want to believe. And then again on two other occasions, because the first time may have been all a monstrous coincidence, he had been told the same thing.

"But why do they want to see her today?" Antonio asked.

"Because…well, because they want to say goodbye to her," Pablo said. And if the tokô should try to seek sanctuary in a hole, he would plug the hole very tightly with a wad of the strongest tobacco he could find and so let it suffocate or starve to death. Then an irrational doubt crossed his mind. Would the lizard really die? It seemed to him now to be death incarnate itself, and its face was the true face of death, a face of inconceivable evil. He felt the tugging on his pants and he said wearily, "Yes, your mother is going away on a very long journey."

"A very long journey!" Antonio repeated his father's words, his thin anemic face brightening instantly. It was what he had been waiting to hear. He had developed the habit of accompanying his mother whenever she went to town or attended a feast in a nearby barrio, having found them enjoyable occasions. If his mother took the trouble of going out far, then it must be for a big event. And then the prospect of discovering new and more distant places greatly excited the young explorer in him. "Oh good, good!" he exclaimed, clapping his tiny hands in delight as he performed a short dance of joy.

His father did not speak, but merely looked at him with eyes that seemed to have lost something. Then Pablo raised Antonio up in his arms and together they went to the window.

"Do you see those men down there?" Pablo asked, pointing with his lips. "Well, you can see that they are making something---a wooden box. And do you know what it is for?"

"Yes."

Pablo held his breath. "You do?"

"It is for putting something in," Antonio said.

"Ah…yes! Yes, of course! Naturally, he he!" Pablo almost became really happy to find his fear groundless. But if his laugh resembled anything at all, it was more like the prelude to an involuntary sneeze. However, his son could not see the misery in his eyes, nor the quiver of emotion of his nostrils.

"The box is for your mother to travel in," he continued quickly, afraid his son might think of other things to ask. He could not bring himself to look directly at the boy, for he was not used to deceiving anyone, least of all his own son, and the effort pained him almost more than he could bear. Yet he was determined to do anything to spare Antonio from the terrible realization of parting forever with a loved one. Perhaps, had he been closer to the boy, and the boy less attached to the mother… But there was no time for idle reflection.

"Your mother," Pablo went on hurriedly, almost breathlessly, before Antonio could say anything, "your mother will have to travel across a very dark and dangerous region filled with all kinds of witches and demons and monsters! That is why it is absolutely necessary for her to go securely locked in a strong wooden box. Not only that, but she must also be in a very deep sleep all the time, so that she would not be afraid, for if she should show the least sign of fear, then…then her trip would not be successful." Pablo felt a tremor run through his son's frail body. If there was anything Antonio was afraid of, it was the imaginary creatures of horror his aunts had familiarized him with in their bedtime stories. Pablo knew that he had hit upon the way out of his problem. "It is not the kind of trip you would like to take," he added as an afterthought, although what he really wanted to say, truthfully, was, "It is not the kind of trip I should ever want you to take, my son," but he was afraid his son might want to go for the very reason that he didn't want him to.

"Manong, the guests are getting restless. Don't you think we should start stuffing them now with food??" It was Rosa, looking very brave and grave, and vaguely disturbing in her form-fitting silk black dress of mourning. She was notorious for her cynicism and sharp tongue, which had served to counteract the effect of her figure and smooth skin on other men. Pablo had known of her existence only after he had married Petra. She was only a year older than Petra.

"You are right, Rosa," Pablo said. "And you might as well give Antonio his dinner now." He watched the sway of her hips as she took Antonio away to the kitchen. Then something made him glance quickly upward. The tokô had moved from its original position and was now almost hidden behind the bamboo ridgepole, with only part of its head and one gleaming eye visible. It seemed to be leering maliciously at him. Pablo swore under his breath, vowing to exterminate the obnoxious pest as soon as he could attend to it, and he remembered that he still had to attend to his guests.

The funeral procession was about to set off for town when the commotion arose in Pablo's house. Pablo recognized the screams of Anna,

his wife's eldest sister. At first Pablo thought she was merely expressing her grief in her own peculiar way, which was really to attract attention to herself, but when he saw the people running around excitedly in his house, he almost flew in his haste going back. He found a group of chattering, gesticulating women huddled around something.

"What is the matter?" Pablo shouted. "What happened?"

They made way for him and he saw Anna was having her fainting fit. Rosa was pushing her fist into her sister's solar plexus in an effort to revive her. Anna kept screaming and rolling her eyes. With her singular emaciation and cadaverous face, she looked like the corpse whom death had overlooked and mistaken for someone else. Pablo was both relieved and disgusted.

"It's all Antonio's doing," explained Rosa. "The little imp frightened her out of her wits by lying stiff and still and holding palm leaf cross. She thought the boy…" She broke off to push her fist again into Anna's solar plexus as Anna screamed once more and rolled her eyes. A fat woman was applying medicinal ash on Anna's temples, and another was trying to make Anna drink from a bowl of broth.

"Papa Pablo," Antonio said. "I want to go with Mama Petra."

Pablo took the boy aside. "I have already told you why you cannot go," he said.

"But I can sleep like Mama Petra, and there is enough wood left over to make a box for me."

A look of inward suffering appeared on Pablo's face, as though he had an attack of gastric pain. "Would you then leave your poor father alone?" he said with a groan.

But Tia Rosa and Tia Anna can keep you company," Antonio said. "I want to go with Mama Petra. Please, Papa Pablo, let me go with Mama Petra."

"Enough of this foolishness," Pablo said finally, stamping his foot. "You do as I say and stay here," he said, pointing his finger at Antonio. He told Rosa to hold the boy if he tried to follow.

Antonio stopped crying when Pablo returned from the burial. Pablo had brought home with him a painted toy truck.

"What is that bulging in your pocket, Papa Pablo?" Antonio asked, wiping away the last traces of his tears from his cheeks as he held the toy to him.

"Oh, that," Pablo said. "It is a wad of strong tobacco."

So Antonio went off, happily pulling his painted toy truck after him, saying, "Teet-teet! Truck coming! Out of the way, everybody! Teet-teet!"

The days that followed were busy ones for Pablo and his sisters-in-law. They had to prepare for the people who came every evening for the novena, and who prayed heartily only with a full stomach. After each night's devotion there were games intended to drive away the sadness of death. For Antonio it was a period of unmitigated joy. He was always smiling and pulling his painted toy truck behind him. Pablo found himself watching Rosa more often, and he thought less and less of the departed one. There came a whole day, the day before the katapusan or end of the novena, when his dead wife did not enter his mind even once.

A cow was killed for the final day of prayer, and everybody had a good time. It seemed indeed that the sadness of death had been completely driven away. Even Anna, who had not smiled since her sister died, was now laughing and joking as though she had never known sorrow. To add to the general gaiety was the pleasant expectation of more feasting and praying. It was rumored that Kapitan Eslao, a rich old man who had been seriously ill for several months, would not last another day.

"Papa Pablo," Antonio said.

"Yes, son. What is it?" Pablo replied laughingly. He was in high spirits, having drunk several glassfuls of tuba. He was also closely observing out of the corners of his eyes the subtly provocative way Rosa behaved in his presence. He had come to the conclusion that she knew when he was watching her and that she liked it, too. He was breathing hard.

"I like Mama Petra to go where she is going now," Antonio said. "When she comes back I hope she will take another long trip again, so that we will have some more happy times."

Pablo's smile withered on his lips. His vision seemed to dim, and the merriment around him appeared like a scene from a disturbing dream. When he looked down and saw his son's beaming face he could not say anything. He placed his hand on the boy's head, stroking it tenderly.

"What is that piece of wood you have on your truck?" he asked, after a while, to divert the boy's thoughts from his dead mother.

"It is the box containing Mama Petra," Antonio answered. Pablo pales, and when the blood returned to his face he frowned. He recognized the piece of wood as a left-over of the material used for his wife's coffin.

"You should not play about your mother's trip," Pablo said in a stern voice. "You should not even mention your mother's name. You might wake her up and cause her to be frightened. You know that would be bad for her. It would spoil everything we have done to make her trip successful."

"Would it keep her from coming back?" Antonio asked, wide-eyed with concern.

"Yes," Pablo said, "it might." He picked up the piece of wood on the painted toy truck. "I don't think you have disturbed her journey yet, but you must not play any more about it," he said, "nor mention her name again." Antonio was thoughtfully silent when Pablo threw away the piece of wood as far away as he could.

But throughout the rest of the day and far into the night, no matter what he did, Pablo could not get rid of the vague unease that had descended upon him. He was haunted by memories of his dead wife. He could not---dared not---sleep. A plopping sound on the floor made him jump as though he heard a ghost. It was only the tokô discharging its filth. Pablo realized with a pang of regret that he had smoked all of the strong tobacco he had bought for the sole purpose of killing the lizard in case it hid in a hole. But he could still borrow his friend Cencio's air-rifle first thing in the morning. It would be quite a simple matter then to have his revenge on the creeping abomination that inhabited his roof and spied on him all the time.

Pablo carried out his plan early the following day, while Rosa went marketing with Antonio. The tokô clung tenaciously to the bamboo ridgepole, dripping blood on the floor, even after it had been hit many times. In the end, however, it fell with a thud, dead beyond reasonable doubt. Pablo threw the lizard away not far from the house, so that he could smell its stench when it began to decay.

But somehow there was no feeling of triumph in Pablo, nor even a sense of satisfaction. He was unaccountably restless. Once he caught himself staring at the roof, as though he expected to find the tokô still there. It was not there anymore, of course.

"What is the matter, Manong?" Rosa asked him after the noon meal. The solicitude in her voice and in her glance was more than sisterly. "You hardly touched your food. Is something weighing on your mind?"

"I…I don't know, Rosa," Pablo said uncertainly. Mistaking Rosa's eager look for anxiety, he told her about the story he had devised for Antonio.

"You did right and wisely," Rosa assured him, touching his arm. "The boy is too frail, too sensitive to know the truth now," she said, gazing into his eyes. "Later on, when he is older and stronger, he will find out and understand."

"Yes," Pablo said, and a wave of tenderness for Rosa swept over him. He wanted to express his gratitude for her encouragement. And there was something else he wanted, too. "Yes," he repeated, at a loss for words.

He was still thinking of his shapely sister-in-law when Antonio said, "Papa Pablo, look at what I found." And a sudden dread took hold of

Pablo. A moan escaped his lips. Somehow, even before he saw what his son had found, it seemed to him that he knew what it was. He stood paralyzed in helpless terror as the dead tokô bore into his soul with its staring sightless eyes. With an effort, he passed his hand over his face, and the crazy feeling went away, leaving him weak and slightly annoyed.

"Why did you do that?" he asked irritably. "Don't you know that it is dangerous to play with a tokô?" The lifeless lizard had the painted toy truck all to itself, like a privileged passenger.

"But it's dead," Antonio argued. "It's harmless.' His tone was that of a grown-up person trying to reason with a child.

To Pablo, the word "dead" coming from the mouth of Antonio sounded strange and alien, as though devoid of sinister connotations. "How do you know that it's d…that it's harmless?" he asked bitterly. "Just because it's…dead does not mean that it's harmless. Many dead things are harmful. As a matter of fact, a dead thing can be more harmful than when it was alive." Pablo realized that he was saying things he should not say, even though he was not saying them for the boy alone, but for himself also.

"Now take this tokô," he went on. "It may be dead, as you say, but if its foot should touch your skin it won't easily come off." He demonstrated by touching a foot of the tokô with the end of a stick.

"Oh, I know that," Antonio said. "But I'm careful not to touch its feet, and it won't touch me because it's dead."

"Oh, is that so? And how do you know it's really dead? What would you say if I told you that it was only asleep…" Pablo stopped abruptly. The two regarded each other mutely, the son puzzled, and the father fearful that he had given himself away.

"But the tokô is dead," the boy insisted.

Pablo heaved a deep sigh of resignation. "Of course it's dead," he said, indifferently. "But you don't want the chickens to eat it and get poisoned."

"The chickens would have found it where I found it."

"We'll bury it then."

Pablo was digging the grave of the dead tokô when Anna stuck her head out of a hole in the house which had been a window before she stuck her head out of it. "What are you two doing there?" she asked. Her questions had a way of sounding like damning accusations, and her harsh, croaking voice seemed to come from some bird of ill omen in the wooded ravine back of the house. And her black dress constantly reminded him of something he did not want to be reminded of. It also made her look more like an old crow. He hated crows.

"We're burying a dead tokô, Tia Anna," Antonio said.

"Huh!" snorted Anna. "From the size of that hole one would think you were burying more than a dead tokô." Pablo wanted to say something sarcastic, but Anna had disappeared. It was her way of having the last word, by disappearing after she had said it.

"The chickens won't be able to get at this tokô after we're through," Pablo said, by way of an explanation for the size of the hole he was digging. Antonio said nothing, as though he had not heard, although his silence might have been tacit acceptance. But from where he stood, on the other side of the hole, he now seemed utterly beyond reach of the other, as though the hole were an unbridgeable chasm between him and his son, and it wrung his heart to know that it was his own making. It would only be a matter of time before his son would discover the truth, and then it would be the end. He might as well be burying the stillborn embryo of the love he craved so much from his son.

He was standing in the middle of a long straight road that lay across a vast encompassing absolute darkness fraught with unknown peril. He could only see the surface of the road and two other persons standing on it---a woman and a boy about four years old, the woman holding the boy firmly by the hand. They were a short distance ahead of him with their backs to him. They did not move; they were waiting. He had never seen them before, yet he was certain he knew them. Then a silent truck appeared, approaching not gradually like an ordinary truck, but step by step like a paralytic's dragging foot, as though its wheels had nothing to do with its motion. It was the painted toy truck he had bought for his son, but now as big as a real truck. Then the woman and the boy moved noiselessly towards the truck and boarded it. Everything was quiet as the woman placed the boy in a wooden box at the back of the truck, and when the woman slid into the driver's seat finally facing him he saw that she was not his wife but the tokô and his horror increased. "My son! Give me my son!" he wanted to shout, but he could not make a sound. Neither could he move. Then the tokô said, "Tok-oo!" and the truck moved away backwards once. "Tok-oo!" The truck moved farther away.

"Manong! Wake up! Wake up!"

Pablo opened his eyes and saw Rosa. She was shaking him with one hand and holding a light with the other hand. "You were having a nightmare," she said.

"Tok-oo!"

"What's that?" Pablo said in a startled, frightened voice.

"Rain?" Anna asked from inside her room.

"Why, it must be the mate of the tokô you killed," Rosa said, looking into his eyes and breathing deeply. She was leaning over slightly and she was wearing a loose revealing blouse.

"Tok-oo!"

"No rain?" Anna asked, and then, after a minute of silence, she announced in a disappointed tone, "No rain."

There will be rain for planting," Rosa said, creeping back to bed by her sister's side. "That tokô was calling for its mate."

"You are always talking about mates," Anna said. "I'm not interested in them."

"Always talking? Why, that was even the first time."

Pablo peered into the room of his sisters-in-law, where Antonio slept. Antonio's face was unusually pale in the flickering light of the coconut oil lamp. Pablo made sure that Antonio's chest was moving before he went back to his room. But he could not sleep. He lay awake staring into the darkness of the roof. Sometimes snatches of conversation from his sisters-in-law came to his ears, but they did not make sense to him. He told himself that Rosa must be right as usual, that it must be only another tokô, but he could not dispel the doubt that surrounded him like the darkness. He tried to think of Rosa leaning over slightly, wearing loose revealing blouse, but his memory would not cooperate. He could not bring her image into focus in his mind, although he had seen her only a few minutes before.

After burying the dead tokô, he had wandered off aimlessly, from one sanggutan to another. He could not recall how many tuba-producing coconut trees he had visited. Most of his friends kept several, and he had many friends. Neither did he know how he reached home, who helped him get there. But he was sure that he had drunk more tuba than he could decently hold, for although he felt washed and his clothes had been changed, he could still detect the telltale odor which meant that he had vomited. Fortunately, he never became violent under the influence of tuba, and he must have gone to sleep early. It would have greatly disturbed him if, losing consciousness, he did not go to sleep. But he could not help feeling silly now, and he suddenly realized that he was very weak, and that he had a splitting headache. His head was like a volleyball that was being given too much air. He clutched it with both hands, and then he ran his fingers over his face.

"Where are you going, Pablo?" What is happening to you?"

He had spoken softly, but the sound of his own questions reverberated in his ears, filling his head with echoes. Then he noticed that the darkness had deepened and the silence had become pronounced. Of course, there was an explanation. His sisters-in-law had fallen asleep, and

the coconut oil lamp, left unattended, had burned itself out as it often did. But it was so dark that when he closed his eyes he saw no difference, and the silence was so deafening he could not hear anything else. For the first time he keenly missed the snoring of his wife. He felt utterly alone against the darkness and the silence. Suddenly a note of fear stole into his heart, increasing in intensity with every beat. He was afraid that if he moved or made a sound he would be discovered by the unknown menace that lurked in the darkness around him; and he was afraid that if he tried to move or make a sound, he might find that he could not. He lay mute and motionless, paralyzed with a growing terror.

And then from the silence and the darkness came the sound he had been waiting for.

"Tok-oo!"

A question formed in Pablo's mind. He was not asking about the coming of the rain.

Sands & Coral 1955

Graciano H. Arinday Jr.

1955 Editor

Graciano Hechanova Arinday Jr. was born in 1927 in Allicante, Saravia (now Enrique B. Magalona), Negros Occidental. He went to Allicante Elementary School and then later to Silay Institute to start secondary school but his schooling was interrupted in 1945 by the Second World War. He eventually completed his secondary education in 1948 at the Negros Occidental Provincial High School in Bacolod City. In 1952 he earned his Bachelor of Arts degree at Silliman University and subsequently took up law, earning his Bachelor of Laws in 1955 also at Silliman. While studying law, Arinday also pursued both journalism and creative writing as shown in his involvement with *The Sillimanian* and *Sands & Coral*, contributing poems and stories from 1950 to 1954. His essay "Las Vegas de la Memoria: The Mid-Fifties" appeared in the centennial issue of the *Sands & Coral* 2001. As a student, Arinday was both an active campus writer and student leader: the Chairman of the Supervisory Board of Student Publications, the President of West Visayan Circle and the Silliman Writer's Guild, a correspondent of *The Evening News* and *The Manila Times*, the editor-in-chief of *The Sillimanian*, the editor of *Sands & Coral*, the literary editor of *Portal*, the PRO of Order of the Purple Hood and United Seniors, and a Senator in the Student Government. Arinday eventually became a Regional Trial Court Judge. He also sponsored literary contests for Silliman students. He died on July 23, 2012.

The Street of Nights

From the sun's dimensions this street
Where houses expose naked the arteries of lust, Look like the paraphernalia of funerals,
Of flowers pallid upon a forsaken tomb.

The eyelids now heavy with undefinable sadness
And the flesh quivering at an ill wind's kiss,
We stand motionless watching civilization set
Among the cathedral shadows of my town's drafty homes.

It will take generations to piece together the remnants
Of a once lovely place and a new sun to filter
Across this land of lolling breasts and bleeding eyes,
Where affection resembles the martyrdom of a thief.

Oh, yes, this place is not for you, beloved,
The nights are endless among my neighbors;
The undulatory afternoon hours are spent with strange sounds
Of mahjong blocks and voices of brides stolen from their beds.

To feel the place and be with a dear companion
On the river wall bracing the neighbors' back doors,
Is to be dead for a moment with dark-green lips,
Like god-like fishermen murdered on amber shores.

Here, you shall witness the sagas of ancient pains,
Ending, beginning, conflicting, contaminating,
Across the fiber of continental flesh and blood
Made up of adulterous anxieties and fears

Of men and women lasciviously cruel,

Whose pleasures and dreams are coded crookedly
In sunset blood and money and treachery
For civilization to bleed and die in transgression's womb.

And yet, we must live, beloved, continuing,
Without squinting at the sky, nor remembering
The halting wombs and sainted visions
Of haunted people on the street of nights.

Sands & Coral 1954

Maria Luisa E. Centena

1955 Editor

Maria Luisa E. Centena obtained her M.A. in English from Silliman University in 1956, with her thesis, "A Critical Study of the Different Aspects of Realism in the Short Stories of Four Major Filipino Writers in English." She became part of the English and Literature Department in the same year and was one of the advisers for *The Junior Sillimanian* in 1957.

On Chinese and Hindu Poetry: A Study of Contrasts

Poetry stands parallel to a people's highest level of culture; it is the truest expression of a national attitude. Both Chinese and Hindus have a poetic tradition that dates back to ancient times, a tradition of art that holds within its core the lost and almost forgotten magnificence of early civilizations, carefully preserving through centuries the changing and vari-coloured tones of a people's racial vision, yet irreconcilable as these two Oriental races are in their way of life.

Religious mysticism, which is perhaps the greatest influence to be discerned in Hindu poetry, has not successfully penetrated the structure of Chinese poetic art. Lao-Tzu and his mystic doctrines, strengthened by the assimilated philosophy of Buddhism, together coursing along the same spiritual vein, have merely toned Chinese acceptance of whatever Fate has in store for the human underling into a passive perspective, a profoundly calm view of life. The mystic hand has not touched the heart of the race and as a result the Chinese have a religious tradition founded on common sense, holding as the highest good the path of the "golden mean." The venerated sage Confucius, whose practical wisdom is recognized by peasant and potentate alike, almost exclusively directs their way of life and, consequently, their poetry. His beneficent teachings on matters of everyday concern have instilled in both outlook and poetry of the Chinese race a casual, yet adult objectivity. The Chinese poet does not chase into nature for its elusive mysteries; to him life is wholesome and tangible; it is to be seen and heard and touched, to be found and enjoyed in the most seemingly-insignificant of its attributes.

Take a poem of one Po Chü-I, entitled "Madly Singing in the Mountains":

They have put my bed beside the unpainted screen; They have shifted my stove in front of the blue curtain. I listen to my grandchildren, reading me a book;
I watch the servants, heating up my soup.
With rapid pencil I answer the poems of friends;
I feel in my pockets and pull out medicine-money. When this superintendence of trifling affairs is done,
I lie back on my pillows and sleep with my face to the south.

Hence Chinese poetry, influenced by the 'common sense' principle, is predominantly realistic and woven around external objects and circumstances, many of them assuming the direct and sparkling cleverness of short commentaries. Not that it is without poignancy, for the Chinese have an inherent love for life, an extraordinary capacity for enjoying the countless details of minute importance that form the pattern of living. Their poetry abounds with these little happenings, descriptions of sensuous delights done with relish, in frank and informal language, poems of separation and absence, of manners and etiquette, of court intrigues and military campaigns, of devoted friendship, short poems on cockfights and cockatoos, on horses and mice. It appears, by these commonplace themes, that the Chinese is a poet by heart, a poet by natural inclination, for a race which can have aesthetic experiences over the most mild and trivial of things is undoubtedly a race of poets. Po Chü-I, one of those who graced China's Golden Age of Poetry during the T'ang Dynasty, expresses this natural gift for the rest of his fellow-men:

There is no one among men that has not a special failing; And my failing consists in writing verse.
I have broken away from the thousand ties of life: But this infirmity still remains behind.
Each time that I meet a loved friend,
I raise my voice and recite a stanza of poetry
And am glad as though a god has crossed my path.

The mystic strength of Brahmanism, and centuries later of Buddhism, has taken roots and blossomed in Hindu poetry. From the earliest Vedic literatures to Rabindranath Tagore's "Gitanjali," which is of our time, one

can easily trace the course of this mystic strain, steady and unfluctuating—'Ages pass, and still thou pourest, and still there is room to fill!'—and the reader who fails to detect or consider this particular quality grasps merely the surface values of Hindu art. The Hindu poet thinks in terms of symbols; each item in actual reality is a flitting clue to the real meaning of existence. The sentient world is illusory and life a temporary sojourn which must be taken merely as a part of the universal life force, therefore not important for its own sake. One finds no 'let us drink and be merry for tomorrow we die' philosophy here but a transcendentalist view of objective reality—a penetration of the fleshliness of nature in the search for Indra's heaven.

A natural outgrowth of spiritual yearning is the lyric, and Hindu poetry is innately lyrical. Even its epics are sensitively toned to this lyric mood, the narrative occasionally lapsing into delicate outpourings over some profound secret of life or some fleeting joy. Hindu lyrics wear the timeless mood of languid, seemingly endless afternoons in the shade, with worldly shapes and sounds and colors vividly floating around, yet not quite real. For the Hindu poet lives in a mysterious exquisite world of fairy-forms and flute-like women voices, of righteous gods and heroes, of faithful wives and devoted family life, of idyllic love between man and woman, a wonderful, hidden world of transfigured forms and happy echoes, tranquil and untouched by pain. This escape from the confines of human individuality into the original state of immaterial existence, this losing of Self, underlies the sheer, dreamlike quality of Hindu poetic imagery.

Rabindranath Tagore, in "Gitanjali," says:

> Let all the strains of joy mingle in my last song—that joy that makes the earth flow over in the riotous excess of the grass, the joy that sets the twin brothers, life and death dancing over the wide world, the joy that sweeps in with the tempest, shaking and waking all life with laughter, the joy that sits still with its tears on the open red lotus of pain, and the joy that throws everything it has upon the dust, and knows not a word.

The Hindu poet often represents himself as a romantic lover; he finds love between man and woman—its different absorbing phases, its speechless but soul-rending trials, its quiet triumphs—a fascinating theme. He sings rapturously of 'love at first sight,' of predestined love that resists the caprices of cruel superhuman agencies, of forbidden love that recklessly defies death. From Kashmirian Bilhana's "Chaurapanchasika" we find these lines:

Even now
I seem to see my prison walls come close,
Built up of darkness, and against that darkness
A girl no taller than my breast and very tired,
Leaning upon the bed and smiling, feeding
A little bird and lying slender as ash trees,
Sleepily aware as I told of the green
Grapes and the small bright-coloured river flowers.
Even now
I know that I have savoured the hot taste of life
Lifting green cups and gold at the great feast. Just for a small and a forgotten time
I have had full in my eyes from off my girl
The whitest pouring of eternal light.
The heavy knife. As to a gala day.

Passionate love between the sexes is rarely celebrated in Chinese poetry, although the reverse, the rejected love of woman for man is a favourite theme. To the Chinese poet, the highest form of human attachment is friendship. It furnishes much of what is poignant, touching, and truly emotional in Chinese poetry. Over its many joys, its alternately satisfying and heartbreaking qualities, an unknown Chinese poet breaks into songs:

Shang Ya!
I want to be your friend
Forever and ever without break or decay.
When the hills are all flat
And the rivers are all dry,

When it lightnings and thunders in winter,
When it rains and snows in summer,
When Heaven and Earth mingle—
Not till then will I part from you.

Poetry is participated in and enjoyed in such a nationwide manner nowhere else in the world as in China. The knowledge and the recitation of poetry are considered a necessary accomplishment to which even the common people aspire. Eunice Tietjens, in her introductory note to a collection of Chinese poetry, says: "Until very recently the knowledge of the classic poems, and the ability to produce new ones on the old models, was considered one of the first principles of education. No one might attain to any position of authority, even such an unlikely one as the equivalent of chief of police of the city of Peking, without a profound knowledge of poetry—an idea which commends itself heartily to some of us. Even the common people have by heart a number of the classic poems, and anyone with the slightest pretense to education can chant poems by the half hour, in the curious formal system of intoning which they invariably use in rendering poetry, a system not unlike, I judge from Mr. Yeats, that used by the early Irish bards." The recurrence and popularity of themes on governmental functions and on the duties of government officials have an explanation in the fact that most of the major poets of China have been servants of the state.

Both highly sensuous in imagery, both excelling in beautiful poetic pictures, graphic and delicate, Chinese and Hindu poetry have come through the long, arduous centuries unscathed, retaining the original purity of their emotional tone. Great names illumine the unbroken line of both traditions: Khalidasa, the greatest Hindu dramatist, whose dramas are full of enchanting lyrical digressions; Bhartrihari, the master of short, sparkling lyrics; Jayadeva, and his beautiful love poem, the "Gita-Govinda," also called the "Indian Song of Songs;" Kashmirian Bilhana, who wrote the "Fifty Stanzas Of The Chaurapanchasika" for the lovely, white-limbed king's daughter that he loved; Toru Dutt, the high-caste maiden poet and essayist who died at the tender age of twenty-one, leaving behind a number of musical and mellifluous sonnets; Rabindranath Tagore, musician, critic, dramatist and poet, of whom it is said—"To read one line of his is to forget all the troubles of the world;" and then one

cannot fail to mention the representatives of the great epic period of the Sanskrit era, the Mahabharata and the Ramayana, more lyrical than heroic in mood. Alongside these famous Hindu names, we find those of the poet-statesman, Chu Yuan, whose poems are fraught with colorful imagery; the irrepressible Li Po, who rebelled against convention and discovered the joys of living in a "pot of wine among the flowers;" the serious, contemplative Tu Fu; the extremely learned Po Chu-i—whose most popular poem "The Never- Ending Wrong" has immortalized the love of the Emperor Ming Huang, the patron of Li Po, for the lovely concubine Yang Kuei-fei— all of the golden Tang Dynasty; Wang Wei, the poet and landscape painter; Yuan Mei, Li Shang-yin, Su Tung-Po, Su Shih, and a host of minor poets who carry on the golden Tang Dynasty, a poetic tradition as old as history itself.

No one can rightly say which group is greater; it is not for us to make comparisons as there is no tangible formula for measuring literary merit. It is enough that poetry makes possible an intimate sharing of one another's preoccupations, regrets, joys, and frustrations; that it makes possible a communion of alien natures. We catch precious fragments of a long-vanished splendour like "shadows of flowers on the floor of the Jasper Pavilion," of a calm and exquisite world beyond the tossing clouds and the restlessness of flesh; and there is pain, not of remembering, but in the sudden thought that these things may forever be gone for us, that within our tainted selves we may nevermore "lie naked in the green forest of summer" beneath "an ancient cypress with a trunk of green bronze and a root of stone," nevermore find in ancient, jade-lined tomes the magic of "ten thousand yesterdays."

Sands & Coral 1954

Carminia A. Yaptenco

1957 Editor

Born in Ermita, Manila in 1931, Carminia Añonuevo Yaptenco obtained her Bachelor of Arts degree, *magna cum laude*, from the University of the Philippines in 1953. She then moved to Dumaguete City and worked as a part time instructor in the Department English and Literature at Silliman University. From 1956 to 1957, she was editor of *Sands & Coral* and secretary of the Silliman Writers Guild. Yaptenco finished her Master of Arts in English degree from Silliman in 1958, doing a critical study on the works of National Artist Nick Joaquin for her thesis. In 1975, she earned her Ph. D. from Michigan State University. She taught literature at the University of the Philippines Diliman until her retirement.

Cage of Glass

Renato Vidal glanced at his watch, then at his wife seated before the dresser, meticulously putting on the finishing touches to her make up. Her image in the mirror seemed unusually radiant, her fancy earrings dangling, glittering in the light of the fluorescent lamp.

The familiar scent of her perfume which had suddenly started to invade their bedroom irritated him. With a grunt, he forced his stuck drawer open; the contents spilled on the linoleumed floor. Breathing heavily now, he stooped down to pick up the scattered papers.

"Rene," Thelma broke the silence that had crowded them apart the last few minutes, "if you're busy tonight, I'll just ask Berto to drive me to Lily's place."

"It isn't that." He sounded morose. "I just want us to be home together tonight with the kid."

"Well, haven't we celebrated Joey's birthday? And rather thoroughly? I'm still tired from that party. But this tonight is very important. My friends won't know how to manage the affair, not without me."

"Your friends—yes! They're more important to you, it seems." "Please, Rene, I don't know why. We just seem to…"

"Six years," he mumbled, "and still we can't agree on a lot of things!"

"It's because you refuse to understand. And what do you expect me to do? Deprive myself of the things I'm used to?"

"Now, Thelly, you talk as if you don't have a family. Can't you ever understand that our child needs you, needs what you can give to him?"

"But Meding is always here to look after him.""That's right! It has always been like that. What kind of mother are you, anyway?"

"Oh, you always talk as if…"

There was a creak from behind. Gradually the door opened. Slowly Joey entered, glancing at him, then at his mother. As the boy minced his way towards her, she smiled.

"Mommy," he said, looking up at her. "Are you going out tonight?" "Yes, darling. What do you want me to take home for you?" "Candies, peanuts, biscuits… many, many things like when you

won in mah…"

"No, darling, I'm not going to play mahjong tonight," she explained slowly, carefully, and all too obviously for the benefit of Rene. "Your

Mommy's a busy woman. She's raising funds for the underprivileged children of the slums."

"That's right," Rene took up, "Your Mommy's a busy woman.

She's going to a bingo social."

"What's a bingo so…" Joey inquired.

"Never mind that, dear," Thelma told the child. "When you grow up, you'll understand."

"When I grow up, will you let me go out with you at night?" "Well… yes, darling. Now kiss Mommy good night, and tell your Tita Meding to give you a sponge bath."

Joey kissed his mother lightly on both cheeks then wiped his lips with the back of his palms. "Why does Tita Meding not go out with you at night?" he asked, lingering by her side.

"She's tired, attending to the house. Now, Joey, be a good boy and hurry up. I'll bring you many things when I come back. Ah, yes, has your Tita Meding given you your vitamins?"

"She has," Rene answered. "She always does."

Briskly Thelma stood up, led the boy outside, and closed the door behind her back. "Rene, please," she whispered, "let's not quarrel tonight. I just have to go out."

"You always have to, don't you?"

"Oh, I'm late now," Thelma exclaimed, glancing at her watch. Stepping into her high heels, she hurried out of their room, past their living room, to the patio outside, down the flight of stairs.

He heard the door of the car slam shut. Then the whir of the motor, loud, forceful, gradually disappearing, tires screeching on the concrete driveway.

Alone in the room, Rene tried to concentrate on the volume of Official Gazette spread open on his desk. But disturbing thoughts kept intruding. Six years, six long years they had been married, and they could not yet agree on a number of things. At the start of their marriage, he thought it would just take a little patience. But now he was beginning to doubt if his wife would ever change.

There was a big difference between them to start with. In fact, it was a surprise to many people that they got married at all. Thelma was an only child, the only daughter of the late governor of the province and Mrs. Sotera Mendez y Camanzo, owner of a string of rice lands. And he? An ambitious young lawyer engaged in private practice!

When he won a big court case, Cholita was glad and then was terribly hurt when he changed his mind about their getting married. It was really for the best, he had been trying to convince himself.

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All his life, he had worked hard to help his widowed mother support his younger brothers and sisters. And now that he had a chance to go up fast through the influence of the Mendezes, he should not lose it. For he had started calling at Thelma's place and could sense that it was just a matter of time before he was accepted.

The first few months of their marriage, however, were beset with difficulties. From the outset, he had objected to Thelma's going out with her friends. She was lonely, she protested. As soon as they had a baby, it would be different, she promised.

When Joey came, however, her friends kept on dropping by at their place. And when the boy was a little bigger, she started going out with them again.

Rene tried to convince his wife to leave the place, to go with him to Manila where he could join some of his former classmates in a law partnership. But she just wouldn't leave. This was her home. Anywhere else, it would be different.

"Rene," the old woman herself intervened in their argument, "please don't take her away yet. She's my only daughter, the child of my old age…" She paused as if thinking of what to say next.

She's my wife, he was about to answer back but thought better of it.

"I've only a few more years to live," the old woman went on.

"When I die, Thelly will take over everything; that is, almost everything, except for the little that will go to Meding."

"Mama," he answered, "that's precisely why I want to take her away. She doesn't realize how I feel here, with everything belonging to her. Perhaps that's why she insists on having her own way."

"Rene, you should make allowances for her. She's our only daughter, and we gave her everything. When we realized our mistake, it was too late."

"Nothing is too late if we have the will to change it.""I am an old woman now, Rene, and I know how it is to be disappointed. I took in Meding, hoping that Thelly would change if she had a foster-sister. But I was mistaken."

"Won't you give me a chance?"

"As I said, I have only a few more years left. Thelly's still my daughter no matter how deeply I've been hurt by her ways. I hope you won't take her away."

"But, Mama, Joey's growing up. Very soon, he'll come to understand things. I want him to be brought up with the proper discipline." He groped for words to say but his indignation kept getting in the way.

"I know how you feel, Rene. All I ask is a few more years. You don't have to worry about Joey. I'll see to it that Meding doesn't spoil him."

"All right, Mama. It's up to you." He realized it was useless to argue further with his mother-in-law.

In less than a year, the old woman took ill. Things turned out as he had feared. Joey was left solely in Meding's care, and the boy seemed to be more attached to her than to them. And Thelma did not even seem to care. If he had only insisted on his way, things would have turned out different.

Going out to the patio, Rene reproached himself. What was the use of indulging in regrets? There was Joey. Ah, yes, he should see that the child was well tucked into bed. But, of course, Meding could be trusted to do that.

Poor Meding—she had to attend to the house, the old woman, the tenants, everything. It was true she bore the celebrated name of the Mendezes. But what was her part in it?

Family friends had always looked down on her as somebody different. And it was Thelma who, through hints, always reminded them of her place.

Painfully aware of Meding's predicament, he had tried his best to let her meet others, his friends, mostly young lawyers. But it was the old woman herself who held them at arm's length.

Poor Meding—with the passing of the years, the cage that confined her had grown narrower, leaving her helpless, perplexed. And she did not dare find a way to escape.

First there was the old woman, now an invalid who did not want to be cared for by anybody else. Then there was Joey, who preferred her to them, his own parents. Was it pity, envy, or resentment that once made him try to break up the close attachment between her and the boy?

It was no use, he realized with regret. That was more than a year ago. But still he was haunted by the bewildered hurt in Meding's face. Joey himself did not seem to comprehend.

When he pushed the door of Joey's room open, Meding was startled. She was carefully tucking the child's mosquito net under his mattress. "I'm sorry," he said. "Is he asleep?"

"He is. He just had to take his new toys with him to bed. And I had to tell him several stories before he went to sleep."

"Well… thanks." He found himself stammering. "I mean not only for tonight but for all the other things. I just can't imagine how we can manage without your help."

"Oh, Cuyang," she said. He saw how her tiny dimples deepened as she smiled to conceal her embarrassment. "I'm used to it. Ever since Mama Titang took to bed—I mean, somebody has to look after these things."

"But that shouldn't be. I mean…"

"Cuyang," she said, Mama Titang took me in when both my parents died in an accident. This is little enough to show my gratefulness."

"Meding…"

"Yes, Cuyang?" She looked up at him, her deep dark eyes probing. He stared at her, unable to proceed. After a long silence, he started again. "I was just thinking…" He stopped, shocked at himself. "Oh,

never mind," he said and hurriedly left.

Back in the patio, Rene shuddered. What was that he almost said? With horror, he realized what he had refused to admit even to himself these past years.

He heard footsteps going out of the child's room, past the living room to the main door. Turning around, he saw Meding approaching the butterfly orchids hanging suspended on split coconut husks over the balustrade. "Cuyang, what is it you are worried about?" she asked, reaching for the sprinkler by his side. Her hands gleamed white in the moonlight.

"Meding," he blurted out, "do you have to take everybody's responsibilities on your shoulders? You should start thinking of yourself now, your own future, before it's too late. When the old woman dies, what will happen to you?"

"Oh, Cuyang," she exclaimed, distressed, "that's something you really shouldn't worry about!" She turned away and left.

Alone in the patio, Rene wondered why Meding apparently took offense at what he had said, why he had said such a thing in the first place. Was he afraid for her? Or of himself?

He was fiscal of the province now, thanks to the influence of the Mendezes. And he must always protect his position. He could not help wishing though that he was not always under the scrutiny of the public. The public, he muttered to himself, who compose the public? Weak men like himself, men who do err and bring grief even to those they should respect and protect. And he? He had once erred, bringing anguish to the one he had once vowed never to forsake.

Like Meding, he found himself caught in a cage built of glass, wanting to escape but held back by its revealing walls; outside, the eyes were watching, staring. Was there no way out of it?

In the semi-darkness, he seemed to hear the patter of slippers, a soft voice breaking… He should see Meding, he decided, and made a clean breast of it.

With a determined gait, Rene hurried to the living room, paused, stared at her door. She must be kneeling at the altar now, saying her beads. She was always praying. For whom, he had once asked her in jest. For all of us, she had answered. Pray for me especially, a sinner, he had jokingly told her. She did not answer.

Now that he recalled the incident, he started wondering what she really thought of him. Perhaps at this very moment, she was praying for him, for them.

He thought he saw the door knob twist, writhe, then twirl back to place. And the sound of the unoiled hinges gritted in his ears like dry sand scraped by a spade.

Gripping the back of the chair that stood in his way, he stared hard, harder, harder till his eyes brimmed with tears. Still he stared, fearful that if he so much as blinked, the door would slam shut in his face.

In the darkness the old clock chimed. And he felt the minutes, the seconds ticking away in his veins. Startled, he glanced at his luminous watch. It was past twelve.

The door swung back. And the crush shattered his being into shivering little pieces. Aching in every limb he willed himself to approach the door. For the door knob had turned brilliant, sparkling with an eerie, intermittent light. Slowly, bit by bit, he struggled against the onrushing tides that had suddenly appeared with the strange light. He was near the door, his hands were poised for the knob, when a flash of light revealed the faces floating in the tides—faces of people he had known and never known before—mocking, taunting, jeering.

And among the countless faces floating all around, he could single out the face of his wife, her full red lips curled up in triumph that he had fallen at last, his child's staring, uncomprehending.

Another face loomed in the swirling tides—bewildered, hurt. And he had no doubt whose face it was.

Suddenly he turned about, and rushed to the patio outside. For a moment he stood by the balustrade, with bowed head, his shoulders twitching. Nearby, the butterfly orchids fluttered in the small wind. And the droplets of water clinging on the leaves sparkled like bits of transparent glass in the moonlight.

Sands & Coral 1960

Eugenio Alexis R. Baban

1958 Editor

Eugenio Alexis Reyes Baban was born in Cebu City to Nicolas Baban and Florencia Reyes. He earned his Bachelor of Science (General) and Bachelor of Arts in English from Silliman University, and his M.D. from the University of the Philippines. As student in Silliman, he served as Press Relations Officer for both the Guy Hall dormitory association and the Alpha Sigma Chi fraternity. He was also an elder of the Silliman Church in 1957-1958, and the editor-in-chief of the *Sands & Coral* 1958.

Arrow in Flight

Setting: A farm somewhere in the heart of Panay Island.
Cast:

Tio Manoling — A farmer
Tia Floring — His wife
Nanding — Their son
Pacing — Their daughter
Capitan Luis — A commando
Corporal

The Play . . . . .

SCENE I

(Scene I opens in the spacious sala of a prosperous farm-house. The room has large windows and two doors opposite each other. Big bamboo baskets line the wall, while big wooden chairs surround a low card table. On a wall hang two pictures, one of Nanding and the other of Pacing. As the curtain rises, Tio Manoling is sitting contentedly on a chair while Tia Floring is busy darning a dress.)

Tio Manoling: The rain will come, and very soon I shall have to begin preparing the rice fields for the planting.
Tia Flaring: Do you think the crop will be good this year?
Tio Manoling: Who knows, but if God wills it, we will have a prosperous year. It is too early to guess, but we have been blessed for so long a time.
Tia Floring: We are in many ways lucky. A good home, security, and two obedient. children. (Looks at Nanding's picture) I'm a little worried about Nanding though. He hasn't written us for over a month.

Tio Manoling: He must be busy studying. Law is quite a hard course. However I have faith that Nanding will become a lawyer. He was always a bright boy.

Tia Floring: I remember the first oratorical contest he entered. He was only third year then, and on the stage he looked so small. I thought I would faint when he forgot a part of his piece and stuttered.

Tio Manoling: But he remembered the lines and finished the piece. I was the proudest man in the town when Nanding got that medal. I felt as if I had won the medal too.

Tia Floring: You did, in a way.

Tio Manoling: When I was young, I was full of dreams and ambitions. Most of them were silly, but some of them I wanted so much. Now I find myself old and weak, and my dreams out of reach, still as far away as they were years ago.

Tia Floring: I guess everyone at some time in his life wants something which is impossible to achieve.

Tio Manoling: I wanted to be a lawyer, a good lawyer. I never became one, and I guess I failed.

Tia Floring: Never think that of yourself, Manoling. I love a man who, orphaned at the age of ten, grew up and built himself a farm with the strength of his hand and the sweat of his brow. I married you for what you have achieved, not for what you could have.

Tio Manoling: Yes, I have achieved riches, but where am I? People know me as an illiterate farmer. They respect me for my money, not because of myself. It would have been different had I been to law school.

Tia Floring: You speak a lot of nonsense. Why do you talk this way? You never talk like this when Nanding is here. You miss your son, don't you?

Tio Manoling: Yes, and I'm being so selfish about it.

Tia Floring: You and Nanding are very much alike. He used to imitate everything you did, including that slight limp you have from your leg wound. I don't know what you would be like if we didn't have a son.

Tio Manoling: Maybe I'd consider Myself a failure in many things, but not with Nanding. He is my son, my own flesh and blood. He carries all my hopes and ambitions. All the things I missed, he shall have. All those things I wanted to be but couldn't, he shall become.

Tia Floring: When he left for Manila six months ago, I knew that my little boy was gone. It was a man waving to me from the departing ship. I'm so proud of him.

Tio Manoling: Just think of it, Floring. Four years from now I shall be the father of a lawyer. . . or even a politician.

Tia Floring: Let him just be a lawyer. That in itself is enough to send him to hell.

ENTER Pacing . . . .

Pacing: Good Morning, Papa', Mama' (Kisses their hands). I helped Maria with the preparation of the dinner.

Tio Manoling: Why, is that handsome Capitan coming again?

Pacing: To get me.

Tio Manoling: What?

Pacing: Oh, Papa', as if you didn't know that Luis and I are engaged. We have planned the wedding for next week, and today Luis is coming to formally ask for my hand in marriage.

Tio Manoling: I suppose what is expected of me is a formal yes?

Pacing: Only that and nothing more.

Tio Manoling: Well, I object to his tactics. He should have come to me first.

Tia Floring: I don't know what you mean, Manoling, but if I remember right, you presented our marriage license to my father before he could consent to our marriage.

Tio Manoling: Well, that was different. Have you told Nanding about it, Pacing?

Pacing: No, not yet, but I'll write to him and tell him all about it.

Tia Floring: Here comes the Captain. Some soldiers are with him.

Tio Manoling: That's probably to make sure that I don't say no.

Pacing: Oh, Papa'!

Tia Floring: You better go inside Pacing. Come on in when I call you.

Capitan—Tagbalay!

EXIT Pacing; knocking at the door. . . .

Tio Manoling: (Opening door) Ah, Capitan, please come in.

Capitan: Tio Manoling, Tia Floring.
Tia Floring: Please take a seat.
Tio Manoling: What can we do for you, Capitan?
Capitan: I, ahh. . . about Pacing.
Tia Floring: Yes?
Capitan: I'll have to be direct since I have only a short time.
Tio Manoling: We should all be direct. You want to marry my daughter?
Capitan: Why yes.
Tia Floring: You and Pacing have planned it already?
Capitan: We have. I came here because of that. I'm afraid our plans cannot go through.
Tia Floring: Does Pacing know?
Capitan: I guess not.
Tio Manoling: There must be a good reason, Capitan.
Capitan: A very dangerous one. You see, there is a certain Komander Sundang who has come here to Panay to organize the Huks.
Tio Manoling: The Huks have been inactive since the death of Capadocia.
Capitan: We suspect that this Komander Sundang is here to take the place of Capadocia. Headquarters has ordered my company to catch this Huk.
Tia Floring: Do you know where he is?
Capitan: We did yesterday. We surprised him with a handful of his men at about six in the afternoon. All his men were shot but he got away although very badly wounded.
Tio Manoling: What do you plan to do?
Capitan: Look for him, He couldn't get far with that wound of his.
Tia Floring: I better call Pacing. You talk this out with her. Excuse me.

EXIT Tia Floring. . . .

Capitan: I hope Pacing will understand.
Tio Manoling: I think she will. How about your men. Where are they?
Capitan: I sent them to scout around for the Huk. They will be back soon.

ENTER PACING. . .

Pacing: Luis, I thought you would never come. Has Papa said yes?

Tio Manoling: Oh, I remembered something. I have to go down to the coconut groves. You two talk it out.

EXIT Tio Manoling . . . .

Pacing: Well, did Papa' say yes? Capitan: I didn't ask him.

Pacing: What? Why?

Capitan: There is Huk trouble in this area, Pacing. I don't want our wedding right in the middle of it.

Pacing: Then when will the wedding be? When will this Huk trouble be over?

Capitan: Days, weeks, months, I don't know.

Pacing: You don't know! Luis Ledesma, if you think that you can make me wait while you run after another of those Huks, you're wasting your time.

Capitan: I think you will wait, and for a good reason.

Pacing: Oh, you even have a reason!

Capitan: I have to go after this Komander Sundang. The Army wants him dead or alive, and I'm the man who was ordered to get him. While he is alive, I will have to run after him.

Pacing: Why don't you stop thinking up of reasons? All you have to say is that your feelings for me have changed. Go on, say it! I won't die of grief.

Capitan: Pacing, you know my brother Andres, don't you?

Pacing: Yes. What has he got to do with our getting married?

Capitan: Everything at the moment. He was killed yesterday by the same man I am running after.

Pacing: I didn't know. I'm very sorry.

Capitan: Andres was with me when my men discovered the hiding place of this Komander Sundang. I don't know what happened, but before I knew it Andres was gone. I rushed to where the shooting was in time to see Andres fall from a bullet fired by this Huk I was telling you about.

Pacing: Did the Huk get away?

Capitan: Yes, although four of his men lay dead. Komander Sundang, however, is badly wounded and out here somewhere.

Pacing: I'm sorry I didn't believe you.

Capitan: You see, Pacing, I have to go after that Huk not only because the Army wants him, but because I want him for killing my brother.

Pacing: Did you get a good look at him? I mean Komander Sundang.

Capitan: It was late in the afternoon and I couldn't see his face, but he was tall and lean. Had long but well groomed hair and had a big low voice.

Pacing: And I suppose he wore a Hawaiian shirt and very thin pants?

Capitan: Yes, why?

Pacing: (Amused) When you described him, I almost saw Nanding, my elder brother. I told you about him, didn't I?

Capitan: Too much. I think he was all we talked about the first time I visited you. Sometimes I think you love him so much that I don't have a place in your heart anymore.

Pacing: (Still amused) Now you are jealous! You know that Nanding is the only brother I ever had, and the best any one could have too.

Capitan: Yes, I know.

Pacing: Nanding and I were always doing things together. When we were small children, we used to visit the mango trees everyday when the fruits were beginning to come out. One time Nanding saw a yellow spot high up in the tree. Thinking it was a ripe fruit, he climbed the tree even though I told him that it was too high. It wasn't a mango, but a dead leaf, and Nanding almost broke his arm when he fell from the tree.

Capitan: It is so different without a brother. I feel a great difference now that Andres is gone.

Pacing: I'm sorry, Luis. Andres could have been my brother too. I don't know what I'd do if Nanding . . . I don't even want to think about it.

Capitan: I think you see now why you must wait, don't you, Pacing?

Pacing: If it's because of danger, both of us, as husband and wife can face it better.

Capitan: That is precisely why I can't marry you now. I love you so much that I cannot bear to see you hurt because of me.

Pacing: But . . .

Capitan: No, don't say anything else. You know I will change my mind if you do. Say nothing else. The thought that you will be waiting for me when this work is done will be my courage.

(Knocking at the door)

Pacing (Opening door) It is one of your men and Papa'. Come in.

ENTER Corporal and Tio Manoling. . . .

Capitan: What is it, Corporal?
Corporal: Message from Headquarters, Sir (Hands a note).
Capitan: I must go back to town at once, Tio Manoling.
Tio Manoling: So soon? I thought you would eat with us today.
Capitan: I would like to, very much, but I have to go.
Tio Manoling: (Calls) Floring! The Capitan is going.

ENTER Tia Floring. . . .

Tia Floring: But you have just arrived!
Capitan: The Major wants me to come to town right away.
Tia Floring: That's too bad. Well, you soldiers sure keep running all the time.
Capitan: This time we are chasing, for a change. Tio Manoling, Tia Floring, Pacing?
Pacing: Take care of yourself. Don't take any risks.
Capitan: Goodbye. I'll be back very soon. Oh, Tio Manoling, I think you better watch out for Komander Sundang. He may be very near your farm.

Exit Corporal and Capitan. . . .

Tia Floring: I'm scared about this talk of Huks. I wish Nanding were here. He always gave me a feeling of assurance when he was around. Always sure about what he was going to do. Like. you, Manoling, only you take time to think about it.
Tio Manoling: There's nothing to be scared about. The Huks are far away, and that Komander Sundang must be dead already.
Pacing: Luis said that he was badly wounded.
Tio Manoling: (Striking bolo at a coconut) Blind fools.
Tia Floring: Who?
Tio Manoling: Huks (another blow with the bolo), oh, my finger!

Tia Floring: There you go again, getting mad over some Huk whom you don't know. Is it deep?
Tio Manoling: No, just a scratch.
Pacing: I'll see if we have some mercurochrome and bandages.

EXIT Pacing. . .

Tio Manoling: These Huks are a lot of lazy people. They don't work and when they don't have
anything to eat, they think others have to feed them. I built this farm with my own hands and I hate to think of people who threaten to get it away from me.
Tia Floring: They have their reasons. Do you hear somebody coming up the stairs? The door is opening!

ENTER Nanding in tattered, soiled clothes, wearing a gun around his waist.
Tio Manoling: What is the meaning of this? Don't you have any manners at all, coming up the house like you owned it?

Nanding: Don't you recognize me?
ENTER Pacing with the bandages. . . .

Pacing: Papa', Mama, it is Nanding! (Runs to him).
Nanding: I'm wounded (Clutches body side and slumps into a chair.)
Tia Floring: It is you, Nanding.
Tio Manoling: Why is he here? No, Nanding is in Manila, studying to be a lawyer!
Pacing: I'll go get some water, Mama'.

EXIT Pacing . . . .

Tio Manoling: (Dazed) Wounded? Wearing guns and rags. . . No! It can't be! It mustn't be!

ENTER Pacing with pitcher of water and a towel. . . .

Pacing: Has the wound stopped bleeding?

Nanding: (Comes out of unconsciousness) Pacing! Mama'! Papa'!

Tio Manoling: (Brushing aside Tia Floring and grabbing Nanding by the collar) Hernando! You are the Huk the Commandos are looking for. Answer me. (Shakes him)!

Tia Floring: Stop it, Manoling, he is wounded!

Tio Manoling: Are you or are you not Komander Sundang? Nanding: Yes, Papa, I am Komander Sundang.

Tio Manoling: (Releasing hold on Nanding) But why? You are supposed to be in Manila, six months already. . . studying law.

Nanding: I got out of the University.

Tia Floring: But, Nanding, you went there to study law.

Nanding: I got out to join actively in the liberation of our country. The communist party of the Philippines needed my services.

Tio Manoling: And you willingly became a Huk? I cannot understand it. A Huk?

Nanding: Only the people who don't understand our cause have given a distaste for the name of Huk. To the oppressed, it means liberator, or revolutionist.

Tio Manoling: (Sarcastic) And I was going to be the father of a lawyer! Now I find myself the father of a Huk! No!

Tia Floring: Don't talk, Nanding, you will only open your wound again.

Tio Manoling: (Turning back on Nanding) From a baby I taught you right from wrong, good from evil. Ah, you learned your lessons well, so well that it was a joy to teach you. I guess you never knew how much pride I felt in my heart for you when you boarded the bus with all our friends watching and envying me for having a son who is going to be a lawyer. Now I am ashamed of you and I curse the day you were born!

Pacing: (Helping Nanding get to his feet) Nanding, don't stand. . . your wound will open!

Nanding: (Approaching father who still has back turned) Papá, didn't you tell me once that if I ever find a goal in life I must pursue it to the utmost of my ability?

Tio Manoling: Honor, service, contentment, yes, but not the goal of the Huks.

Nanding: I sincerely believe in what I am doing.

Tio Manoling: (Whirling around) Murder, rape, robbery, arson, ambush? Is that what you believe in?

Nanding: It is the only means to a desirable end, the liberation of our country.

Tio Manoling: What desirable end? The grave. And what liberation? From what?

Nanding: The evil capitalistic system. We in the provinces rot while the fat capitalists in the city prosper. We who work the fields eat only once a day while those who sit in their offices eat all they want. We don't even possess the basic rights that human beings are entitled to. Soldiers take what they want, kill whom they will under the pretext of shooting at a Huk. A government that engenders this is a bad government. A change in favor of the common people is needed.

Tio Manoling: Why we, Hernando? You have never missed a meal in your life. You enjoyed the respect given to me by everybody. We never had any cause to complain against our government. Oh, Hernando, you had a promising future, and you threw it away.

Nanding: Yes, I have never been hungry or maltreated by anybody. I never had cause to complain. For myself, yes. But I am fighting for the people who are not as fortunate as I am or was. Where is Tio Juan? He is dead, shot by soldiers.

Tio Manoling: It was an accident.

Nanding: Accident? Why that old man was so weak he couldn't lift a gun. Where is your neighbor Tio Pedro? I'll tell you. He's in the city driving a jeep when he used to own a hundred hectares of land here. He lost it all because of a city swindler who produced what he called the original title to the land.

Tio Manoling: It was proved in court that he had no right to the land. The appeal was turned down by our supreme court.

Nanding: Courts! That old man lost because he was ignorant and those who had some education exploited him. Yes, you are right when you say that I, Hernando, have never been hungry or suffered injusticed. Only, the others have. . .our neighbors. In my conscience I have suffered the injustices which have been heaped on others. That is why my cause is noble. I fight not for myself but for the rest of the people.

Tio Manoling: I cannot believe that you are the same son who left me six months ago to take up law. You are insane! Come back to your senses,

Hernando. You are becoming the instrument of the greatest slave machine the world has ever known . . . communism. I don't know much about it but this I know . . . it is evil. It is a sackful of empty promises. Turn back from madness!

Nanding: Papa, do you remember when I was a small boy playing with bows and arrows, you said, "Nanding, be very careful how you shoot the arrow. Make sure of your target before you let go of the string, because once the arrow is in flight, nothing you can do will be fast

enough to bring it back."

Tio Manoling: (Softly) Yes, I remember telling you that. It is not too late to turn back if you will, now!

Nanding: But it is too late, Papá. The arrow is in flight. I am sure within me that my cause is just and beneficial to the people of the Philippines.

Tio Manoling: (Turning around) Then why did you have to come back here! Why did you come back! Why couldn't you just have disappeared?

Nanding: I will go away.

Tio Manoling: Now! Get out of this house. I cannot bear to see my own flesh and blood a traitor to his country and to his father.

Nanding: I will go but hear me first. I was sent here by the Supremo to reorganize the Huks in Panay. This will be a bigger and greater organization than ever before. This is the final rally.

Tio Manoling: You won't succeed. The Philippine army is very strong. The commandos are already looking for you.

Nanding: They will never catch me. In a few weeks, the Philippines shall see a revolt. A revolt that shall overthrow capitalistic imperialism and pave the way for Communism.

Tio Manoling: What are you talking about?

Nanding: A nation-wide uprising, with the army of the common people, the Huks at the vanguard. I have been given the honor of leading the revolt here in Panay. I have not told you yet, but I am a Colonel in the people's army.

Tio Manoling: You traitor!

Nanding: Do not say that of me, Papá. I know what I am fighting for. Join me. The cause lacks men of courage and conviction. I am to convince you to rally to the cause.

Tio Manoling: (Picking up bolo and grabbing Nanding by the shirt) Why, you dirty communist! . . . How dare you say . . . (Nanding pulls out his gun).

Pacing: (Shrieks) NO! Papá, Nanding! (Runs to Nanding and hugs him).

Tia Floring: (Rushing to Tio Manoling) Father and son? Oh, God, what has happened to us?

Nanding: I, I'm sorry (Walks away to other end of room with Pacing). Here, take it (hands her the gun).

Tio Manoling: I could kill you. You are not fit to leave this house alive.

Tia Floring: Manoling! What kind of a man are you? This is your son that you want to kill! Your son!

Tio Manoling: That's what hurts the most. Once he leaves this house, he will go and get others like him. Didn't you hear him say that there will be a nationwide revolt in a few weeks and that he is the leader here? You know what that means, Floring. Thousands of people will be killed and he will be the cause of it here.

Tia Floring: But he is still your son!

Tio Manoling: Not anymore. I have no son. My son was supposed to be in Manila studying law. What you see here is not my son. He is a Huk, a murderer and a traitor. Get him out of this house before I kill him.

EXIT Tio Manoling . . .

Pacing: Who's is coming? (Runs to window)

Tia Floring: Who are they, Pacing?

Pacing: Luis and his men! But he just left us a few hours ago.

Nanding: (Looking out of the window) It is the Capitan who surprised me and my men yesterday. (Looking out more intently) They are splitting. They must think I am here. They are circling the house.

Pacing: You must get away, Nanding.

Nanding: I won't get far. They will see me if I go out of the house. I'll hide inside. I don't think they know I am here.

Tia Floring: No, not inside. If they ever look for you, that is the first place they will go to.

Pacing: Inside the basket. That one, Nanding, it has no rice in it.

Tia Floring: Hurry.

Nanding: (Getting into basket) The gun!

Pacing: Never mind, I'll keep it (puts down cover of basket).
Capitan: (From the outside) Tagbalay! Tio Manoling?
Tia Floring: (Opening door) Oh, it is you, Capitan. Have you forgotten something? Please come in.

ENTER Capitan . . . .

Capitan: I'm sorry if I am intruding. I guess I'll have to say good morning again.
Pacing: Take a seat, Luis.
Capitan: My business will be quite short. Is Tio Manoling here?
Tia Floring: Yes, he is inside.
Pacing: I'll call him.

EXIT Pacing . . . .

Tia Floring: Is it very important? Please take a seat.
Capitan: Thank you. This is really a routine.

ENTER Tio Manoling and Pacing . . .

Capitan: Good morning, Tio Manoling. I'm very sorry about this visit. You see it is about that Komander Sundang. (Tio Manoling remains silent.)
Capitan: After we left your house this morning, we went to the farm of Tio Manuel. He was waiting for us. He told us that early this morning he heard his dog barking. Then all of a sudden there was a shot. He brought us to the place where he heard the shot and we found his dog, dead.
Pacing: Of what importance is that?
Capitan: Well, we found this bit of cloth in the mouth of the dog (Hands Tio Manoling a colored piece of cloth).
Tio Manoling: (Absentmindedly.) What is this supposed to be?
Capitan: Part of the shirt which Komander Sundang was wearing yesterday.
Tia Floring: Then why did you come back here? Surely Komander Sundang should be near Tio Manuel's farm. Capitan: No, the Huk was apparently headed here.

Tia Floring: Surely, you are not thinking that you will find him here.
Capitan: Of course not, Tia Floring, but we have searched your surroundings and haven't found him. I thought I might make the search thorough so that I could submit a complete report to my Major.
Tia Floring: Do you think that Huk is here?
Capitan: No, not exactly. I mean I'm not sure. You understand don't you, Tio Manoling.
Tio Manoling: Huk? What's that you said?
Capitan: I said that you'd understand my purpose in searching the house.
Tio Manoling: (Disinterestedly) Oh, oh yes.
Capitan: (To Tia Floring) Have you locked your back door?
Pacing: We always keep it open except in the evenings.
Capitan: Haven't you thought that he might have come up your house while all of you were in this room?
Tia Floring: Why, no.
Tio Manoling: Let him do what he has to do, Floring. It's all right, Capitan. I just feel dizzy.
Capitan: With your permission. (Calls) Corporal!

ENTER Corporal . . . .

Corporal: Yes, Captain.
Capitan: We'll search the house. Please don't go into the rooms while the corporal searches. It might be dangerous. We'll make it quick.

EXIT Corporal . . . .
Tio Manoling: Capitan, have you ever planted rice?
Capitan: Only when I was a small boy. My father was a farmer.
Tio Manoling: How did your father feel when during the harvest he found out that the good grain which he had planted months before and which had grown green and healthy yielded only a lot of rice husk?
Capitan: That happened once with my father when I was still small. My father wanted to burn his whole rice field, destroy many hectares because of his disappointment.
Tio Manoling: I can understand why he wanted to do it. Look at those big rice baskets. They contain a part of the grain which I will sow my fields with when the rains come.

Capitan: I think you may do your planting soon. The heat is a sure sign that the rain is coming.

Tio Manoling: You still are a farmer's son. Open one of those baskets over there.

Pacing: No!

Tio Manoling: Why not, Pacing. I want to show the capitan the first class grain I have.

Pacing: Luis is in a hurry, Papa! He has a lot of work to do. He has to go now, don't you, Luis? It won't take long. Now stop being silly. I want you to look at the grain, Capitan. It is good grain; yet I am not sure whether it will yield me husk only when harvest time comes. Open it.

Capitan: (Opening the cover of one basket) I'll see if I still can recognize good grain when I see some.

Pacing: No!

Capitan: Huh! (Falls backward as Nanding coming out of the basket hits him).

Pacing: Nanding, your gun, get out while you can. Nanding: Don't pull your gun.

ENTER Corporal . . . .

Corporal: Captain, there is no one . . .

Capitan: Do as he says, Corporal, he has the gun.

Tio Manoling: Are you still here? I told you to get out of the house.

Capitan: This is Komander Sundang, Tio Manoling. Why are you helping him? Pacing, this man is a Huk, why did you give him the gun?

Pacing: He is my brother.

Capitan: What? I thought he was in Manila.

Nanding: But I am here, Captain, and I plan to escape you again.

Capitan: You can't, the house is surrounded with my men.

Nanding: They would not want to see you killed, Captain. You will come with me, and I will have this gun at your back all the time. Let's go.

Capitan: I'm not going.

Tia Floring: Go with him, Captain, and let him get out of here.

Capitan: He is not escaping and I will not go with him.

Nanding: You don't think I'll use this gun, do you?

Capitan: I know you will, and it doesn't matter whether you use it now or later. You will kill me just the same when you have escaped.

Pacing: Nanding, you would not do it. (Runs to Luis) I gave you the gun because I love you and don't want you to be killed, not because I want you to kill some more.

Nanding: Some things have to be done.

Pacing: No, Nanding. I am going to marry Luis; I was going to write you about him.

Nanding: As a future member of the liberated people of the Philippines, you must learn to sacrifice. I will use the gun if you do not go, Captain.

Capitan: I have only one life. Pacing: Don't say that, Luis.

Capitan: One life is nothing compared to the hundreds that will be killed if you are given a chance to organize your Huks.

Tio Manoling: (Approaches Nanding) Put down that gun, Hernando.

Nanding: I will count to five, Captain, and if you still refuse to go after the fifth count, I shall kill you and take my chances outside.

Pacing: No, Nanding! What have you become? Nanding: One!

Tio Manoling: I said put down that gun! (Slaps Nanding) Give me the gun (Knocks Nanding down).

Tia Floring: Manoling, Nanding!

Tio Manoling: (Takes hold of Nanding by the collar and lifts him up) You won't kill anybody while I'm here. (Hits him again.)

Nanding: No! (Gun goes off)

Tio Manoling: You . . . (falls down) .

Nanding: Papa'. I didn't pull the trigger!

Tia Floring: (Rushing to fallen Tio Manoling) What have you done, Nanding?

Pacing: (Kneels down by Tio Manoling's side) Oh, Papá. Nanding: I . . I . . . the gun went off.

Pacing: (Standing up) You killed him! Your own father!

Nanding: No, Pacing!

Pacing: I gave you the gun, Nanding, and you killed your own father. You, my brother? What have you become? Has your madness made you a murderer?

Nanding: It was an accident! Pacing ! Stay where you are, Captain.

Pacing: (Hysterical) Get out of the house! You have brought enough grief.

Nanding: (Backing towards door) I must go! I cannot stay here. The cause! (Whirls around and opens door . . . two shots ring out . . . he staggers back in)

Tia Floring: No, Nanding!

Nanding: (Leaning on chair for support) I die, but I am insignificant. The cause . . . the liberation of our country. . . is greater than I. (Falls down).

Sands & Coral 1957

Eliseo P. Bañas

1959 Editor and 1968 Co-editor

Eliseo Pandiño Bañas began his career in Silliman University in 1955 as a staff member of the College of Theology library. Eight years later, he was promoted as chief cataloger of the University Library. His diligence and dedication to Silliman—even while pursuing his master's degree in Library Science, which he eventually earned from the University of the Philippines in 1974—eventually led to his appointment as acting University Librarian in 1970. In 1981, he became the University Librarian and held this position until his retirement in 1988. In addition to his full-time work in the library, he contributed critical essays and short stories to the *Sands & Coral*, where he was editor-in-chief in 1959 and co-editor in 1968, served as managing editor of the *Silliman Journal* in 1978-1979, and edited the Silliman School Calendar and Extension Service Newsletter. His wife, Alejandra Reyes, was a long-time English teacher at the high school department.

Anatomy of a Prize Story

The last first-prize award in the annual short story contest sponsored by the Philippines Free Press has been given to Bienvenido N. Santos for his "Brother, My Brother," which appeared in the Philippines Free Press issue of October 5, 1957.

The question as to what makes a short story win a prize is one which has been asked for countless times, and doubtless will be asked for countless times more as long as there are short story contests here and elsewhere. This brief discussion is another attempt to provide an answer—not necessarily the answer—for to try to settle this perennial question permanently is no saner than bailing water out with a bottomless bucket. Times change and so do standards, especially in the field of commercial stories to which category most prize-winning stories oftentimes belong. For reasons of timelessness and recency, Santos' story has been chosen for dissection on the belief that, since it is the latest choice, it may also be representative of that kind of short stories that the present crop of critics heartily approve.

The story is about 3,500 words in length, which is somewhat in excess of the usual length specified for entries in the annual contest. Numerous passages are in italics, representing the so-called train of consciousness, of which most of the piece is made. Briefly, it concerns a man on the verge of leaving faith in the fidelity of his wife just because he himself once upon a time had some relations with the wife of an absent friend. The story is heavy with symbols, one of which, in this case, takes the form of white ants that had gone far in rendering hollow the sides of a cabinet that had contained letters and other reminders of an almost forgotten past. The word hollow is repeated endlessly as if to drive home the thought that at that stage all is pointless, that whatever he believed unquestioningly about his wife is now of no consequence, despite all appearances.

With the obvious intention of landing it a semblance of reality, "Brother, My Brother" is written in the first person. This gives it the flavor of a confession, a first-hand narrative which, quite naturally, makes it all

the more interesting if we are to accept the widely accepted notion that the average reader is at heart a curious, inquisitive creature. The illusion created is that the events actually happened and that the narrator himself had an active part of the action, making the story his story. On this point, Santos has been criticized by Demetillo as "patently sentimental." The latter despises the story for the reason that, to use his own words, there is "more emotion intruded to it than the situation allows."

Santos appears to be of the school of writers who have a strong affinity for flashbacks. Here he falls back on the method zealously; and the fact that his story captured first prize seems to suggest that flashbacks have not yet gone out of vogue. On the contrary, it could still be a very much accepted approach. The truth is, of the approximately 3,500 words composing the story, about 1,900 makeup for the flashbacks itself. It is there that the story is contained.

To dwell further on the application of the flashback technique in "Brother, My Brother," it would appear that while the author adheres to the time span rule laid down by the classicist, he at the same time must somehow periscope the action in his story such that while the included events actually covered a period counted in months, they would give the illusion of having transpired within the revered Aristotelian rule. It could not have been intended as it suspiciously appears, but it is without question a masterly way of circumscribing an unusually difficult situation.

Again, in keeping with one of the Aristotelian dicta, and perhaps as a manifestation of the influence of the so-called single dominant impression school, Santos' story is set in one, and just one, place. This is of course ignoring the flashback which, in terms of space, really spans the vast Pacific and on to a continent some 10,000 miles away. But the physical setting of a short story is not supposed to change--- at least that is what the followers of the dominant impression group believes---and thus this is one story that faithfully falls in line, if but to please classicism. In this regard, "Brother, My Brother" is perfection itself, for the main character does not even so much as take a step away from where he is when the curtain rises.

Speaking of characters, there are five that stay remembered more or less at the end of the story. The short story must not deal with more than five characters, so says a much revered literary tenet, and so here it does not. Hence, again we are made to see that this is a piece of writing done in accordance with the rigid prescription of a rigid school of writing. This is

not in the least to the discredit of its author---far from it. Santos simply happens to belong to a well regimented school of thinking and is merely doing the best that circumstances call for. Consider that his piece captured the highest award.

It must be pointed out before going any further that it is not the intention, conscious or otherwise, of this discussion to suggest that any other short story written after the manner of "Brother, My Brother," will certainly win first prize if entered in the Philippines Free Press annual contest. That would be lunacy, plain and simple. One only has to go over Joaquin's "Guardia de Honor," Villa's "A Voice in Rama," Tiempo's "Chambers of the Sea," or Gatbonton's "Clay"—all top winners in past contests—to see that there can be no hard and fast prescription as to what stories will win awards and what will not. It is extremely doubtful that a short story consciously and meticulously patterned after the literary gems just mentioned will ever win any prize, let alone first prize. As pointed out at the beginning of this discussion, times and standards change how be it gradually and imperceptibly. The true intention here rather is to suggest to the avid would-be short story writer what might be accomplished by adhering to established literary norms already mentioned or hinted at in the preceding paragraph. At the time when stories properly destined for the "pulps" are earnestly accepted by the "slicks" (and vice versa), there can hardly be any assurance that toeing that literary line will land the coveted laurel on one's head. The consolation lies in the thought that he who plays according to established rules deserves the most to win the game.

Sands & Coral 1958

Erlendo O. Constantino

1960 Editor

Born in Legaspi, Albay, Erlendo O. Constantino earned his Master of Arts in English at Silliman University in 1960. His works were published in the *Philippines Free Press* and in the *Sands & Coral*, which he edited in 1960. In the same year, he served as an associate editor for the *Portal*, alongside another *Sands & Coral* editor, Raymond Llorca. He was also a recipient of the Ethel Chapman Scholarship from 1959 to 1960. He taught English and journalism courses at Silliman University, where he also served as adviser for the campus paper, *The Sillimanian*, in 1961. E.O. Constantino later worked at Prudentialife Group, where he eventually held an executive position until his retirement.

Darkness at the Top End of the Line

He momentarily allowed his 1903 Model Springfield to dangle by its rear shoulder sling as he laid it at the base of the huge pile of ammunition heaped for burning. He could not at first understand why he felt sentimental about the rifle; for in the three months of actual fighting on the battlefield, it had never saved his life. He remembered when he was commanded to double-time around the ROTC drill grounds for having left behind a rifle (a gun minus a firing-pin) during a ten-minute break. "Your rifle is your best friend," his cadet officer had told him. Now, April 1942, on the real battlefield, he was told his rifle should be destroyed lest the enemy should capture it for use against them. How could a friend be a traitor also? Perhaps, in critical moments like this, a rifle with one bullet left could be a friend: when he did not want to surrender and it was the only alternative for escape. Without food and medicine nobody wants to escape to the matted, miasmal jungle. Surrendering in war was inevitable, but why did it have to come to them, not to their enemy? What noise would a 15mm rifle produce to stifle the fear of surrendering? (Especially to an enemy who, he had heard, indiscriminately killed prisoners at the capture of Hongkong and Nanking. How could a Jap be discriminating when his frame of mind was unpredictable? He had heard that at one moment a Jap would put a cigarette in your mouth, at the next, he would cut your lips with the same hand…) No, the rifle was too insignificant. But there was too much of the intervals between the bark of an artillery gun; besides, it was quite unwieldy. Perhaps a series of Demonio firecrackers of the kind he used to secretly ignite at New Year's Eve when he was a kid would produce more noise; but then the Japs would know what the racket was all about. The Japs themselves had sent small patrols close to their lines at night to set off a string of firecrackers. The resulting noises sounded like a regiment of riflemen, and some of his greener companions had disclosed their exact positions by opening fire.

How absurd war could be. How absurd any crisis could be. Like that day shortly after their battered regiment was ordered to assemble at the Mariveles airfield for the surrender. A second squad rifleman, he had grabbed the machine gun from fallen comrades. He had nestled his loins in a shallow cleavage marked by a heavy tire, the soles of his boots against the bases of the two rear legs of the tripod. Hard around the trigger, his

clammy hands and whole body shook with the rattling of the machine. Who cared whether he was hitting the damned Japs. Except that the thunder of the Jap 205mm batteries came opposite the muzzle of his weapon. (He liked to refer to the enemy as the damned Japs, accenting the e, imitating Maurice Evans' interpretation of Hamlet's speech after the Dane had first seen the ghost of his father.) At that tide of the war, there were no commanders to signal "Skirmisher Left," or "Platoon Wedge Formation." Everybody was by and for himself, each acting differently. His psychology professor would have a defensible explanation for that. But he did not have to take anybody's opinion; he was quite capable of resolving things for himself. He knew he had always been, so why not now, too? Not even the present abnormal situation (certainly, no war is a normal experience), not even this war could break him down into doing what he knew was wrong. He was made of sterner stuff, and why would situations predict his actions? Is not the spirit of man greater than any situation? The incident about the machine gun was in fact a case to support the point. It was not because he could not help being carried into drowning his fears with the steel rattles of the gun. It was his will to handle the machine gun. Every jerk of the gun at his cocking the trigger was an absorber of the released punch of his will.

Manuel Abelardo sloshed through the brown mud, his army boots undistinguished beneath two grotesque bundles of sticky earth that covered his feet during the first two hours of their march to what later turned out to be Camp O'Donnell. It had rained at noon when they were herded into serried ranks; but now into their soaked tattered uniforms the sun penetrated like scattered balls of fire. The ground reeked with the pungent, sickening sweet smell of dead men. As he bent to scrape off the mud from his legs, his steel helmet fell. He was adjusting it back on when a swinging rifle butt grazed the rim and the headgear catapulted face up unto the earth. A short, squat Japanese sergeant stood apart from Manuel Abelardo. The guard signaled to him in a guttural belch. He wished he had not fully understood the Jap's menacing look under thick-rimmed glasses. But why should he be afraid? Yet he must be afraid if he left his helmet alone. He started to pick it up. The Jap guard emphasized his point by fronting his stained fixed bayonet. Abelardo stared at the sharp edge. He stumbled away, allowing distance between himself and the steel helmet. The Jap sergeant, with his hob-nailed shoe of crudely processed pigskin, kicked the helmet into the ditch. The youth, feeling the hollow thud of the shoe against the steel as though it were a dull stab in his breast, knotted the

corners of two army handkerchiefs, one on top of the other, and pressed this down over his head to the ears. The damp cloth cooled his head.

The next morning Abelardo heard occasional sobs from platoons in the American lines that had started what turned out to be a 127-kilometer trek—chin up in all the dignity of prisoners of war. They had all counted on the application of the Geneva Convention rules for prisoners of war. The noon previous, when Manuel saw the Japs snatch at canteens to pour the water into huge containers for their horses to drink, he had secretly taken a long gulp from his own canteen before relinquishing it to the Jap sergeant assigned to their section. Like the other guards, their guard had his rifle slung on his back, and he held a yard-and-half bamboo pole for a club. A stocky Filipino tucked his wooden blanket under his arm when he saw the guard approaching. The Jap made a grab at it, but he held on. Infuriated, the sergeant jerked the wool away with such force it burned the naked skin of the prisoner's armpit. With a dull whack of his club, the Jap hit the resentful prisoner full at the upper arm. The Filipino limped to Manuel's side. "Fool!" Manuel exclaimed under his breath; on second thought he tried to justify why he had intuitively directed his curse at the Filipino.

The sun blast from the zenith on urine-smelling men numbed the senses. Even the pitch-black bodies of what must have been Japanese, Americans, and Filipinos—scattered where the heaviest battle had been fought—failed to assert their stench. A clean-shaven American, a Southerner by his accent, an officer of the famous Twenty-seventh Cavalry, strode to the front of his marching comrades as he saw their guard lag behind his line. No food had been given to the prisoners in the fifty kilometers of continuous marching—this was insane, the officer thought. "Men," Captain Clifford D. Quinlen began, his square lower jaw raised parallel to the tip of his aquiline nose darkened by theEastern sun. "Men, I know that we are all in sorry shape. Let's all get out of this together, or perish together. But don't become a disorganized, slovenly mob. I know these Japs. Their god is discipline. You must impress them with your discipline. We shall do this as long as I am most rankin' here. Listen. You are prisoners, but you are still members of the United States Army. Remain as such." His men corrected their dejected gaits in response to his patriotic pronouncements and incongruously distraught but dignified bearing.

An order to halt was passed from one guard to another. Men slumped to the ground, insensible that others had been clubbed to death for appearing too weak to go on. Prisoners craned their necks as word about food stocked up in front of the columns was coursed through the grapevine. Word of hope, no matter where the source, and sometimes the

Jap guards themselves started it, it always awakened the flagging spirits of the men, in spite of the many false alarms. To one side of the road Manuel Abelardo saw topless trucks—except for one roofed truck which had a machine gun set. Loaded with American canned goods, a fourth truck was parked conspicuously behind coiled barbed wires. For ten long minutes, the starving men waited. No order was given to unload the food. The American cavalry officer strutted to the sergeant. Thinking that his language is unintelligible, Quinlen pointed to the goods and to the tattered columns of men. His other arm simulated feeding his mouth.

"Ni, ni," the sergeant replied curtly, shaking his head.

Captain Clifford D. Quinlen insisted, his hand repeating the urgent gesture to his mouth. He could not understand the logic of the squat slopeheads: to refuse when there was food. The guard's brows arching upwards and a wan smile forming in his full lips, he nodded exaggeratedly. He stepped around the wires to the loaded truck and took a flat sardine can. Returning to the American, he rested the can on a burned tree stump. His penknife cut roughly at the tin. He bent the now precariously attached tin and propped up the container with his fingers. The oily liquid crept over the sharp edges. The Jap slapped the filled can on the American's unsuspecting face. Pieces of sardines mixed with the sweat on Quinlen's buttoned uniform. Blood streaked from gashes on his left temple down his face to join the spurts from a deep cut on his left lower jaw. He was too stunned to move, except to wipe at his face with his bare hands. The men in his column broke loose cursing. Anger strengthening their wobbly legs, some Filipinos from the other side of the road joined the group to surge towards the slit- eyed guard. The Jap sergeant ran toward the truck. Blood discolored the grey-green leggings as his leg hit the barbs. Other Nipponeseguards answered the guard's bellow. The sergeant mounted the truck and used the machine gun. He fired above the left flank of the onrushing group; a Filipino who had wandered a bit too far from his ranks came into the range of the deadly bullets. His wails froze others into a nervous mobility.

The bleeding American slogged toward the Filipino lines, still unable to regain his equilibrium. Abelardo helped him into the ranks as mopping-up guards arrived. Abelardo took off his headcloth and gave this to the American officer to wipe his contorted face.

"Don't be a fool," Abelardo said. "The Japs won't feed us." "Don't be a fool yourself, dammit!"

"I am trying to be sensible." "You're yellow!"

"In helping you now? Look, in a tight situation like this…" "Yeah… one stands by doin' nothing. I've seen men betray their

best friends to save their own stinkin' skin!"

"What would you have me do? Rush out, like you, huh!"

"At least then, you think of the starving men—you stop thinkin' of yourself for a change!"

"Hell!... you've got to control yourself!"

Quinlen wiped his sweaty neck and shoulder blades with the bloody headcloth. From the seam of his trousers he wriggled out a bottle of iodine and poured a few drops into the drinking canteen which he slid off between his legs under his ragged uniform. Earlier, he had surreptitiously taken the water from a rice paddy, parting the green scum that covered the surface and dunking his canteen into the stagnant liquid polluted with dysentery bacilli. Semi-delirious under the scorching sun, scores of others had dropped to their bellies and with their hands scooped the stagnant water into their parched lips. Thirst then was a more demanding need than hunger.

The Nipponese sergeant dismounted from the truck as a semblance of order was restored. He adjusted the heavy rifle slung at his back and wiped his clammy hands against his loins. The brackish smell from the sardines mixed with the acrid odor of burned gun powder dulled his senses. He watched the food truck rumble to the direction of heavy shelling. The empty trucks were to pick up weary soldiers a few rods from the columns of prisoners to man their 250mm sledge guns against accursed Corregidor. The goods were for his brothers under fire.

Three days later, at about four in the afternoon, the jagged prisoners plodded into San Fernando. Japanese guards pushed the weakest among the prisoners to the front and the flanks of the columns for the townspeople to survey. Jap cavalry troops, armored tanks,well-fed soldiers seated primly on trucks with huge siege guns trailing had rumbled through southbound. The Japanese mind had expected the populace to be awed by the superiority of their Asian brothers, to cheer the conquerors as they marched alongside the defeated American dogs. The townspeople were silently lined up on the dusty roadsides; their uncheering faces searched the prisoners' bowed heads, as though every man, woman, and child among them was looking for a lost relative. At the marketplace people leaned against the wooden posts of nipa sheds that sheltered their wares from the hot sun. Piles of sincamas, camote-flour cakes were on tables covered with fresh banana leaves. The townspeople covertly tossed these articles to the weary prisoners; to be caught in the act meant violence, certain death for both people and prisoners. The American munched the lush vegetables which tasted like raw turnips and looked like brown apples. "Bless their tiny souls," the big cavalry officer said as the juicy pulp

cooled his senses. He gave the other to Abelardo. Abelardo in return offered him half of the camote pie that he had been gulping in mouthfuls. The American took the hefty thing wrapped in smoked banana leaf. It appeared like tender clay, but he had learned to eat any edible item that might be classified as food. The thing was delicious after all.

The prisoners were cowed into a stockade in about the middle of town, more than a hundred kilometers from the start of the journey. Like the barbed wire enclosure in Orani where they were given their first spoonful of boiled rice about two days ago, the buildings here were pregnant with the foul stench of human feces and dead bodies left by preceding groups. Flies crawled over the feces and dysentery and malaria victims sprawled everywhere. Little water for drinking accompanied the three-fifths canteen cup of boiled rice fed to each. Quinlen had violent hiccups as he vomited his first mouthful of rice. He gave the rest to Manuel Abelardo. After his first vomit Abelardo stuffed food into his mouth again. Night was spent in scant rest, if rest was possible at all in their crammed positions. Long before sunrise the prisoners were driven to the railroad station.

In mid-morning of the next day, one hundred and ten prisoners with two or three guards were unloaded from each boxcar of about 6 x 18 feet. From Capas they trekked the last seven kilometers to the prison camp objective. The columns hobbled down into the prison gate in mid-afternoon. Nimbus clouds partially covered the sun which cast darkness over the top end of the line. It looked as though rain was perpetually about to fall. The sky appeared as if it could not make up its mind: half was dark, half was light, two sides of the same creation and so similar but for the degree of sunburn, yet so indeterminable, so unpredictable.

Just before the war, Camp O'Donnell was in the process of being built for the Philippine Army. The crude, uncompleted barracks were lined up neatly in parallel rows. Roofs of cogon grass sagged almost to the ground. Some uncovered sides of bamboo framework stood defiant against leaning wooden posts. Strangely enough, the camp was named after O'Donnell—the Spanish family who originally owned the mile- square of land.

From the knoll inside the camp on which the headquarters building stood, the awaited Nipponese commander swaggered toward the shambling mass, his interpreter trotting behind. The mass of men had been herded like sick cattle before an unsteady platform. The Jap captain's gold-filled teeth brightened in the dull sun as he roared his welcome. Captain Clifford D. Quinlen watched the bow-legged Japanese captain standing with one hand akimbo, and the other hand grasping the handle of the grotesque sabre dangling by his side. Shiny leather boots planted apart,

he glared at the conquered faces. Quinlen scoffed at the cheap cap the Jap officer was wearing; the same cap with a prominent star in front sported by every Jap private! Quinlen watched the commander storm down the creaky platform after concluding the harangue. The officer tilted the samurai sword forward. He was careful that the tip of the sheath would not brush against the crude rungs, for the precious samurai was a national symbol, like the star on his cap.

Carrying their dead and dying, the tattered mass drifted away— the Americans directed to one side, the Filipinos to the other. Before they were parted Quinlen and Abelardo agreed to stay in adjacent barracks. Abelardo had suggested that Captain Quinlen bury the Japanese currency note he was keeping. They saw a Jap club a soldier to unconsciousness because he was caught tearing off a Jap insignia from his overseas cap. There might be another inspection of the belongings. The note, which had blood smears at two opposite corners, had been given Quinlen for a keepsake by a wounded friend in Bataan. Quinlen had been hiding it in the secret fold of his worn leather wallet which contained pictures of his family. Upon seeing the pictures, the Japanese inspectors had shot questions at him, until they had no more time but for a cursory look into his other things. They had missed the Jap note. What would the devils do with a miserable scrap of paper, anyway!

Manuel Abelardo crawled into leaky-roofed barracks, yet the air was sweltering. Dengue fever hurried his respiratory functions, so that he wormed himself among sweaty bodies for space enough to stretch his back. He found a space just twenty-six inches wide on a floor of bamboo slats. Nearby, skin-and-bone bodies lay comatose; thelegs of one were bloated with gas gangrene. Flies buzzed everywhere, over faces puffy from beri-beri, flies were rimming ulcerated lips and drinking from half-open eyes. Death. Death was all around. Abelardo struggled out of his filthy shirt, spread it open on the floor, and lay on it. He exposed his feverish breast. He remembered when he was a sick boy his mother had never left his bed. He closed his burning eyelids, and soon the weariness of his body was bringing him into a semi- lethargic sleep—the first time in more than a week that he felt safe to sleep. Beneath his relaxed eyelids minute flimsy clouds of darkness tidied from all sides toward the center and disappeared as fast as they were formed. Presently, his mind swirled deeper and deeper, like the circular sinking of a huge, perforated tin spheroid into the entrails of a whirlpool. Gradually, the eddying ceased, and his sleepy thoughts drifted peacefully…. His mother had died when he was nine. She was beloved by the neighbours, and they all mourned at her burial. He alone stood unweeping on the mound above the lowered coffin as he

listened to the minister intone "dust thou art, to dust returnest." He decided not to cry, to show to himself that he loved his mother more than any wailing boy, including his straight-laced father who, in the fifteen years he had served as Elder, never missed to bring along his mother to attend the annual Baptist convention. The neighbours gaped at his behavior, him, the dead mother's son; but what if they did? He cared more for what he thought was true and right. He knew, and accomplished, what he wanted.

Abelardo woke up with a start. A distinctive, painfully expressed hush in the room brought him to a complete awareness of his companions' unified occupation. In various positions they had propped themselves up the narrow window panes to witness the furor in the yard between the barracks. Abelardo briskly rubbed the back of his right forearm over his eyes to adjust them to the bright light of the morning sun. He noticed when he put on his shirt that his fever had somehow subsided. He posted himself at the wide door, leaning on one of the frames. Quinlen was watching at the other side. In the yard were seven prisoners, two Americans and five Filipinos. Stripped to the waist, their arms stretched shoulder level and lashed with split rattan twines to bamboo poles yoked across their shoulders. Prodded by rifle butts and guttural orders, they were being marched down the end of the yard and back. One of the guards tripped a prisoner, who fell headlong, his breast and face splashing into the mud. Two guards, each lifting an end of the pole across the fallen prisoner, jerked him to his feet again.

At the corner of the yard each prisoner was tied to a post across his contracted belly and at the pole on his shoulder. Two other Japs, the interpreter and a corporal in a mud-soaked uniform, passed from one prisoner to another. The interpreter tilted a bowed face upward by the hair and thundered, "Who did it? Who!" The American soldier, to whom this was addressed, kept very still for a moment, his face poised in innocence. Then his eyes narrowed to an Oriental slit, and suddenly with one lunge, he spat at the Jap. The spittle stuck to the breast of the corporal's uniform. The corporal slapped him full on the left cheek and repeatedly struck at his nose. The unsatisfied interpreter delivered a hard uppercut to the American's middle.

Captain Cllifford D. Quinlen shivered at the American's ignominious suffering. His senses reeled. He rushed toward the Jap interpreter. Abelardo understood his friend's intentions. He glanced at the sneering Japanese soldiers. He would not allow himself to think fully of what he was getting himself into. But his friend was in a precarious situation. He convinced himself he was unafraid; the frantic thumping of his heart was

involuntary. His knees felt stern, and the pounding in his breast was suppressed by the sudden onward movements of his brave legs. He ran from the other side of the yard to face Quinlen. He swerved to the unseeing man whom he knew could not be stopped by a mere verbal confrontation. Raising an arm in front of his friend, Abelardo held Quinlen's forearm and pivoted him to the opposite direction. The rage in Quinlen's blood-shot eyes was directed either at him or at the damn Japs, but he led him back just the same. Quinlen protested, then he realized that Jap guards had fixed bayonets and really meant to frustrate him. He allowed himself to be pulled away. He jerked his arm from Abelardo and continued to walk behind him. Abelardo walked faster. Quinlen watched the beads of sweat hurry down the man's nape. The man did not turn his head, and the urgent swing of his arms was incongruous to the long strides of his legs. I've seen men like him before: Quinlen thought. He shuddered at his own knowledge of what this man could do, once he took a stand.

The prisoners had been bound and left under the scorching sun for hours. The heat burned the thinning hair on their scraggy heads. Every couple of hours a pail of dirty water was splashed over their cowed heads. The day previous several prisoners who had been given the same treatment were released delirious. Two died psychotic. Abelardo, together with Quinlen, whom he had pacified, inquired about the cause of the demonstration when they were lined up for their cup-of-rice and dash-of-salt noon meal. Quinlen, shaking his cup, confronted the interpreter, who stood with the Jap K. P.'s.

"Are you trying to murder the 40,000 Americans and Filipinos in this camp!" He looked back at the suffering group in the yard.

Abelardo was told that the seven prisoners were under disciplinary punishment. It seemed the group was one of the details assigned to bury the dead that early morning (they themselves looked ready for the watery graces). With one shovel, and some flattened mess kit and their bare hands, they dug and clawed at the mud. The freshly dressed Jap corporal bellowed orders as he posed, rifle in hand, over the resentful diggers. Limbs of carcasses stuck out from common graves where the covering layer of earth had been washed away by the night's rain. The Jap stood near the edge while he motioned for more bodies to be thrown into the pit. One gravedigger placed himself a few inches behind the flank of the corporal while he and another prisoner swung a body over the watery hole. Suddenly one of them tripped the Jap into the pit. Other guards came to order the rescue of their brother who struggled among the stinking bodies. The sneering prisoners would not tell who had pushed him, despite the threat of retribution for all.

Good work, men. I am proud of you: Captain Quinlen's smile of victory pressed in his pale lips as he and Abelardo passed the detail. They returned to the American's quarters for the afternoon break. The immobile bodies tied to the posts slumped crooked at the necks; groans escaped from them as their chins pressed against their heaving breasts. Abelardo held Quinlen's arm. In the quarters they picked their way across skinny bodies sprawled on the floor. Quinlen peeled off his sweaty shirt and transferred his billfold from the breast pocket to his trousers' and placed the shirt in his corner of the room. He came back to the window pane where his companion was leaning and the two friends watched the corporal and the interpreter examine the hanging heads of the exposed prisoners. The Japs noticed the watchers' defiant stare below the shed. The interpreter swaggered toward them, the corporal following.

Captain Quinlen hurried to his corner and buttoned on his uniform. The ten other prisoners in the room made no move. Their sunken eyes followed their leader and the intruders. The Japs were making an unscheduled inspection of the quarters. The interpreter beaconed to Quinlen to come to him. He was asked to bow. Quinlen felt his whole body flush as he bent lower at the insistence of the Jap. Satisfied, the Jap noisily turned to the Filipino. "Son-of-a-bitch," Quinlen muttered as he fumbled for his wallet. The Filipino was ordered back to his own barracks.

Abelardo preceded the Japs down the American quarters. Something lightly fell on the ground just behind him. In front of the Japs lay a crumpled piece of paper. Abelardo suppressed the hard heaving of his breast as he prayed it wasn't what he thought it was. The interpreter picked up the creased note. The Jap's fingers got smeared in the sputum as he unfolded the Japanese currency. His fury turned into a sinister, sweet sneer of revenge. The corporal fixed the bayonet at the interpreter's guttural order. The interpreter stormed into the room. He surveyed the men calmly. "Now," he began softly, almost tenderly. "Who dropped his money?" Quinlen squatted at his corner, ignoring the question. He sought the eyes of his men with a thought like a banner; their bodies were defeated, but their spirits were never conquered. True, this was more a hope than an expression of truth. Yet he completely believed in the power of suggestion. Had he not used this successfully on his men? Brave men, let us show these sons of hell! The Jap's repeated question rose in a crescendo. Still no answer from the skinny prisoners who were now forcing themselves to sit steadily. The Jap shook the note before their noses as his voice rocked their almost marrow-less bones. Abelardo craned his neck, both eager and afraid to make sure the black smears on the note were on two diametrically opposite corners. But they were! For a long moment he

stood utterly stunned. He didn't know what to do next. He, who prided himself on right action, on the right decision, he was overwhelmed. His will was a tremulous slave. He felt like running far away, anywhere, just so he was away from the barracks. But his legs would not carry him. He felt compelled to stay, as if to run away meant to lunge into an abysmal darkness, from where no escape is possible. Or was it because his whole being refused to go?

At another guttural order from the interpreter, who had taken temporary possession of the fixed-rifle, the corporal ran to the guard house for reinforcements.

"All right, tell me who, or else, the eleven of you will get the sun cure!" The interpreter's long pause carried a morbid finality.

"That one at the corner." Abelardo, who had returned to the door, clearly said, pointing to Captain Clifford D. Quinlen. He had got the full import of the Jap's ultimatum. He paused to ease the lump in his throat. He inhaled deeply, but the noon air was thick and hot. Oh, God! His exclamation jostled him into a full realization of his betrayal. The sun seared his eyes. Swirling darkness blurred his vision. He groped to lean upon the wide door frames of the dark quarters.

Sands & Coral 1960

Raymond L. Llorca

1961 Editor

Raymond L. Llorca obtained both his Bachelor of Arts and Masters in Arts in English from Silliman University. Aside from the campus' literary folio, his fiction and critical essays saw print in various publications such as *Comment* and the *Philippines Free Press*. In 1960, he edited the *Portal* together with E.O. Constantino. The year after, Llorca became the editor-in-chief of the *Sands & Coral*. Prior to joining the Department of English and Literature at Silliman, he also taught at Central Philippine University in Iloilo and West Negros College in Bacolod City. Llorca later went to Mindanao State University in 1976 and earned his postgraduate degree at Wayne State University. He would eventually become Professor Emeritus at MSU. He is the author of *Radical Christ: A Biblical Criticism on God, Jesus, and Christian Belief* (2009), published by Eloquent Books, which is commended as a book that bravely confronts difficult questions of theology and philosophy.

A Note On Author's Intention

Pope was probably the first critic to lay down the rule that the reader must determine the "author's intention" when reading a piece of work. In his "Essay on Criticism," while discussing thematic unity, he says, "In every work regard the writer's end, / Since none can compass more than they intend." (Lines 255-256.) Immediately, we feel in the preceding line the weight of the scepter, backed up in the next assertion of a broadsword. Aristotle, Horace, Longinus, and other critics anticipated him on the subject of thematic unity, but they had not once come to even suggest the specific demand for the "author's intention."

Considering Pope's reputation as critic, added to the fact that he was setting down rules precisely for critics when he wrote these lines, many readers of artistic works cannot choose but heed this dogma with profound respect. Perhaps, because of this reason, the use of the term "author's intention" has become apparently traditional, common and unquestioned.

In attempting to experience a poem (the word "poem" here stands for all artistic pieces), we turn to the critical standard operating procedure by primarily asking: what does the author mean, or, what is his intention? And, second, does he succeed in communicating that intention according to the demands of art? There is no question that this apparently correct critical approach is being employed today, as proven again and again by apparently effective criticism. Perhaps, it is even safe to assume now that, from long experience, criticism can find nothing that would shake the validity of these basic thoughts on critical analysis, insofar as the determination of the meaning of a work is concerned, and to doubt their validity as groundwork for critical analysis in this respect is sheer heresy.

In spite of this, an objection arises regarding the terms used to express these basic thoughts above, because their implication could and does mislead or confuse some readers. Art is so fluid that it requires constant vigil and exploration to maintain its proper blood flow; hence, although this fallacy, if it is fallacy, seems immaterial to criticism (because critical analysis evidently accomplishes its purpose, as we have said, in spite of it), the danger of its implication to the student and therefore to critical thought cannot be regarded too seriously. Precisely, it is for this seeming lack of vital importance to criticism that its danger for the unwary student is emphasized.

The objection rests upon the implication that the critical student must look for in a poem what the author himself intends, not what his poem is; that the author succeeds in communicating his intention, superimposing on the idea that it is the poem that should communicate itself. (To say "poem's intention" is also a misnomer and needs to be followed or prepared by qualifications, for it may imply that a poem "means" something. MacLeish puts it, "A poem should not mean/ But be." A poem has meaning, but it does not "mean." To say that it "means" something would suggest, what is called the heresy of communication, which is the belief that a poem communicates certain ideas in decorative language, rather than that it communicates itself as a complete whole. Richards' oft-quoted statement is, "It is not what the poem says that matters, but what it is." The implication cannot be nut-shelled in the term "author's intention"; its deception also pre-sets the mind to welcome the premise that critical attention be directed on the poet rather than on his poem. The activity of the student in valid criticism is to attempt to re-dream the poet's dream, not the poet himself; the poem dances in the spotlight alone, with its author and biography, necessarily unnecessary to the poem, dissolved in the dark. In fact, the business of twentieth-century criticism is detaching the poem from the poet, both of whom have been welded together by 19th century Romanticism, thus correcting the slackened course in critical navigating, precision being the guiding star and vigilance the watchword of pilots in this fluid occupation. The New Critics generally object to subjectivity in poetry (the view of Romantics), and stress a focusing upon the poem itself. Allen Tate says, "The emotion of art is impersonal, its value residing within its own organization, rather than in any connection with the mind of the poet."

When we study the term carefully we find that "author's intention" is not to be equated with theme, or with total meaning or with the poem, but only with itself: otherwise, why call it thus at all? Of course, we have already mentioned, most critics who use it (and there are many of them who do) mean correctly the total meaning of/or the poem, being unaware of the implication of the term they use. However, because of the inevitable laxity of necessarily-constant analysis, some critics miss the point themselves, taking the literal meaning of the term.

If we have to blame anybody at all, we can always point the finger at Pope and his encyclical lines quoted above as the original confounder. There is no doubt at all what Pope meant when he said, "Since none can compass more than they intend." His subtle miscalculation is both complimentary and uncomplimentary to the author, but more so of the latter.

It becomes uncomplimentary because it underrates the author's capabilities as artist. It puts a limit to what he can do by pre-empting the function of the arbiter on certain virtues recognized in his works, judging them as a case of overinterpretation, or as not intended by him, and, as such, as therefore invalid. It seems that to argue on this basis is chasing after one's own tail. Granting that we should look for the author's intention, how could a critic with this frame of mind know that these virtues are really not at all intended by the author? One task of the artist is to show the illusion that his work is unpremeditated, and the less it shows his hand the more artistic is his execution. He thinks with his body, as Yeats (and the metaphysical poets) would put it, or with his whole personality---the totality of himself, mind, heart, blood and all---and produces a work that appears on the surface as naturally spontaneous, easy, sometimes even meaningless. (One should not be misled by our clause "he thinks with his body"; one should bear in mind that one business of the poet is not to reveal himself in his work.) This is because he has subtly subdued his art and depends upon the infinite number of multidimensional suggestions or shades of meanings that emanate from his work. His art is as infinite as its toil-ground of grace, which is the whole mind or being of man, conscious and subconscious (the soul, in short). Making use of Pope's idea, to say that the author did not intend one shade of meaning recognized by the reader is derisive to the author's capabilities of the artist. Indeed, no critic can compass more than he intends, but his poem can and does because the poem has its own intention as, if we may use Pope against himself again, he intended it to intend thus.

For instance, here is a very popular case wherein the suggestion of a piece of work is beyond the limitations of its time and author. Freudian psychology gives basis for some critics to theorize that Hamlet has Oedipus complex. When Shakespeare wrote Hamlet, there was no such study as psychoanalysis, let alone the concept of Oedipus complex. Now we cannot, as some people would have us do, dismiss this modern finding simply because its basis did not exist, at least as a field of knowledge, at the time of the writing; primarily, because, as we said, it is the poem that matters and the poem is universal, not chained to its author, place or time of writing. Critics and psychologist have argued out this theory too exhaustively for us to re-state in this paper. Even if we think with the view point of Pope's assertion, Shakespeare would still have "intended" it---although not necessarily consciously. We said that writing is thinking with the whole personality which is not only a logical conscious process but also an emotional and sub-conscious process; hence something will come out of the work as the reader reads it, something that strikes his subconscious too

as familiar. Sometimes, perhaps more often than we imagine, one could hardly define this subconscious effect of the poem, but it is there and it is just as good as if the author intended it consciously. Intuitively, Shakespeare could have known the feeling of Oedipus complex without knowledge of the knowledge of what that complex is. Some critics say that psychoanalytical probings and findings are unnecessary to the appreciation of the work, and they must only partially mean that statement. These probings may be unnecessary when one puts a limit to what can be borne out by the work, but they are necessary when one needs a fuller enrichment of the work. They may be "unnecessary" but they are not dismissible. They belong to the study of the mind and it is the whole personality of the mind or the whole man that is the subject, the field of labor and the line of communication in art.

It is therefore careless to say, as R.W. Stallman has done ("The Critical Reader," The Art of Modern Fiction), that "the best artist constructs his work in such a way as to admit of no interpretations but the intended ones," because , first, the reader is not concerned with what interpretations are intended and what are not, and, second, it suggests also that art is precise. No good critic like Stallman would disagree with Ransom who said, "…an art is usually, and probably of necessity, a kind of obliquity… its fixed form proposes to guarantee the round-about of the artistic process, and the 'aesthetic distance.'" Obliquity, or tangentialism, is a method of art concealing art to produce a higher quality of art. Brooks said, "…science makes use of the perfect sphere and its attack can be direct. The method of art can, I believe, never be direct---is always indirect." (The Well-Wrought Urn.) Lionel Trilling's story, "The Other Margaret" employs this method, but Edward Donahoe's "Head by Scopas" apparently does not exactly do this, being too precise---not in spite of, but because of, its obliquity. This story's excellence has made it appear too neat and its neat precision, the fact that it shows "no interpretation but the intended ones," spoils it. It reveals the author's hand with whose intention the story is anchored.

Trilling's story is oblique, yes, but we are not saying here that it is a very excellent example of a work that lives by itself. It is, in fact, also a victim of the fault of "Head of Scopas." We can feel the hand of the author when we consider how well-knit the story is. Trilling differs from Donahoe in these stories mentioned in the sense that Trilling's leash is long enough to allow his bird to fly in the air, whereas Donahoe's is so short he practically nailed his bird spread-eagled on the table.

The difficulty of many short stories and novels lesser, similar or better in quality than Donahoe's and Trilling's stories is the fact that they are, in varying degrees, in one way or another, anchored with the author.

Narration is one of the hooks of the leash, and this is one point wherein the drama seems superior to the short story or novel. By using dialogue alone, drama detaches the author, and its artistic values are recognized only by means of suggestions and implications through the infinite psychological sensibilities of the reader. Of course, the validity of these suggestions is bound by a unified wholeness which when transgressed invalidates them. The expanse in which multiple shades of meaning and/ or dimensions could be borne and born seems greater than the short story's or the novel's. This, in fact, is one point wherein Shakespeare makes full use of his genius. Shakespeare is close to cutting off the leash. The ideal is to let the bird go completely scot-free.

For our second example, a critic-psychologist has rightly said that Macbeth is a psychiatric case of "battle fatigue," which is a motivating factor to his unsurfeitable bloody orgies. There was no "psychiatry" during Shakespeare's day, yet the emotional experience of battle fatigue undeniably exudes from the work; and when this is pointed out, one is immediately inspired to penetrate even deeper through that knowledge. Neither Shakespeare himself nor any of the persons suspected to have written his works has any record of actual combat experience. The emotional experience of Mcbeth is akin to those who fought the world wars. But we would be cheating ourselves of a piece of artistry to dismiss this finding simply because the author could not have intended it.

Let us probe even deeper, this time feeling out certain undercurrents in the play hitherto untapped but necessarily harmoniously meeting others in different strata of the infinite sea. Like the preceding examples, this next one will show how far we can carry this tapping practice in a Shakespearean play. Through a semblance of a discussion, let us make a run-down of the other undercurrent views.

Mark Van Doren says Macbeth "is not in the fullest known sense a tragedy… He [Macbeth] is less valuable as a person than Hamlet, Othello, Lear, Antony, Coriolanus, or Timon." We know "too little about him and have found too little virtue in him to experience at this death the sense of unutterable and tragic loss made necessary by ironies beyond our understanding. He commits murder in violation of a nature which we can assume to have been noble, but we can only assume this." Brooks agrees with Van Doren's view. There is no longer any doubt about the truth of the play's lack of a more full tragic effect which Hamlet and the others mentioned possess. But then when a sustained exploration of the play is made, out of the innumerable suggestions from the play we can deduce more of Macbeth's character that would bring to us a belated but not anti-climactic effect of what Van Doren calls "the sense of an unutterable and

tragic loss." We arrive at this conclusion in somewhat the same manner that Hamlet's Oedipus complex and Macbeth's "battle fatigue" are brought out of the play. The nobility of Macbeth is therefore not to be assumed any longer when one feels this through his reading of the play, for the play itself finally releases this long-guarded essence. We have not seen that nobility; it is not explicit. It cannot be seen from up here, because it is submerged, subdued and subjugated by his cruel, rash, and phillistinic world. It is only after we have searched into his soul that we find a tragic man, whose blood is even purer than Duncan's. Since we cannot argue this point exhaustively here (as this would require another paper), let us assert that Macbeth, deep inside, is gentle in nature---in fact, ironically, the gentlest of all the characters in the play. It is important that one understands the relationship of Macbeth to his society in attempting to determine this. Macbeth does not belong to the crags of rushing militant Scotland; he is too good for it, and when a man cannot be good in the way he is, but in the way his society wants him to be (which is lesser in value), he can only become bad. The play has its root in the strained relationship of the individual poet to his society. Macbeth is a thinker and a poet, introspective and ponderous, but his society is impulsive, practical and extroverted and that, too, is the character they beat him into becoming. They beat him down to be like them, make him a soldier, and he, cooperating with what he supposes to be right, even succeeds as a soldier in spite of his sensibilities, only later to break, to suffer the "battle fatigue," an illness which Banquo, the less sensible man, who fought with him, did not have. Macbeth, who needs to rest, is pressured---rushed by his wife and circumstances to act, when he is a man who must pause to think for a significant period of time. While Hamlet's sensibilities have all the time to be entertained, Macbeth's have none of this privilege. He needs love, but his wife is almost as sexless as the three weird sisters. (Note how she welcomes him with the talk of murder when he needs her endearment to ease his tensions.) There is really no intimate contact between the two. Moreover, Macbeth is obsessed with the lack of children. One could, for instance note many child images in the play, and as Brooks said, the babe is "the most powerful symbol in the tragedy." Macbeth, semi-consciously, envies men with children, which is contributory to his murders later on. Macbeth is almost like a lost child himself who could not communicate his brand of refinement, which is aesthetically better, to a harsh world that refuses to even consider the importance of what he really is to himself. He must forever keep up with what his society expects him to be and what he can never be. Frustration and despair are his only companions in his world whose propriety he himself doubts. After the battle and the fatigue,

anything can happen. He is confused not only by his relation with society, the sense of right and wrong (matters which did not really bother any of the hard-boiled Scots), but also by the numbing drug of sadism in his fatigue and the pressure exerted on him by those and other circumstances within and without his nature. His id predominates---what else can? His id and/or the suppressed monsters say he has been cheated by his world (which in its innocence is also tragic) and the world must pay the price for that injustice even at the expense of the man himself. Led thus in the fatigue, he does not know what he does, in fact, is surprised by what he does; he is detached from his id, yet is more involved in his actions. He acts under a compulsion of a force of evil in him. Fatigue has drugged his conscious guards, setting his bestial self to roam the night. Macbeth's capability to stand firm while the onslaughts of circumstances are far too much for a normal man to bear (others, like his wife, would fall apart) and while the earth which he knows is fluid under his feet sinks below him, added to his futile yet valiant attempt to change the course of destiny; these all, placed against the herb-like deeper character of Macbeth, give us indeed a very deep sense of admiration for the man.

This view of the play is one of the many other views that inter-correlate into an organic whole at last. Seemingly far-fetched, it cannot however be disregarded, and the more we study the play the more we gradually become convinced of its verity, not that we brainwash ourselves to believe a disillusion but that we, through that slow process of art itself, learn to mature with the role of that experience in the play.

But it would be ridiculous for us to pretend that this group of findings is the foremost motivation of Macbeth, because this is only one of many dimensions contributing to his actions. To present this, when we do and that we must, is even to some extent embarrassing. It blushes in its overpowering ineffectiveness or lack of vitality like a tadpole on your palm caught out of his whole personality, the greater part of which is the pool. No tadpole is complete without the pool, yet even this statement is insufficient to express the greater organic unity of seeming discordances in this play.

Leaving Macbeth now, let us turn to another fallacy connected with "author's intention." There is a common belief that the poet himself is necessarily the speaker behind the poem. A poet is also like a fiction writer in the sense that though he writes in the first person, or uses a speaker, he, the poet, is not necessarily the speaker. Although his predications are, in the strict sense, written in poetry, he, the poet who actually wrote the poem, is not the poet who is given in the illusion as the one writing or saying now what is said in the poem. Thus, when a Browning poem gives

illusion as spoken by dying bishop, it is not Browning himself who is the dying bishop; nor is the idle king Ulysses Tennyson himself; neither has Amy Lowell necessarily lost a lover in a battle that prompted her to write "Patterns." Perhaps, Romantic poets like Wordsworth and Keats wrote their poems after personally having had an outdoor excursion or a look into Chapman's Homer. Yet, although Wordsworth would say that writing poems is subjective with the poet, we cannot make that pronouncement a rule; in fact, we would even regard the Romantic poets in the same way we regard others, that is, objectively, as if they did not express their very selves at all.

Many critics, for instance, say that Shakespeare's sonnets are expressions of Shakespeare' own feeling and that he was writing these sonnets for some persons referred to in the sonnets, thus, in a way, telling a story of a love triangle (in which he is the point). Henry W. Simon's introductory note to Sonnets, Songs and Poems of William Shakespeare says, "no one but a literary detective reads sonnets through in order to find a story that Shakespeare obviously never intended to tell. He was too good a storyteller to make a sad botch of so simple a tale."

Theories of these historical and biographical critics are not to be dismissed, however, and are undeniably enriching to our perspective of Shakespeare, and in other cases, with other poets, but they are not valid in criticism as far as the poem per se is concerned. Simon goes on to quote Browning's censure of Wordsworth:

" 'With this same key
Shakespeare unlocked his heart.' Once more,
Did Shakespeare? If so, the less Shakespeare he."

Though Shakespeare's sonnets appear as deep expressions of a man's soul, though he puns with the name "Will" on the 135th sonnet, it is not for us to say that he is the one who is speaking in or through these sonnets.

"As a poet," Allen Tate says, "I have never had any experience, and… as a poet, my concern is the experience that I hope the reader will have in reading the poem." He does not place his experience as Allen Tate, the man, but as the artist he attempts to give the illusion of an experience. As a poet, he is both lacking and full of experience; lacking in the sense that he would not give out any personal experience, and full in that he can give out many which are not his but which would convey an illusion of reality. At this point, it would be well to remember that Yeats' "thinking with the body" is not contradictory to this statement. This paradox of the poet is as much a paradox of art itself. In the final analysis, we might say that it all came from the poet, yet we hasten to add that it did not. We deal with the

poems alone, yet, as Frost says, "The poet is entitled to everything the reader can find in his poem."

The reader's liberty cannot be limited. For instance, let us take E.K.Tiempo's view that Lovelace's "Lucasta, Going to the Wars" is an "eye-for-an-eye vindictiveness of the lover" rather than the traditional interpretation, that is, a romantic avowal. Three hundred years ago, when they say "thy chaste breast," "I could not love thee, dear, so much" (italics mine), they probably meant yours and you respectively. But today, through the movement of the Christian tradition, the use of the words thee or thine has acquired a connotation of reverence. Christians address God as Thee or Thou in prayers and Quakers in particular address other Christians in the same way. Now, with Tiempo's interpretation and this Christian tradition in mind, when the speaker in the poem uses these words "thy" and "thee" on the girl, we get an even more intense biting effect of irony. Almost preposterous, yet, undismissible. Time has enriched the poem. The modern reader, although he may not be conscious of the role played by the words thy and thee in the poem, will get an even better effect than the reader 300 years ago.

To remember the line between poet and poem is imperative for a better perspective. No less than Stallman himself has said that "the skillful reader is an artist," in a sense, and by that we mean the reader may read creatively.

Perhaps we may also mention that it is too usual that a slack reader forms, from reading an author's work, creeping suspicions about the past and even present moral stature of the author, and a bit of knowledge of that author's background in real life strengthens his view of the unfortunate man. Though this suspicion is interesting cud for rumination, it is well that the reader remembers the above discussion of the separate entity of poet and poem. Such loose and fallacious thinking has become rather preponderant over the proper critical attitude, so that to tighten the slack at this juncture by its mere mention here is only too necessary.

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Williamor D. Marquez

1962 Editor

Williamor Domino Marquez was born in Kiamba, Cotabato, to Maximiano Marquez and Michaela Domino. He graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in English degree from Silliman University in 1961. While in college, he was the Vice President of the Junior Philatelic Club, the PRO of the United Seniors, the PRO of the Tipuli Club, and the Vice President of Cotabato Sillimaniates. In 1962, he pursued his graduate studies in English, working on a thesis about the artistic integration of photographic writing in the short story.

Present Days

Now he feels weak, the coarse-haired boy with the dusty suitcase. He feels bus-sick and empty and dirty. It's no good to travel by land, he says to himself. You get bus-sick and empty and dusty. He plods heavily, almost dragging his dusty suitcase. He feels the hot breath of the corrugated asphalt road. He hears the bustling street, the groaning heat-tormented city. The air smells of fried garlic and onions and black pepper as he passes by Chinese restaurant where the unscreened shelves swarm with flies. He feels the uncomfortable empties growing inside him and he imagines collapsing, and a young woman hurrying him to a hospital where he regains consciousness almost instantly because people attend to him as though he were the most important man in the world. Silly, he mutters to himself. But he is not so lonely anymore. He edges along a narrow, paved side-street where a slim, curly-haired girl in a grimy green dress is playing basketball with an empty can. Youth, he says to himself, youth is funny. Youth is great days. He thinks of Lucy. Not as a woman but as a girl. He thinks of the old days when they were neighbors in the friendly, little seaboard town. He thinks of one seagreen afternoon when the two of them walked together to Lily's store to buy garlic and onions and black pepper because somebody in the neighborhood had butchered a pig. On their way home from Lily' store they stopped at the frothy mouth of the river and waded on its shallows, and they watched the fried-egg sun getting swallowed down into the dark depths of the horizon. I wonder how she looks now. I guess she finally had her hair cropped. She must be tall and slim and waspish in the waist. Just like Marlin, perhaps? No, I guess not like marlin. I don't know. Three years---that's one thousand and eighty-five days. That's a long time.

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He makes for a restaurant, one which is not swarming with flies, and he passes a filling station where two burly leathered faced men are playing chess. A boy in a stained shirt is scanning the sports page of a Manila daily.

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He switches the dusty suitcase to his other hand as he catches a glimpse of the headline: "MORNING WINS 9TH LAP…"

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He wakes up with a start. He rubs his bloodshot eyes. He has forgotten to take off his shoes. His head has made a grimy and sticky dent on the pillow marked "Avenue Hotel." Suddenly he springs up, remembering. He peels off his T-shirt and stands before the man-sized mirror, rubbing his smooth chin with his palms. He combs his coarse, pasty hair that smells of Pals, then tries to make a mean face by contorting his mouth. I was young once, he says, I have grown now. My face looks soft and dirty, though.

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In the shower room the first splash of water on his back gives him gooseflesh momentarily but after toweling up he feels much better and he thinks he could tangle with a bull or even with one of those leather-faced men playing chess at the filling station. He feels his coarse hair sticking up like the spines of the sea urchin and he hates the feel of it. He hadn't really intended to wash it but it was too dusty. He wishes it were fine and soft, even if it were not curly. Lucy's was fine, although it was always unkempt, and it would stretch out pliantly when she ran against the wind. Lucy Santos. She was young once. Maybe she finally had her hair cropped. She had always talked of having it cropped.

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"Hello, 1010-J?"

"Yes."

"Is this the Nurses' Home?"

"I wish to speak with Miss Santos---Lucy Santos."

"Just a moment, I'll find out if she's in."

He wipes his moist palms with his shirt-tail. "Thank you."

I wonder, he murmurs bitterly. I wonder why I'm nervous again. Then he hears the same feminine voice politely say, "I'm sorry but Miss

Santos signed out just thirty minutes ago. She must have gone to the movies." He bangs down the receiver and mutters something lame and incoherent.

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It's late evening now and he closes his eyes but can't fall asleep. There is Marlin. She has sex and all. She has everything, except that she is a little dumb. But Lucy---she must be a real woman now. Things change. Things must change. Like the night and day, or like the form of the smoke columns coming from the factories, like the roar of the ocean. Lucy, those were great days. But we can't go on feeling young. We have changed and we must change if we haven't.

Gradually he hears low, husky voices. He peeks through the half-opened door of the next room and sees four leathery-red men smoking and drinking. The ruggedly handsome, grizzly-haired one, who is twitching his neatly trimmed mustache, is talking in Spanish and once in a while blurting out some funnily-accented English words. The three others nod enthusiastically as they listen to the ruggedly handsome man. One of the three listeners would curse once in a while but the ruggedly handsome man goes on talking. Another man comes in with a tray of more beer and something on a platter and the four leathery-red men go on drinking. "I'm positive," the ruggedly handsome na boasts, "I'm positive that I'll win my case this time."

The coarse-haired boy flaps back in bed. He tries to read Of Human Bondage but his eyelids get heavy as he claps the book shut and tosses it under the bed. He crawls under the mosquito net.

"O Lord," he mumbles, "O Lord, you know how it is." He turns over to one side of the bed like a log, takes a long, deep noisy breath and tries not to think of Lucy anymore.

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"Good morning. Is Lucy Santos…"

"I'm sorry," says the mellow female voice, "we don't entertain callers this early."

He hungs down the receiver and curses the mellow female voice. He feels something cold and sharp like a piece of steel wire creep through his spine.

On a sidestreet he almost bumps into a bread peddler. I can tangle with you, sir, he thinks to himself. But gradually he feels the uncomfortable emptiness growing inside him again, so he thinks, No, I guess not, I can't tangle with you. He hurries along to a nearby magazine-book store.

"May I use your telephone, ma'am," he asks the wry-faced woman with a highbridged nose rifling through a sheaf of crisp paper bills at the counter. She does not budge and she really looks awful.

"May I use your telephone, please, if you don't mind?" He wishes he should not have said anything more and should have walked out right then. The wryfaced woman eyes him wall-eyedly but does not say a thing. She looks ugly and dumb, too. Now he thinks she doesn't have a businessman's face. He walks out hurriedly, muttering again. Seeing a sleek-looking telephone in a nearby drugstore, he smiles triumphantly.

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It's now twelve noon and it's ungodly hot. He rambles on until he comes to "Carenderia Piqueña". A good name. The place looks neat and is not swarming with flies. He sits down at an unvarnished, diminutive table in a cramped but out-of-the-way corner. Now that uncomfortable emptiness inside him has turned into something like a frozen lake. He has seen pictures of frozen lakes before but wonders now how a frozen lake looks like.

"You wish to make an order?" a girl in a black, form-fitting dress asks. Her English is badly tinged with a Spanish accent. The dress makes her look mature, the dress and her accent. A taller, pug-nosed girl with a long-thin mouth and a shiny forehead is standing by the counter leafing through a magazine. The girl in the black, form-fitting dress brings back his order. He thinks of Lucy. He thinks particularly of that sea-green afternoon in the friendly little seaboard town when they walked down to Lily's to buy garlic and onions and black pepper because somebody in the neighborhood had butchered a pig. He murmurs something audible enough for the man eating pancit at the next table to look up and give him a puzzled look.

Just then, a lean, big-fisted man in a police uniform plods in, working his square jaws importantly. He takes off his cap and tosses it on the last unoccupied table and wipes his sweaty face with a crumpled handkerchief. He sits down and fans himself with a folded newspaper. Fresh beads of perspiration start to cluster again on his big nose but he doesn't bother to wipe them off.

"Hot day, no?" the taller, pug-nosed girl says across the counter.

"Give me some food," the man in the police uniform says.

"All right, all right."

The coarse-haired boy overhears the waitress in the form-fitting dress say to the taller girl standing by the counter: "The boy looks like he has something on his mind?" The taller girl says: "Maybe he is in love with you." And she goes on reading. The man in the police uniform peels off his big, fat banana, his face expressionless.

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In his room again he snarls something mean and nasty at his image on the man-sized mirror. My face, it looks soft and dirty again. He has put on a rust-colored shirt and dark pants with side zippers and a pair of thin-soled shoes. He sits on the bed and reads the last few chapters of Of Human Bondage.

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It's four p.m. and the coarse-haired boy walks on leisurely, looking from one side of the street to another. Uyanguren Street is where you see a taxi driver honking his horn at a bunch of pedestrians trying to cross in front of his vehicle; where you meet a big mestiza who looks like Marlin, only bigger, who has succulent hips. She is dressed in satiny black, delicately plastered to her skin, and she elbows her way out of the crowd-heated bodies of men and women jamming a movie ticket counter. And then you can't see her anymore because she gets lost in the street crowd but you try to hunt her with your eyes, anyway, especially she has such a way with her hips and in a crowd… But suddenly you realize how funny you look walking with your head twisted around, so now you decide to walk straight ahead thinking that after all she is not such an uncommon

sight. You almost always meet her at street corners, at cafés, movie houses, anywhere. And now you come to a place where you hear music, not the kind that you once knew but the kind that you now know, but as you walk on you come to a particular spot that seems to be almost a world by itself because here you hear violin music like the music your grandfather used to play when you were young, although this one is rather dragged and exaggerated, but you like to listen to it anyway because it's something different from the rest of the music about you---it does not strain your ears. But all of a sudden a bland, deep-seated voice announces "Smoke Omar…" and the effect of the music is nipped, and you frown and shuffle along like a beaten rooster---lonely and desperate, wondering at last what there is in the woman with the hips, in the first place…and you think of Lucy although it's really Marlin the woman with the hips reminds you of.

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A young man and a young woman are seated on a clean bench under a dwarf acacia on the lawn. He watches them surreptitiously for a moment, then mutters something and enters the canteen for a coke.

"I have an old friend here, miss," he tells the girl in a nursing uniform seated at the counter---the only other customer in the canteen. The girl is nibbling at a piece of a soda cracker. "She's a young nurse, too. Her name is Lucy. Lucy Santos." The girl looks up and she is not so pretty really, but she looks confident and quietly poised.

"Wait a minute," she says, looking at his face for a while. "Aren't you the boy in the picture…yes, you are, aren't you? I mean, Lucy's friend…I mean, little brother, she calls you, although you are big now, aren't you… Oh, yes, she talks to me about you sometimes." She takes another nibble, appraising him. "She seems to like you very much, doesn't she? She is a nice girl…Lucy…"

"Is she on duty now?"

"No…I mean, she is in her room…I'll call her for you…let me see, Room 14, second…"

"You don't have to call her now. I mean, there's no hurry, and I'm bothering you. Besides, I'm a little nervous."

She sits down on the high stool beside the counter and part of her well-shaped thighs are exposed but he doesn't seem to mind at all.

"What else," he asks, finishing the last of his coke, then glancing awkwardly at the well-shaped thighs, "what else did she tell you about me? Has she told you a great deal, maybe?"

"Oh, well," she says, tentatively, deciding." No…I mean, not much really except…She thinks a great deal about you, and I guess, she told me once that she loves you, as a brother, I mean…I mean, big brother, now that you have grown, of course…because she doesn't have any brother…"

"I know. We grew up together in a small village along the beach. In fact, so small a village you never heard of it, I'm sure. Did she mention to you anything about my coming?"

"Well, no, but she told me you might possibly come since it is vacation."

"You see, I didn't tell her I was coming. I arrived in the city only yesterday and I only called her up this morning, and she would not believe it's me. You think she is angry because I didn't write her I was coming?"

"Why, I should think on the contrary…I mean, why should she be? I'll go, and call her…"

"You really need not, you know," he tries to sound casual.

"Oh, yes… she would be delighted to see you again…after all it's been a long time…three years, or was it?" She smiles then trots away.

One thousand and eighty-five days is a long time but she should not be telling people about me, he murmurs to himself. Anyway, I should have wired her, or at least written her.

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"You have changed, Ben." The tall girl talks breathily. She has cropped hair and her gummy smile generously exposes a row of white teeth.

"Yes, Lucy." He smiles. He can't think of anything more brilliant to say.

"Poor boy!" says Lucy. "It's good you came. Why didn't you tell me you were coming? You wanted to surprise me, that's it." She smiles again, looking at his rust-colored shirt. "I can't believe it's you. You have grown---and," gesturing with both hands, "sideward, too!"

"You have grown more, Lucy."

"Poor boy!" she laughs. "Come, we can't stand here all afternoon." She tugs him by the arm. Her grip is firm but perfunctory. She leads him to a bench not far from the young couple on the bench. Lucy is a little taller than he, and he is quite tall. He feels gawky and ridiculous. He can't think of anything to say now. Lucy's Athenian posture makes him feel sickly and he can't help marveling at how a slim, frisky, little girl could grow into a woman as big as that. He wants to talk but can only think of the things he wants to talk about. You don't know, Lucy. You don't know how I feel about you. Things are different now. That's why I came, Lucy. That's why I came. You only know that we were friends once. You don't feel the same way I do now, I know. He wishes he could talk about his feelings, but now he can feel that cold thing creep through his spine.

"I wish these were the good old days," says Lucy, not looking at him but at a young boy hawking newspapers in the streets.

"Oh, yes," he says. "But I don't want the good old days. It's silly, the way I feel about them now. I want it the way I want it now. It's perhaps I have grown up. So you think you have grown up. We can't go on like this. We can't go on feeling young." He mutters something loud enough for Lucy to hear.

"Oh, Ben, don't curse," Lucy tells him in a kindly manner.

After a while she asks, Do you still like western movies?"

"Western movies are for growing boys." He thinks there is wisdom in what he said and he is glad about it.

"Poor boy, Ben." She pinches his hand and presses it. He begins to feel awkward and uncomfortable again. He really wants to tell her what he is there for but he can't started. Instead he feels cold as a corpse. I wonder, am I a corpse?, he thinks.

"I wish this were one of the good old days," says Lucy again. Her eyes look as though they had been dipped in oil.

"Yes, I wish it, too." He can't look at those eyes now.

"They were golden, those days. Yes, youth is always great days. You would think there's never anybody else in the world then."

"Yes, they were great days."

"Ben," she says, breaking into laughter, suddenly warm, suddenly innocent, "do you still think of that time we raced on the beach, the two of us, and I beat you because you stumbled on something Lolit's little brother built on the sand, and you were sore because I laughed at you, and you

said I was laughing at something that was not really funny at all because you almost broke your ankle?"

He smiles but wonders why she remembers that incident particularly.

"Yes, of course, I remember," he laughs. "Perhaps you still remember also that afternoon we went to Lily's store to buy garlic and onions and black pepper because somebody in the neighborhood had butchered a pig, and on our way home we watched the sunset, the sun that looked like a fried egg, and then you got your white dress and your white thighs all wet and sandy because you waded on the water where the bigger waves were…You remember that?"

"You're naughty," she says, pinching his arm, this time harder. "Of course, I didn't get my thighs sandy."

"Yes, you did. I was there."

"Well, maybe I did get them wet. We were young idiots then."

The young man and the young woman under the dwarf acacia on the lawn stand up almost simultaneously and walk to the canteen, holding hands.

"You have a college girl now, don't you, Ben?" Lucy asks.

He thinks he feels sick inside. "No."

"Really? At your age? You should have. At least one, anyway."

He looks at her for a while. He doesn't like his feelings now. He can't believe in anything at all, not even in himself. He feels the cold steel wire thing creep through his spine and he wants to kick himself until he feels pain. Esputa con sangre? he remembers. He doesn't know what that means but he remembers it every time he does not like his feelings. You don't understand, Lucy. I knew you since time brought us into the world. Do I have a college girl! You're a woman now. You've grown, and I have grown.

"I have a lot of friends, boy friends. I mean, not real boy friends. You are the best of them all, Ben. At least you write to me once a week. And I take most of your advice---especially about love affairs and things like that."

He can't say anything to her now. He can only think about things he can say to himself. He seems to be hearing his voice somewhere but it doesn't sound like his own, which is a little raspy, anyway. You're good to me, Lucy. Too good even. I like you, too. I came because there's you. I want to tell you just that. But you don't feel the same way about it, do you?

It doesn't matter now. Nothing matters. Not even the past, the good, old, golden days---they don't matter anymore. Well, maybe because I've changed, or you have changed, or the years have changed. By the way, you're not so pretty anymore, you are too huge. I guess I have to accept change somehow. These are not the good old days. I am not a little brother to you nor to anyone. We have changed. We must change. Don't you see the change taking place? Don't you see yourself getting old?

For a long while nobody says a thing. He imagines Lucy talking to him, too, and she seems to be saying: I have grown, too, Ben. More than you have. I'm twenty-two and you're nineteen. What do you know? You're nineteen and I'm twenty-two. We grew up together. We swam in the same waters, bathed in the same sunlight. What more? I want it to stay that way. I want to see you as the boy in short pants pulling my hair until I cried, throwing dust on my white dress until I cried my way home. You're a poet now, aren't you? I wish you were an engineer.

No, Lucy. It's better to leave things the way they are now. Go your way now. I think we have journeyed together long enough and haven't even found out why.

Suddenly: Why did I ever have to come here in the first place. It's silly, isn't it?

"How about you, Lucy?" At last the voice sounds like his, and he feels silly about his silly imagination. "I mean, do you have a boyfriend---I mean, a real boyfriend? Ah, yes, of course. I know. That engineer, what's his name, you told me about in your letter. The long-legged, cross-eyed engineer. Why, he is too old for you, Lucy. Can't you find a better one? And he is dumb, too."

"He has asked me to marry him, Ben. I guess, I will, too, if I can't find a better one. I do like engineers. They don't say much but they make good husbands because they make good money." She laughs, and he laughs, too.

"I think nursing and engineering go together. I am happy for you." Nurses don't say much, either, and they are dumb. He thinks of Marlin. Marlin is a little dumb, too. Not too much, though. Of course, she's a little shy and doesn't say much, but she has sex. She's a fine girl.

"What time do you have there?" he asks.

"Six-ten."

"Is that late already?"

"It's that early."

"No, time to go. I think."

"Visiting hours are up to eight." She looks at her watch.

"No, I can't stay all evening. Classes start again soon and I have a novel to read. Besides, these people might think…"

"You can always read a novel when you get home. Don't you ever take a break? Don't you go to the movies anymore? Why don't you take me to one tonight? No. I'm joking. Poor boy!"

"I wish you wouldn't call me poor boy."

"I've been so used to. Sorry."

"I think I really must go now. Someday I'm going to marry a rich girl like you so you won't call me poor boy anymore."

"I'm not rich and you know it. When are you leaving for home?"

"Tomorrow at six. I wish I could take you to a movie, though." He is not certain of the time the bus leaves. He doesn't care anymore. He can't stay for another minute here. Why did he ever have to come, anyway.

Lucy looks up to him. "Tomorrow evening at six?"

"I just came to see you, Lucy, that's all."

"Oh Ben, you're wonderful. I wish you were really my brother and I wish these were the good old days again."

"Maybe I won't see you again, Lucy."

"But why not, Ben, why not?"

"Because, Lucy…well, maybe because…I don't know, Lucy. Well, goodnight, Lucy. It's good to see you again---after three long years."

He turns around, conscious of his steps. He hesitates, deciding. He thinks of going back to the Indian Bazaar in Uyanguren Street where he had seen an attractive fan. He walks on, not looking back. He looks back finally, but Lucy is not there. Poor girl, Lucy. Poor girl.

There is Marlin, he says to himself as he walks on. Why must some girls be shy and dumb and sexy and nice? I guess that's all right.

Yes, Marlin will like that attractive little fan he saw in the Indian Bazaar.

Sands & Coral 1963

Rhoda B. Galima

1963 Editor

Born in Solano, Nueva Viscaya, Rhoda B. Galima obtained her Bachelor of Arts in English Degree from Silliman University in 1962. While studying in Silliman, she worked as a student assistant at the speech laboratory and as a radio announcer at DYCR. After graduation, she began a Master's in English Program at Silliman University where she became a graduate teaching fellow at the Department of English and Literature. She later moved to Mindanao in 1964 and taught at Zamboanga AE Colleges in Zamboanga City.

Platonic Inspiration: A Reinterpretation*

Plato's influence is so great that it can rightly be said that literary criticism began with him. Since his time, theories of literature have been either in agreement or in disagreement with him, particularly in his theory of inspiration. His theory of inspiration has been constantly stirring up the literary world mainly because it has not been quite understood. Some are even willing to completely throw it overboard as something impertinent to the present accepted literary "dogmas".

Ours is a highly specialized age. This is necessarily so, of course, because knowledge has grown so rapidly and gone so deeply that a mortal could not be expected to know everything as deeply as it is discovered to be. Man is not just able to contain such richness and depth, and has not enough chance in his lifetime. In the field of medical knowledge alone, one is not surprised to know that one doctor is consulted for one part of the body and another for some other part; or that one doctor tells a patient what is wrong with him and yet would not know the remedy; or that, perhaps a few years from now, a person would be going to one specialist for one ear and another specialist for the other. This tendency to compartmentalize everything has gone too far, for it has gone into the realm of the human personality. We have allowed some of the component parts of the human being to be developed so gigantically that the other parts are dwarfed. People are now either "emotionalists" or "intellectualists," sensualists or spiritualists, and there is no such thing as a meeting ground between the two.

This is exactly what we have done in literature. We either believe or not believe in inspiration and art; that people are either artists by inspiration or by art. And we refuse to see the close relation between the two. As a result, we have become narrow-minded. Close examination of things and ideas and values, however, show us that this is not so; it is not a question of either-or but a combination of both parts, and the differences only consist of sometimes indefinable shades of both extremes. Therefore,

no one can be so radical as to either swallow a thing completely or vomit it entirely.

Plato need not be shrugged off like a child talking of his fantastic dreams and creations. Modern psychology and literary history before knowledge of depth psychology bear out the validity of Plato's theory. By no means does this paper pretend to present a "masterly reinterpretation" of his theory in modern terms but it is hoped that some of the difficulties presented by this theory will be seen and clarified, thereby making whatever decision made for or against it intelligent and reasonable.

Some poets and critics throughout literary history have said that Plato was either right or wrong. A thorough examination of several critics will disclose that some of them who have explicitly disagreed with Plato have implicitly agreed with him in the same language. Before we take this close look, let us first define Plato's "theory of inspiration".

Plato definitely expressed his idea of inspiration in two of his works, Ion and Phaedrus. Both Jowett's and Shelley's translations of Plato's works are here quoted:

> For all good poets, epic as well as lyric, compose their beautiful poems not by art, but because they are inspired and possessed. And as the Corybantian revellers when they dance are not in their right mind, so the lyric peers are not in their right mind when they are composing their beautiful strains: but when falling under the power of music and metro they are inspired and possessed… For the poet is a light and winged and holy thing, and there is not invention in him until he has been inspired and is out of his senses, and the mind is no longer in him: when he has not attained to this state he is peerless and is unable to utter his oracles. Had he learned by rules of art, he would have known how to speak not of one theme only, but of all; therefore, God takes away the minds of poets, and uses them as his ministers, as he also uses diviners and holy prophets, in order that we who hear them may know them to be speaking not of themselves who utter these priceless words in a state of unconsciousness, but that God himself is the speaker and that through them he is conversing with us… For in this way the God would seem to indicate to us and not allow us to doubt that these beautiful poems are not human, of the work of man, but divine and the work of God; and that

> the poets are only the interpreters of the Gods by whom they are severely possessed… (Jowett)
> The authors of these great poems which we admire do not attain excellence through the rules of art, but they utter their beautiful melodies of verse in a state of inspiration and, as it were, possessed by a spirit not their own. Thus the composers of lyric poetry create these admired songs of theirs in a state of divine insanity, like the Corybantes, who lose control of their reason in the enthusiasm of the sacred dance and, during the supernatural possession are excited to the rhythm and harmony which they communicate to men; like the Bacchantes who, when possessed by the gods, draw honey and milk from the rivers, in which when they come to their senses, they find nothing but simple water…. For the poet is indeed a thing ethereally light, winged and sacred; nor can he compose anything worth calling poetry until he becomes inspired and, as it were, mad;… for whilst a man retains any portion of the thing called reason, he is utterly incompetent to produce poetry or to ratiocinate. (Shelly)

In his Phaedrus, Plato talks about four kinds of madness: first, the art of divination or prophecy; second, the art of purification by mysteries; third, madness in poetry which is the inspiration of the muses without which no man can enter their temple; and the fourth, transmigration. The following quotation taken from the book is a discussion of the third kind of madness:

> … this enters into a delicate and virgin (pure) soul, and their inspiring frenzy, awakens lyric and all other numbers; with those adorning the myriad actions of ancient heroes for the instruction of posterity. But he who, not being inspired and having not the touch of madness in his soul, comes to the door and thinks that he will get into the temple by the help of art—he, I say, and his poetry are not admitted; the soul is nowhere at all when he enters into rivalry with the madman.

Plato's theory of inspiration may be summarized thus: that the poet is a "pure and delicate soul" taken possession by the "gods" and/ or the "muses"—any time and any place at their caprice, without any conscious

control on the part of the poet—who deprive him of reason and therefore putting him out of his senses; that when a poet is in such a state, he utters beautiful poetry spontaneously and unconsciously and he is unknowing of what to say before and after such a state; that the poet, out of his senses, is made an instrument of the gods to speak to men; and that this can be said only of the "good" poets.

As mentioned at the beginning of this paper, literary history bears out the fact that, from Aristotle down to I. A. Richards, Plato's theory is either concerned with partly or wholly, in the same or slightly different language. Aristotle,[1] Ovid,[2] Seneca,[3] and Lipsius[4]— all ancient and respected critics—believed with Plato that the poet has in him something divine and that while a man is uttering poetry he is inspired,—his mind is in a state of excitation or in a rave.[5] Longinus, the Greek critic of the first century A.D., believed in the "spur" or genius; it is innate, free and independent but it must be guided with wisdom or what he calls "curb."

Leading English critics like Sydney, Spenser, Milton and Dryden, are noted also to agree with Plato that poetry is a "divine gift and heavenly instinct not begotten by labor and learning but adorned with both, and poured into by a certain… celestial inspiration"[6] or that it is a divine instinct and unnatural rage passing the reach of common reason"[7] it is "madness," therefore, because it cannot be explained by common reason. Milton calls it "eternal Spirit who can enrich all utterance and knowledge." Dryden, in his "Preface to Troilus and Cressida," says that a poet is "born" with this quality talked about by Milton and the rest of the English critics. I think it was also Dryden who said that rules can help a man from being a bad poet but not necessarily help him to be one if he is not.

The critics immediately following Plato more or less agreed on Plato's theory with the explicit condition that this be "curbed with 'rules' or 'art'." This curbing was so emphasized that it soon became the sole test of good poetry. This was so during the Augustan age of English literature which produced Dryden and Pope and Johnson who leaned heavily on "conscious art." This made their works stilted, cold and devoid of the feeling and warmth so necessary in art. This tendency was true until the Romantic Movement of the eighteenth century, spearheaded by Edward Young, which produced no lesser poets than Wordsworth and Shelley and Coleridge. The Romantics, revolting against too much intellectualization of life during the Augustan age, swung to the opposite extreme—that of

excessive emotionalism. They believed that poetry is inspired and that one has to be inspired in order to produce poetry worth the name—so much so that it became an excuse for lack of discipline, resulting in sensationalism and poor craftsmanship. The Romantics, however, realized and believed and acted on the realization that "the supreme realities were not disclosed by a man's unaided thinking: they dawned upon his mind, briefly, fragmentarily, in fortunate moments, which Wordsworth calls 'spots of time' (intersection of the temporal with the eternal) when the percipience was raised above its ordinary level."[8] As opposed to the critics and poets of the Neo-Classical period who depended rather too heavily on man himself, the Romantics believed, and rightly, that human beings were part of the unified universe, of man and things and elements, controlled by Someone or Something above and beyond their reach, of which much they knew by the help of reason and much more they came to know through brief and fragmentary glimpses when percipience was raised above its natural and ordinary capacity, and much more of which they did not know, but still believed in, anyway, because of instinct or of that which found an answering call to the faint voices, far away but familiar.

Shelley believed in the Romantic poets through and through and made this the "beginning" and "end" of his creative activities. Shelley was fascinated with Plato and studied him. He went for Plato's theory "hook, line and sinker", in a manner of speaking, and this can be seen in his essay, "A Defense for Poetrie":

> We are aware of evanescent visitations of thought and feeling sometimes associated with place or person, sometimes regarding our mind alone, and always rising unforeseen and departing unbidden, but elevating and delightful beyond expression… It is, as it were, the interpenetration of a diviner nature through our own.

But its footsteps are as unclear and undefinable as the wind's traces over the sea and land. The mind, Shelley says, is like an Aeolian lyre, reacting to the movements of the wind, making sound and harmony in response to the different movements of the wind:

> Reason is to the imagination as the instrument is to the agent, as the body to the spirit, as the shadow to the substance.

Here again we are given the idea of "instrument" in the form of the Aeolian lyre. And since the lyre cannot control the wind, the ability or inspiration to compose poetry "is not subject to the control of active powers of the mind" and it has no connection with the "consciousness" or "will." The mind, then, becomes only an instrument. It receives impressions, experiences, glimpses of truth and life. It produces poetry as it is touched by Something or Someone beyond it. And the more passive it becomes, the more reason is subjugated to this power, the better does the "player" produce something which delights and teaches. Here is Plato's idea that if a poet is to become a worthy instrument, he has to empty himself of the barrier being, according to Shelley, reason. This was a way of madness—temporary, where the mind is not in control of the person.

The critics of the enlightened 20th century, although they may profess that they are against Plato and call him "mad," inadvertently express their concurrence with him in a way of their own. The "spots of time" of Wordsworth, which are brief and fragmentary, in which the human mind sees beyond its ordinary vision, is called by Matthew Arnold the "power of the moment". There must be this power of the moment which ignites the power of the man and together they produce what is worth calling poetry. These moments are "appointed" and not under the control of the man.[9] Henry James boasts that "art" is the beginning and end of the novelist's work. But he also says that literature worth its name is created from "experiences compounded of impressions" which means the same as the momentary and fragmentary glimpses of life beyond this, free of the conscious manipulation of the mind but which are caught by the mind, stored in the memory without any conscious effort from the man itself. The "spiderweb" of James gives the same idea as that of Shelley's Aeolian lyre and Plato's "instrument" of the gods. The mind, James says, is like a "huge spiderweb of the finest silken threads suspended in the chamber of consciousness and catching every airborne particle in its tissue" and, like the wind, one does not know where this catching and storing begins or ends. This thing which we call experience, made up of countless, effortless and unconscious impressions caught by the mind is so immense that one cannot honestly contain it in "rules of art" and telling someone how to compose poetry is as problematical as telling someone how he should compose a "nosegay."

T.S. Elliot seems to agree with Plato in the latter's Impersonal Theory. Eliot believes that the poet has not a personality to express, that he is only a "medium and not a personality, in which impressions and experience combine in peculiar and unexpected ways". The mind, he says, like the lyre of Shelley, the spiderweb of James, is a "receptacle for seizing and storing up numberless feelings, phrases, images, which remain there until all the particles which can unite to form a new compound are present together". One never knows and cannot know when the particles needed are all there except when it manifests itself in an urge to express, an urge to be born, then, and only then, there comes this "possession" of Plato's gods and muses! In the process of collecting "particles" up to the time that this new compound is synthesized—this "creation"—the poet comes out unscratched, untouched, unaffected. Certainly, this is Plato in Ion, who believes that before and after a "possession" of the "gods" one does not know, or care about what he says. He is completely passive and is willing to be used as an instrument of the gods. This idea is certainly in Eliot's idea of the poet as a catalyst who brings about the synthesis of a new compound but remains unchanged in the process.

The most Platonic of the modern poet-critics is I. A. Richards. Plato says that when a man is inspired he just utters beautiful poetry—spontaneously and unconsciously—and he does not even try to make it so. Richards says that a poet does not know why certain words are used and why they are arranged in such an order. The words, he says, "just fall into place without conscious control, and a feeling of rightness, of inevitability, is commonly his sole conscious ground for his certainty that it has ordered them aright", and for someone to ask why he is sure they are right is impertinent. True, he might give reasons, but they are only "rationalizations" which have nothing to do with the matter. In other words, he can justify the arrangement, but he cannot perform it consciously. "He knows how to do it but he does not himself know how it is done." Richards even goes as far as saying that students can only be helped by "letting himself be influenced deeply, not by a superficial examination of style… Poetry cannot be written by cunning and study, by craft and contrivance". As Dryden said, rules help one from being a bad poet but not necessarily help one be a good one if he does not have the right qualification, which is "inspiration," or what we call "gift". It does not matter what one calls it as long as it is understood that it is something

beyond the conscious control of the mind in its unexcited state and it is recognized as the big difference between a mediocre poet and a great poet.

Plato called it the "gods" and "muses". Modern poets call it "experience" or the supreme "ordering of experience" or impressions; psychologists may call it "unconscious cerebration" or "unconscious germination" instead of "divine insanity" or "inspiration". Really, there should be no quarrel about the terms as long as one realizes that there is so much which we do not know somehow other than the reason. There is now fairly good reason to believe that Plato's world of ideas is really a blend of the most incredibly intricate memories, some actually remembered, some really forgotten and only resurrected through the changes they have wrought on a conscious memory."

I like to think of the mind as a combination of the Aeolian lyre, spiderweb, and receptacle catching impressions and "faintest hints of life." What kind of and how much is stored, one does not know. This process of catching and storing up and the mental organization governing them goes on for months, or for years, in a period of incubation until the time comes when the last thing needed to complete the ingredients that make a new compound piles itself on top of all the other things and starts an avalanche of poetry. Wordsworth calls it "overflow" and because these things have been piled and organized in the mind when the time comes, the words would fall into place; the poet knows instinctively, intuitively, that these words are right and arranged. But ask him to explain and he couldn't.

One recent Platonist says that the mind is a "trackless mystery, a universe of lost worlds and swinging bright planets and the lost worlds are really lost—worlds of lost observation never recorded by critical reason, of memories that were never anchored to the conscious stream of self, of desires never admitted, or outgrown, or satisfied by compromise" and it is these potential selves which every artist recovers by means of imagination —this is the part in other men that responds to the artist's way of expressing." I also like to think that man's life is like an iceberg; two-thirds of which is submerged and one-third seen from the surface. The one-third is the conscious life and man knows how to direct it through rules of society, but the two-thirds become mysterious; man cannot fully understand how it works but he recognizes that there exists such a thing.

Our knowledge of "depth psychology" helps us understand those lost worlds but depth psychologists also admit that through the little that

they know of the subconscious and its systems they know that there is still much which they do not know. In the realization of man's finite thought, there must necessarily be the element of humility and the openness of mind in order to be resolutely well-balanced.

In unreservedly embracing Plato's theory of inspiration we commit, in a sense, the same mistake as those who threw it overboard. But lest we commit this mistake, it is necessary to accept Plato's theory with reservations and point out some of its weaknesses.

First, let us recognize that it is discipline, or conscious art, which makes "inspiration" acceptable in our age of intellectualization. To forget this would make good and discerning critics issue remarks similar to what Jonson said of Shakespeare, "O that he had struck out a thousand lines from his works". Secondly, let us learn from Richards and James themselves. James talks of a notebook which every aspiring artist must have so he could jot down little impressions which strike his mind from time to time. Richards, too, talks about the ordering of experience through the organization of individual interests. "Interests must come into play and remain in play with as little conflict as possible." The impulses and impressions must be given freedom. Even if Wordsworth believed in inspiration, he did not wait until he was inspired to write. While waiting for those fullness which eventually he expresses itself in creation, he played with ideas and all those ideas became part of his experience.

The plea for Plato's theory of inspiration is a plea for balance in everything. In poetic experience, there must be the harmonious working together of the intellect, the emotion and the imagination.

END NOTES

Footnotes from the original article are collected as endnotes.

[1] There is no great genius without a mixture of madness. Nor can there be anything sublime unless the mind is excited.

[2] There is a god in us; we grow not at his urging… from the ethereal above that spirit comes.

[3] Sometimes it is delightful to rave.

[4] I know that no poet has been illustrious who land not in him an abundant portion of the divine breath.

[5] Quoted from Ben Jonson, "Discoveries", The Great Critics, ed. by J. H. Smith and E. W. Parks: New York, Norton and Company, 1939.

[6] Edward Spenser, "Eclogue for October, Shepherd's Calendar", The Great Critics, ed. By Smith and Parks.

[7] Milton.

[8] Ernest Bernbaum, "Introduction to the Romantic Movement", An Anthropology for English Romanticism, ed. By Bernbaum, New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1948.

[9] Matthew Arnold, "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time", The Great Critics, Smith and Parks.

Sands & Coral 1962

Myrna Peña-Reyes

1964 Editor

Myrna Peña-Reyes was born on October 2, 1938, with twin sister Lorna, to schoolteacher parents in Cagayan de Oro, Misamis Oriental. After WWII, her family moved to Dumaguete. She completed her elementary, high school, and college education at Silliman University, where her father also worked as biology professor. She regularly contributed to *The Sillimanian* and the *Sands & Coral*. After her college education, she joined the Department of English and Literature, teaching literature and creative writing. She also helped the Tiempos run the Silliman University National Summer Writers Workshop in its early years. She earned her MFA in creative writing at the University of Oregon, where she met her husband, the poet William Timothy Sweet. She won the Oregon Literary Fellowship for poetry from the state's Literary Arts organization and received the Oregon Fellowship for Poetry both in 1994 and 2002. Peña-Reyes soon published her first poetry collection, *The River Singing Stone* (Anvil, 1994), which was a finalist for the 1995 National Book Award in poetry. The University of the Philippines Press published her second poetry collection, *Almost Home: Poems*, in 2004. In 2015, her third collection, *Memory's Mercy: New and Selected Poems by Artemio Tadena*, was published by the UP Press and was nominated for the 2016 National Book Award. She co-edited with Gemino H. Abad, This Craft, As With a Woman Loved: Selected Poems (UST Publishing House, 2016), which was nominated for the National Book Award. In 2018, she was awarded by the Unyon ng mga Manunulat sa Pilipinas [UMPIL] the Gawad Pambansang Alagad ni Francisco Balagtas for Poetry in English. She was also recipient of the Taboan Literary Award for Poetry in English from the National Commission for Culture and the Arts. Presently retired in Dumaguete, she continues her volunteer affiliation with Silliman University's literary studies and creative writing programs.

The Measure of a Waterfall

Not what blue wings would span
Is the measure of a waterfall---
But the blue-blurring upward
Through the rainbow splitting spray,
And on the bank the dew-fire
Springing from the grass.

For measuring a waterfall
Is not by marking wing spans to its crest,
Or harnessing the thunder at its full,
Nor probing all its lichen-splintered rocks---
But standing back to watch the bridging
Of a river to the sky.

Sands & Coral 1964

Rachel P. Gadiane

1965 Co-editor

Rachel P. Gadiane, born in 1943, taught at Silliman University while also completing her master's degree. Aside from being a campus writer, she was also active in various activities on campus, including being adviser to the ROTC Corps of Sponsors and a cast member of Arthur Miller's "Death of a Salesman," which was presented at the Phil Am Life Auditorium in Manila. She married George Sidney Silliman and migrated to California, where she still lives with her family. She is the author of *The Visayans and Pilipino: A Study of Regional Elite Attitudes, Nationalism, and Language Planning in the Philippines*, published in Ann Arbor, Michigan by Xerox University Microfilms in 1976.

The Tale of Genji: The First Japanese Novel

The Genji Monogatari (Tales of Genji) is the greatest of the Japanese novels. It was written sometime during the first decade of the eleventh century by Lady Murasaki Shikibu, perhaps the most famous author of the Heian Period of Japanese literature. The Tales of Genji is the first novel to appear in the literature of the Japanese people and, as such, marks a departure from the limitations of poetry which so dominated the early years of literature. It is also an improvement on the diaries and the other "monogataris," since the Genji Monogatari is a prose epic of real life.

The Genji Monogatari is composed of fifty-four separate chapters or books, each generally dealing with some aspect of the life of Prince Genji. This separation into books leads to the conclusion that the Genji is not actually a novel in the Western sense of the word. This conclusion can be supported by the fact that the Genji has no tight, unifying plot; it has no climax; nor does it contain an underlying philosophy to be discerned by the reader. However, the Genji may be classified as a biography rendered in the form of a novel. The characterization of Prince Genji is intensive–the work revolving around his many love affairs. That the Tale is a novel is further indicated in the weaving in and out of the secondary characters in the different books. The appearance of Fujitsubo in many of the chapters of this book, as does Lady Rokujo, Genji's wife Aloi, and the image of Yugao make for a certain unity.

Nothing is ever simply stated in this novel. The style of the Genji Monogatari is ornate, graceful, and extremely refined. Each sentence contains many descriptive passages and the language used is elegant. But this is as it should be since the Heian Period itself was characterized by grace, elegance, and refinement. Also, most of the characters in the Genji are of the aristocracy and the imperial family. The court life was elaborate, the customs of the period were imposing, and the whole atmosphere was pervaded with a certain artificiality. It is only natural that any descriptions of this period should use ornate language.

Realism is, however, present in the portrayal of the life of these times. Based around the many amours of Prince Genji, this novel shows the prevailing morality of the court life. It was far from high with many flirtations and affairs. One shining example of the type of morality found

in this work is the affair between Prince Genji and Fujitsubo. Fujitsubo, the Emperor's consort, and Prince Genji fall in love and have a secret affair, the result of which is a baby boy. The Emperor, unaware, thinks that the baby boy is his. A further example of the low standard of morality is that Genji had intrigues with numerous women, even though married to Aloi. It appears that not only did the aristocracy tolerate such affairs among the sexes, but even gave tacit encouragement. But it is interesting that throughout this book, any sexual contact is only hinted at. The author portrays the affairs in a very subtle manner and it is sometime before the reader realizes that the men are not only visiting these ladies. There are only a few direct references to the fact that these affairs result in relations, and this is generally when the author speaks of the birth of a child. This is a vivid contrast with many Western novels which openly deal with sex and which sometimes are even obscene.

The Genji Monogatari is also realistic in that it deals with the lives of real people. This work is not concerned with demigods or fairy tales, as is the Konjaku Monogatari or the Kojiki. The Genji portrays events which are plausible, the time sequence within each chapter being valid, and the emotions described are not artificial. Murasaki Shikibu is especially adept in the last respect as she writes of the sentiment, the melancholy, the humor, and the grief of her characters. These inner emotions, the atmosphere, are generally revealed by the author's descriptions since the Genji is lacking in dialogue. The last chapter of Arthur Waley's translation best exemplifies this realistic portrayal of emotions. Here the author describes the grief of Prince Genji after the death of his wife Aloi. Genji's sorrow, his pain, his helplessness shown in an atmosphere of gloom is stark reality.

The personality of Genji is revealed through the many intrigues which he engages in. The main concern of Genji in this world is women and his desire to love. Genji courts Utsusemi, but is repulsed because of her loyalty to her husband, he falls in love with Yugao and grieves heavily over her death; he marries Aloi, but finds himself only extremely fond of her; and finally, he breeds Murasaki to be his lover and wife. Throughout these many amours Genji is seen to be immature in his ability to love and to be extremely fickle. This is demonstrated very well in the portion where he is absorbed in the memory of Murasaki, yet finds time to father the child of Fujitsubo. It should be noted that one reason Genji has such an easy time with women is that he is extremely handsome.

Another point of Genji's personality that is revealed through his love affairs is that he is charmed and attracted by the fantastic, by the grotesque, by the novel, whether it be situations or people. Furthermore, he

is completely absorbed in the things of this world and too lighthearted to be interested in spiritual matters. In addition, Genji is easily attracted by the excitement of an intrigue, as is shown by the Prince pursuing the sister of Lady Kokiden.

On the serious side of Genji's personality can be seen pity, guilt and grief, and impatience. Genji reveals his capacity for pity in the affair with Princess Sutetsumuhana. After he had seen her in her tragic uncouthness, pity gained the upper hand, and henceforth, he showed her every kindness. The guilt and grief of Prince Genji are shown after the death of Aloi. He misses her extremely and experiences guilt since he feels that he was unjust to her. Then Genji is shown to be impatient when his visit to Utsusemi is delayed.

The other characters in the Genji Monogatari are not so vividly drawn but the descriptive prowess of Lady Murasaki is unmistakable:

She was a thoughtless creature in whose life no very strong emotion had ever played a part. Hers was the flippancy that goes with inexperience…

If one only gains a fleeting glance into the personalities of the other characters and only enough to acquaint the reader with some aspect of that personality, this cannot be a discrediting factor since the tale is mainly that of Genji.

Not only is this novel notable for its character portrayal of Genji. It is also important in that it reveals the continuing influence of the Chinese in the literature of Japan. This novel contains many references to items Chinese as Chinese porcelain, Chinese banquet (a poetry contest), acquaintance with Buddhism, and the frequent allusions to Chinese poetry. Lady Murasaki often quotes the verses of Po Chu-i.

Furthermore, the novel is notable for the constant reference of objects of nature. The prose portion of the work and the poetry portions (with which the Tale is so interspersed) use the moods of Nature to give the desired atmosphere for the action. In the passage It had begun to rain; a cold wind blew across the hill, carrying with it the sound of a waterfall,… and with it, somnolently rising and falling, mingled the monotonous chanting of the scriptures.

the melancholy literally drips in the air. Not only is nature used to create an atmosphere, but it is also in the descriptions of nature that Murasaki makes best use of imagery. The cry of wild geese on the wing, the light of an unclouded full moon shining between the ill-fitting planks of the roof and flooding the whole room, the lovely distances half lost in haze, and the blur of shimmering woods stretching out on every side – they evoke an atmosphere in minor key. Lady Murasaki also uses objects of

nature in the titles of her chapters and in some of the names of her characters: Yugao stands for mayflower; Suyetsumuhana for saffron-flower and there is mention of the Broom-Tree. The author's primary concern with the beauty of nature finds culmination in the physical build of Prince Genji who is the epitome of good looks.

The general lack of dialogue may be explained by the manner of presentation which is that of author-narration.

As a symbol, the Prince represents the grace, the splendor and the refinement of the period. Yet, he is also a symbol of the desire for pleasure, the lack of concern for the art of government, and the low morality of the aristocracy and of the Imperial court.

Describing the intrigues of Genji, the work moves with rapidity. In spite of the ornate language, it is seldom that the reader becomes bogged down by lengthy descriptions. The reader moves from humor, to sarcasm, to sentiment, and is often thrilled by the intrigues of the love affairs of Genji.

In general, it can be said that the Genji Monogatari is an extremely entertaining novel. Although devoid of any underlying philosophy, it is a book made to be enjoyed by the inner emotions of the reader.

REFERENCE

Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, (translated by Arthur Waley), N.Y. Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1956

Sands & Coral 1967

Roberto J. Ponteñila

1965 Co-editor

Roberto J. Ponteñila was in his sophomore year as a journalism student when he became the editor of *Sands & Coral* in 1965 alongside Rachel P. Gadiane. As a student, he was actively engaged in various campus publications, as staff artist and then art editor for the Portal and as associate editor and then editor for *The Sillimanian*. He was also technical director for the local production of "All My Sons," and an executive secretary for the Student Government in 1962-1963. He earned his journalism degree in 1967.

The Face of Veronica

Estrella woke UP that morning feeling the damp brush of air against her cheeks. She shivered: the nakedness of the room chilled her like the haunting of ghosts reverberating in her mind. For a while, the pastel blue walls were blanched and her thoughts vague remembrances which she would utter to herself. But a little later, she would clearly remember that Mike had left. Gone for two weeks. (Was it two weeks? She was not sure. She only remembered the rain-drenched kiss at the doorway.) Poor man. He tried his best.

Wrapping herself with the robe carelessly upon the back of the sofa by the bed, she went to the bathroom and gargled. Her mouth still tasted bitter. Mike had warned her. And she wouldn't listen. Poor man. He tried his best. I wonder now…

Pfui! She filled her mouth with water again, tilted her head and allowed the water to reach her throat.

It had rained last night, drenching the dust-white streets, making noise on the rooftops like the gurgling noise in her throat. When she was still young, a child of seven (was it eight?), she would like to go rooftops and dance in the rain while the other children would be playing. She never had her wish because her mother would not allow her. Her mother died a year after.

Pfui! Estrella spat the remaining bitterness from her mouth. She turned on the faucet; water hissed down, washing away the dryness that was last night. Next month will be my birthday, she thought. I wonder what Mike will give me.

She opened a tube of toothpaste, placed a strip of its white content on her toothbrush, and started the up-and-down movements of brushing the teeth. The tube was already half-empty. I should buy anew one, she thought. I should have bought it the other day. I'll buy one today.

The rain last night made her sad. She could remember she cried when Mike kissed her in the doorway. Poor man. He tried his best. Why does his wife not care for him? He is all right…

Pfui!

After rinsing her mouth, she placed her toothbrush under the running water until the white foam settling on its top and sides and clinging on its back was completely gone. With her right hand cupped in front of her mouth and nose, she exhaled through her mouth and inhaled through the nose. Satisfied with her mint-smelling breath, she started to wash her face, washing it as she had done many times before: scrubbing it first with a whirling movement like a slow pirouette, allowing the lather to cover it, and finally the lather would be removed with water, revealing the natural sheen of her skin.

Brrrrrrrr! … It was cold.

That would be the last party until Mike comes back, she thought. Mike was really strict. That's what she liked about him. He would say it and mean it. No other man, he would say. Sometimes she wouldn't listen.

Drying her face with the towel, she wondered why men were strange. Mike, for example. He had a pretty wife and two children. (He had shown her their photographs.) He had money. (But his wife had left him.) He told her his wife could not understand him. She couldn't either. Yet he clung to her, he continued to stay with her, provided her with money and food and brought her to parties, and showed her his collection of paintings and antiques. Mike was a strange man. Sometimes he would just lay his head on her breasts and for interminable hours, nothing but their soft breathing could be heard. She would occasionally stroke his head, running her slim fingers through his thinning hair; tired, she would draw his head closer to her, and let her hands rest on his cheeks. He would remain passive until the night would lull him to sleep. But Estrella would remain: the heat of summer permeating the night air would seem to envelop her, its humid intensity piercing her body, and that for some untraceable moments would linger into her confusion; and then when a breeze would enter the room, it would disappear like a malignant fever, leaving her serene, her body tingling with a rippling sensation dying away, dissipating into memories: the poems she had learned in school, the poems she had read in magazines:

Ah, love, if it could only be…

She would stop there because she had forgotten the rest of the lines; but she would keep repeating the line in her mind until exhausted, she would fall asleep.

Light had filtered through the mist and made soft shadows on the walls. From below, the sound of wheels sloshing through the wet asphalt could be heard along with some urgent footsteps occasionally broken by casual footfalls and voices that would vanish into the distance. Soon the honking of the horns would cross the street and through the window, the sunlight would cast sharp shadows; the mist would clear and the diaphanous curtains, pale-gray before, would turn immaculate, their numerous pores filled with the blue of the sky.

Estrella peered at herself in the mirror. She could see lines below her eyes. That's April, she said to herself. Twenty-five, I can't forget. I wonder what Mike will give me. I'm getting old. Bah, who isn't? Pearl is. She's younger than me. I'm getting drinks too much that's why. I shouldn't drink anymore. Mike is right. He's right. Poor man. Why don't I listen to him sometimes? Always tries his best. Ah, gaga! That's me.

Brushing her hair—cropped to the nape—with swift strokes she stared with almost mock admiration at her face which in the morning light appeared deeply etched, its contours formed by shadows, giving an impression of liveliness and strange fragility mingled with the lushness of an almost unblemished skin; in the certain reflection of the mirror, it was a face she had known every morning and owned by many. It could not be hers alone; it belonged to Mike and to others before Mike. Then she stopped brushing her hair and unconsciously, the brush moved down, touching her cheek, its bristles clawing sharply at her skin and as if in deep thought, she began, as by habit, to move the brush with light sweeping strokes, and would continue until the sensitizing sensation of the bristles would bring her out of her passivity, leaving her cheeks slightly burning with pain.

Estrella combed her hair with care. Years ago, her hair was a flowing tress and gave her a secret triumphant feeling over the other girls, who, like her, showed signs of womanhood. She would play with the boys, with them, though no longer as active as before; she did not wish her hair to be ruffled in the roughness of the games, only by the wind for she began to notice these things and also wanted her playmates to notice the sheen of her hair, especially Rodring. So she became passive, sometimes indifferent that her playmates chided her for being such an old-fashioned girl. Later she quit playing games with them; sometimes in the heat of the play, one of the boys would accidentally brush against her breasts and she would feel a

sharp pain; she would have not minded if it were Rodring but usually it was Paeng. She did not exactly hate Paeng but she did not like him either. She was fifteen then. She could not forget it, Rodring…

Now her hair was short, trimmed and cared for by her beautician, Jimmy. (Jimmy, my eye! He longs to be pregnant.) It was short since she was twenty or twenty-one and still was regarded by her in the same way as before; it gave her an almost undiminished secret triumphant feeling that even Mike with his money, his art collection, his vast knowledge, could not overwhelm and vanquish.

Ah gaga! What has Mike got to do with it? His wife doesn't understand him. That's all. I'll see how much he's left me. Let's see… toothpaste…hair spray net…nylons…what else?

She started to powder her face, cheeks and forehead first, a little more carefully under her eyes to hide the lines left last night. With a rapid circling motion, Estrella removed the excess with the puff. Then she took a hand-mirror and viewed her profile. Since she met Mike she viewed her profile with amusement. Not that there was something wrong with it. It was a beautiful profile. Rodring had said once. Who could be truer than Rodring? But that night, when she and Mike lay still Mike suddenly sprang up.

"I got it," he said. "I got it now!"

Mike looked funny indeed. She had found him odd, a bit strange—a man yet like a woman. And seeing him without his trousers on, even in the dimness of a small table lamp across the bed, was enough to make her laugh. But she never laughed; she never laughed at her lovers. It would be unkind. Laughed at their jokes, yes. Not at them. Never.

She contained herself and lay immobile and tried to conceal her laughter. Mike was looking intently at her face as if it were the only object in the room, as if it were an art object, as if light were focused on it.

"Jesus, you look like Veronica!"

"Veronica?" She thought Veronica was the name of his girl or wife maybe.

"You knew her?" "I mean your profile." "Who is she?"

"The woman who took the impression of Christ's head on a piece of cloth."

"I do?"

"Yes, and it was at the back of my mind all the time. From a painting by Berzellota, Italian, Renaissance."

Estrella merely nodded her head. She could not comprehend him. Nor his attitude. All the others did was pay her what she asked. Not this one."I will show you the painting tomorrow. I have the set—via crucis."

She became uneasy. Berze—what was that? Indeed her mother had taught her the via crucis—the way to the cross, the catechism, the prayers; pious woman she was, bless her soul. Once Estrella had diligently prayed and knelt during lent. Knelt and prayed. And she had remembered the stations clearly, one by one, round the walls of the church. Afterwards, feeling light, as if she had unburdened a great weight through mortification, she would join the procession and for some moments lose her thoughts among the throng of candles and orisons. But when changes of womanhood had started, to attract her attention, candles and orisons became a little insipid for her. Within her then was a voice crying, rebelliously asserting itself above the multitude: "See my hair, look at me, I'm a woman now, and I pray, too, like my mother." The cry would seem deafening and sometimes her heart would skip a beat or two, terrified at entertaining such thoughts, and then the candle she had been holding would quiver, its flames would flicker; she would miss some lines of the prayer or hymn. But she would quickly recover her composure among the multitude; many candlelights were unsteady, too, and the droning voices under the purple sky seemed to engulf all doubts. Later, a thousand amens would resound, not quite simultaneously, resulting in a chain of murmurs, and the final amen would be from a lone voice.

Mike showed her the painting, and indeed, the face of Veronica bore a striking resemblance to hers. Except the neck. Veronica has too long a neck, she thought. Mike with no trousers. Ridiculous. I wonder if he remembers my birthday. He should. I reminded him. He never forgets. That's why he's always reminding me to keep away from drinks. 'They ruin you—your beauty,' he'd say. The guy knows absolutely everything—men, women, drinks, you name it. There's nothing you can tell him that he doesn't know. His wife should serve him. He's a great guy. His wife should know how to please him. Mike should send her to me. I'll teach her. That woman.

We've met at the party, remember?

She was bewildered; she could not remember. The man in front of her had a roguish smile and his eyebrows arched a suggestive invitation. Ridiculous. The man was dirty-looking, hair unkempt and beard unshaven; Estrella could even perceive the acrid odor of his body and the mildewed smell of his turtle-neck sweater. (Or was it his corduroy pants?)

"We've met at the party," he repeated swaggering. "Remember?" "Y-yes," she replied, trying to recall. "You remember."

"Yes."

She opened the door wider. The man took a huge and flat rectangular object wrapped in Manila paper. A painting, she thought.

"Where?"

"Come in—down here."

The man followed her down the basement which housed Mike's art collection. Switching on the light, Estrella indicated a far corner where a crate and some packages lay. Above the packages was a row of flood lights. The man walked past the collonading antiques and paintings on the walls, and laid the objects down among the unopened packages. Then he turned his attention to the room, to the multi-colored lights dancing on the surface of the vases, the cups, the scabbards, the swords—ancient yet shining with dazzling intensity and at the same time glowing with mellowed maturity. His eyes hovered over the paintings, some dulled and cracked by age; others shining with freshness. His eyes stopped on the small frame of a pastoral scene. The painting was common—trees and grass, a farmhouse from a distance, and mountains and sky painted in the style of old masters: brownish tints dominant—but the frame, from his vantage point, was unmistakably golden.

"Quite a place," the man said, his eyes still on the frame. "Someday, I'll have my own."

"Do you paint too?"

"I'm an artist. I painted that," he said, indicating the object he had just bought.

"It must be difficult. Being an artist, I mean."

"I am an artist and real artists do not care for the tribulations in life."

Admiration welled in her, breaking into soft flush on her cheeks.

Just like Rodring, she thought.

The man started to scrutinize the frame, touching it with his forefinger.

"Gold?"

She nodded her head.

"Magnifico," he said, letting out a soft whistle escape between his yellowish teeth. "You're fortunate. You and all these."

"These are not…"

"Don't continue," he said, extending his hand in a dramatic gesture of stopping her. "I know. You are his mistress. But what does that matter?"

Estrella smiled, amused at his actions.

"Not to me. Virginity and all that. What do they matter? I eat now, I don't tomorrow—what does it matter?"

Looking at him, she seemed to grasp the meaning of everything. But like Mike, the man was saying things she only half-understood. Yet inside her she shared a certain familiarity with him, the dirty clothes and the unshaven face. A real artist, she thought.

The man walked towards her, his eyes gleaming with a certain fervidity like those of a man at the height of passion.

"I paint so I live. All, all are tarnished—you, me, the others. Look at yourself: a beautiful woman. One day I will paint you. I will paint your beauty, I will proclaim to the world your mortal existence. Ha, that would be great. Gr-rrr-eaa-at! Brush strokes would be music to praise your body, your body strip of anything. Pure. And I will know you, every inch of your body."

Though still unable to understand him completely, she found in his words sincerity and warmth; the ring of his voice was piercing though sometimes, it would dissipate into hoarseness. And as he continued talking, she began to feel secure and her hands no longer held tight the flap of her robe; she wanted to listen to him, listen to him and his dreams that would take her far away to a world she probably never knew. And one day, perhaps, she would really be there too, and they would tell each other stories of the past, of how they dreamt once and of how their dreams came true.

"I shall hold you in the palm of my hand," he continued. "In my heart you shall endure. I shall worship you as my forebears worshipped the sun. Eve-rrything. Ha, that would be great."

He knelt before her and Estrella thought it was funny. (Ah, gaga! You must remember he's an artist—an artist.) Nobody—not even Mike had knelt before her.

"I must go. But I shall be back."

"No—you stay. We can talk. Mike's not here. Would you like some drinks?" She became polite.

"Ah, my angel. My angel, how shall I thank you? We must talk because I'm flowing with words. Words are music too. My words are songs. And wine, of course. It makes music. And what shall we talk? Or shall I get my paints and brushes and preserve you for eternity? Now? Today? Shall I not even receive a reply?"

He must have already drunk something, she thought. But he doesn't smell. Or maybe…

The man tailed behind Estrella, swaggering on the carpeted floor which led to the bedroom. Estrella slid open the windows of a built-in bar of deep mahogany, took out a bottle of whiskey and two glasses, and poured its contents in the glasses. The man accepted the proffered glass with a dignified stance, shuffling his feet like a worn-out cavalier.

Warmed by alcohol, he surveyed the pastel blue room with the casual eye of a connoisseur, and extended his glass to be filled again.

"You live here all the time?"

"No, not always."

"You are fortunate," he said, pausing to drink his second glass. Estrella had her second glass also. "Wine like this," he continued wetly, smacking his lips and shaking his head in disbelief. "Ah yes, sometimes I would like to be like—what's his name again?" Estrella said Mike. "Mike, yes."

"But you are an artist," she said, thinking she ought to stop drinking. But she poured her third anyway. I wonder what Mike will say if he'll know, she muttered to herself.

"I am, I am. And real artists do not care for the tribulations in life."

"Yes," she assented. He had told her that. This wine must be vintage—wait —Estrella read the label—I'm right. So what do you know. I'm right.

"Has anyone tried breaking in here? You know burglars, thieves," he walked to the bed and sat.

"No, why?"

"Too many precious things there," he turned his right thumb down.

"But nobody knows about them. And who would know about them here?"

She carried the bottle to him and poured more whisky into his glass. "You can never tell," he said, smiling, shielding his vision with the

glass. The flap of Estrella's robe was open and white skin played with the light. "You can never tell," he repeated; his eyes were flushed.

Morning brought the sun high above the curtains that showed the gray asphalt below. Air danced in the street and vendors peddled quietly their goods; and beggars, palms opened, held their expressionless eyes high, away from the hubbub of long beeps and rrrrrrrrh of motors, waiting for the mute paper bills or cold coins to drop into their familiar hands.

Estrella had taken another bottle and was pouring its contents into her glass. Rosy-eyed now, she sat on the edge of the bed with him, her white skin playing with the sunlight. Mmmmm—and she gulped another glass of whisky.

"I shall paint you," he said slushingly. "My masterpiece will be my face. A-a-aaaah great!" He stood up and arms extended, turned around in the blue light, whirling as the white curtains rustled. Estrella laughed, her voice spilling across the room. The man continued to dance, to whirl, and Estrella continued to laugh until her eyes became bleary.

The man ceased dancing and threw the glass to the floor. He swaggered forward as if in a trance, walking in alcoholic transparency, and Estrella could see him and him.

"Hiheat today—Hidon't tomorrow," he said with great effort. "Wasssshouldaykerrr."

Estrella suddenly became sad. The room was misty and she wanted to remember the poems she had forgotten. "Wasssshouldayke-e-rrrrr," the man repeated. Forlorn now, Estrella lay still, wishing she were dead. Bastards, bastards, bastards, she kept repeating in her mind: she wanted to remember the poems she had forgotten; she wanted to recite them. "Ahhhhhmyrubbbissshingbride, my languid onnnne- uh!" the man continued hissing and Estrella could no longer think of anything, could not do anything except listen to him, to his voice that grew louder and louder, stronger and stronger until reaching its peak, it stopped. And she looked at him like a mesmerized animal, glassy- eyed and dumb; she shuddered because suddenly the room was chilled into reminiscences which filled her body, creeping inside her like waves to the shore, so that the past became once more deep sighs in the night often wafted by the breeze of a noisy city under summer stars. She struggled to free herself, to remember things that

would stop the alcohol running in her veins: the kind of life she had known once: the prayers she had forgotten: Rodring…but not even the memory of Rodring could free her. True he had abandoned her but that was after, after…

…In the misty blue room, all she knew was that the man's eyes had become orbs gleaming red with madness, orbs that opened her white skin to the sky like a thousand pinpricks, and that in his hands, he held the silence of the room.

The red sky entered incandescent into the room; the blinds were drawn up. Faces yellow, tinged with the flush of sunlight, Estrella and the man lay inert on the bed.

"I love sunsets," Estrella said, propping herself up so that she could see the rays transomed through the grills of the window.

"Uh-huh," the man answered.

She had told him of the paintings in Mike's collection, explained to him what they were about, for she seemed to know them all. Mike had told her everything and she told the man everything. "They're beautiful. When will you paint sunsets?"

"My masterpiece first. No sunsets before my masterpiece." "When will you paint your masterpiece? You haven't even

sketched me." She sounded disappointed. The man had been raving for three days about a masterpiece but he did not seem to show any interest in starting it. He wanted to borrow the golden frame, the scabbards and the vase first.

"It's here," he indicated his breast. "Here. But I cannot paint it until I have the materials. I need the materials. I am inspired, I have you—but the materials."

"But I gave you money."

"I have to eat and you know that. I have to pay rent."

"You can work here. It's quiet and the sunset looks beautiful from here."

"Your head is full of sunsets. Sunsets are common. I want something new, something symbolic, something that would perpetuate my name."

Three days (or was it four?) and all for nothing, she thought, saying:

"Why would you need that for? Why are you interested in your name?"

"Ah, you don't understand an artist."

"I understand you. I understand. That's why."

He sat up, put his corduroy pants on, and went to the toilet.

Moments later, Estrella heard the roar of the water.

"Look at this," the man said while zipping the fly of his pants. "This—this room—is all money. Money. You look at that." He pointed at the curtains. "Money. Tiled bathrooms and toilets. All."

"But this isn't mine," Estrella said. "Nothing is. Can't you see?" "What does Mike want all these for?"

"I don't know. Give me something to drink." This will ruin my face, she thought. And aloud: "I need a drink."

The man went to the bar, poured some whisky into two glasses, and brought them to her.

"He has a wife, you know that," he said, downing the drink.

Estrella nodded and drank the whisky. "She's left him," she said and added:

"Some more."

He obediently went back to pour drinks.

He is strange too, she thought. Damn this head. Gaga. He's an artist. He wants something. I don't know what he really wants. Maybe after a few days he'll know. She exhaled on her palm and her pungent breath saturated her nostrils. Tonight I'll get drunk.

"Careful, you might spill them," Estrella said. "Mike would know I've been drinking again. Over here. Here, sit down." The man sat down on the edge of the bed. "Recite me some poems."

"I am not in the mood. I want to paint. I'm an artist who needs a model." She touched his arm. "No, not you. Brush strokes would only desecrate your beauty. I want to preserve it in memory so that in solace, I shall remember its perfection."

She smiled and embraced him, guiding his head to her breasts so that, like Mike, she could stroke his hair and lull him to sleep.

The wine was already bitter in her mouth and she felt like gargling, but she did not dare shift her position lest she shift his mood. For whatever was assailing his mind, she did not want to know. In the dusk she desired only his touch and the flame colored sky to match.

Soon dark supplanted the sky and violet clouds were drawn black. The urgent footsteps were back as in the morning. Maybe for home. Maybe to where God (she hadn't gone to church for sometime: she could not bear

facing a priest.) and His kingdom meet. Maybe back to the neon lights which flickered the hours away, wasted in hum- dum hum-dum hum-dum flick-flack flick-flack flick-flack monotones. But her eyes did not see these for even before, she never saw the neon lights, though they were part of her life. No neon lights for her. No neon lights. Only shadows pointed in the glazed pavement where she walked. She had cried out for rice in her sleep but nobody woke her up and she still cried, her sobs heard only by the crickety wheels played by children with sticks, guiding their rings with their pulse and running with the wind. But that was all. No neon lights.

Though the air was warm, she snuggled close to him. Mike would never want her to be with another man: He'll be furious. Poor man. He tried his best. He knows everything, he told me everything. Now I know everything. In the room downstairs, I can tell everyone what his collection is about. I can tell everyone their meaning. Green marble fauns. Deity of fields and herds. Italian. Like Berzelo—ah gaga! Why do I always forget his name? He painted the via crucis. Deep blue-grays for grief. 'Grief is a shroud," Mike said. Mike is always sad. No drinks, no cigarettes, and maybe…

The room was no longer lighted and except for tawny reflections, shadows concealed the furniture and the colors of the walls and Estrella and the man. The man did not move for in the room devoid of sunlight, his thoughts were as deep as the dark, and to Estrella, seemed impenetrable like the plaint of cars and jeepneys carrying home the hushed breathing of the man, minty in the soft evening.

"You shall paint your masterpiece," she whispered, her voice as clear as the wind in a cold evening. "I shall give you what you want. In three days you can keep them: the golden frame, the scabbards, the vase. They are all your symbols—I have told you everything. You'll have them. You'll have them. Paint in your studio. Paint…"

When Mike arrived, Estrella was in the bathroom taking a bath. Wrapping herself with a towel, she greeted him with a wet embrace.

"You look tired," she said. His face has grown gaunt, she noticed. "I am. And you look fresh," he said, disengaging himself from

her. He looked around, sniffing as if the familiar place would yield unfamiliar smells. "You've been drinking again."

"How did you know?" she asked.

Mike pointed at the glasses on the desk near the mirror. She laughed.

"Oh you know everything." He smiled.

"Do I have letters?"

"Yes, on the work table." She remembered because she had placed them there. It was one week—seven days—(She had counted the days.) since the man had left. She had not seen him since. I wonder… But he'll be back. She remembered there was no more toothpaste. She had forgotten a new tube. Anyway, Mike is already here. I hope he won't notice they're missing. "I'll be there in a moment. I'll just put on something."

Estrella heard his footfalls fade into the carpet. She dried herself quickly and slipped on a tight brown skirt and a loose tangerine blouse while humming an old song, humming in the same way as before though feeling different now. She brushed her hair with vigorous strokes while she allowed her thoughts to peter into the trivialities which occupied her vacant moments or which hid her fears. My birthday maybe? She said to herself. I'll go to his place and who cares? Not Mike with all his collection, his—ah gaga! Why do I include Mike? Maybe the poor man is really tired.

"Simplicity is beauty, my love," she mimicked the man (Rogel was his name.) Oh Rogel, why are all artists crazy? She turned around in front of the mirror once. I have to go now, she murmured and walked away.

The basement door was open and Mike, his body bent with his shadow, was unwrapping some of the unsorted packages.

"Drink, Mike?" she said.

"Yes, please," Mike replied.

Estrella went back to the bedroom. He must be tired, she thought. He did not even notice me. Maybe he's tired of me. The better because I have to tell him anyway. It will hurt. Why doesn't his wife come back to him?

She took a bottle of wine and two glasses, and went back to the basement. Mike was dusting his hands with a white handkerchief when she entered. Light suddenly blinded her eyes: Mike had switched on one of the big lamps, its rotund yellow face gaping like huge monster bleaching gray Mike's charcoal black suit.

"Switch off the light, Mike, will you?" "I'm sorry."

The switch clicked and the walls returned to normal. "The drinks are here."

"Yes, thanks. Just a minute."

Estrella placed the glasses and the bottle on Mike's desk and sat down, cross-legged, on the leather chair. She poured the wine into the glasses, watching its incandescence rise high, reaching near the brim of the glasses. For a while, like the many for a whiles before, she stared at the glasses blankly, her thoughts away from the present for she remembered the moments, the stealthy moments that made her say to herself; now I know, now I know, now I know. Yet there was a sharp contrapuntal vagueness that she wanted to overcome, to overwhelm completely; if only to grapple once more with it was a triumph, she would have done so; she would have gladly done it: for then she could say: I know now I know now I know.

Mike strode to his desk where the two glasses stood cold. Smiling, he snapped his fingers near Estrella's face.

"Hey, wake up, Cinderella. The ball is over."

She smiled, her face becoming rosy all over. He smiled too, watching her face turn fair again. Then he took the two glasses from the desk and handed Estrella one. Raising his own, he said ceremoniously, "To my Veronica," and drank the wine slowly.

"Let's not get drunk in the early morning," he said, putting down his empty glass. Estrella poured more wine in her glass.

"The cards, please," he said. Indicating: "The middle drawer." Estrella pulled the drawer and handed him the cards. "Thank you."

"Mike," she said. This is the right time, she thought.

"Yes," Mike replied, riffling through the cards containing the description of his painting and antiques.

Damn. Why can't I tell him now? Aloud: "Nothing really, Mike, nothing. It's just—I…"

He waved his hand.

"Oh, you're bored. You must be. I'll check these first." "It's all right," she answered limply.

"You are impatient, but you must bear with me today. I'm a little tired."

She smiled.

"Some new entries must be made, I believe," he said, clucking his tongue. Then, eyes squinted, as if trying to remember something, as if remarking something odd, Mike stood still, looking at the empty space where the vase once stood. And now his eyes moved rapidly, scanning the

entire room, only stopping where an empty space would punctuate his gaze.

"Estrella, what happened to the vase?" he asked. "And the scabbards? And the golden frame?"

The room was white all over. "Answer me!"

"I lent them." "To whom?" "To an artist." "Who?"

"Rogel—" "Artemio?"

"Yes, that's his name."

"And he drank my whisky too?" She nodded.

"The son of a bitch." He laughed. "You know him then?"

"Who doesn't? The son of a bitch." He shook his head. "How long did he stay here?"

"A few hours." If I tell him the truth he'd kill me.

"Just long enough to convince you, eh? He still hasn't changed.

What else did he say?"

"He said that he's painting his masterpiece."

"He's always painting masterpieces: 'Achilles by the Fireside,' 'Lapulapu's Last Battle,' and scores of others. He's an old friend of mine, a kindly old man who can be trusted anytime, anywhere. He painted"— pointing to the painting that the man had delivered—"that."

The room became white all over again. "I'll call him up. I'll invite him here."

"No," she said. "No," she repeated. "You see—well, you know how I am."

"Put on something decent then."

"No." No, no, no. Damn that man Rogel. That's his only name I know. All lies, lies, and he made me believe them.

"What's bothering you, Estrella?" "Nothing, Mike. Nothing really?" "Yes, something is bothering you."

He knows everything. God, how I hate you Mike for knowing everything.

Mike's eyes became deep orbs that tore the room apart and made Estrella sob.

"That man was not Rogel Artemio, that's it, eh?" Mike's voice was cold and level, and through the faint haze, Estrella saw the hard lines of his gaunt face.

"So it was not Rogel. What happened then? Who can bring back those precious collection of mine?"

Estrella continued to sob.

"Mandragora! Tears won't bring those objects back!" Mike shouted. "And what else did he do? Did he make love to you? Did he?"

She did not answer him; she stood up and went to the door. "Listen, I'm asking you!" He gripped her shoulders and shook her. "Let me go now," she said. Damn Rogel. Damn him, damn—

The hand came like a blur and slammed against her face, pale then red: she staggered. Another blur came and her left check felt the sudden initial insensibility of a blow, and then hot stinging flush, and instantly the room seemed cold and misty and clouds passed through her mind as in a dream, and her arms were muted by the brown carpet now imbibing her tears. "Mandragora!" came a distant echo. "Mandragora…"

In a dream that was so sudden, trees branched out into twig silhouettes in the sky, roseate then white, so sudden as light. Neon lights marched red, orange, yellow, green, blue and white, careening like the cars sucked by the wail of a siren growing louder and louder until she could not hear anything anymore—drowned in a tympanal maelstrom. Then darkness.

…She saw the brown carpet again, dark brown at first, and when she removed her gaze, became the color of withered petals.

She lifted herself up and saw her clothes strewn on the floor and the bottle of wine lying on the desk, its contents making a silent dark pool in the soft carpet.

Sands & Coral 1965

Edgar Libre-Griño

1966 Co-editor

Edgar Libre-Griño was studying engineering at Silliman while also a campus writer. His poems and stories appeared in the *Sands & Coral* as well as in national publications, such as Sunday Times Magazine, Weekly Graphic, and The Nation. He became associate editor of *The Sillimanian* and then editor of the *Sands & Coral*. At one point, he was the executive secretary of the Citizen's Committee on Mass Media in Dumaguete City. After earning his Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering degree from Silliman in 1966, he proceeded to study law, and eventually earned his Bachelor of Laws at the University of Negros Occidental-Recoletos. In 1968, he taught at Foundation College (now Foundation University) and was adviser of their school paper. He was a writing fellow of the Silliman University National Writers Workshop in 1971. Currently, Libre-Griño is based in Cebu City, where he is President of the Cebu Labor Rights Center, a non-governmental organization providing legal assistance to workers.

Poem Upon Seeing Georges Seurat's Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Latte

This mind can only wonder why rigid forms
Must be captured by million points —

Not all people who go to the park
On Sunday afternoons are picnickers
Some people who go to the park
On Sunday afternoons are sick
And picnickers choose to go to the park
Only on sunny Sunday afternoons.

But these eyes can see how frigid bodies
Are made alive by golds and greens —

Not all people who go to the park
On Sunday afternoon are lovers
Some people who go to the park
On Sunday afternoon are drifters
And lovers choose to go to the park
Sometimes on rainy Sunday afternoons.

Sands & Coral 1966

David C. Martinez

1967 Co-editor

David C. Martinez was born in Dumaguete City and earned his undergraduate degree from Foundation University. Soon after, he entered Silliman University law school, where he distinguished himself as a debater winning gold medals at national collegiate debate competitions. He also wrote poems, essays and short stories which were published in the Philippine Free Press and Weekly Graphic between 1964 to 1971. As a vocal political activist during the early years of Martial Law, he was briefly detained by the military and eventually resettled by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in California USA, where his family has resided since 1974. He edited the *Asian American News* in Los Angeles in 1979. Martinez was a double winner in the 1997 Carlos Palanca Award for Literature (English Division) with his "The Amulet" garnering First Prize in the Short Story Category and "Shadow on the Sun" garnering Second Prize in the Poetry Category. His book *A Country of Our Own: Partitioning the Philippines* was published in 2002 by Daykeeper Press and in 2004 by Bisaya Books.

Footnote to a Sunday Psalm

I know you made the growth, lord, from
which we weave these sheets to make
our beds, and the petalry which we
crush and let alone to bleed, to trap

perfume, yes and the oak and shore
and most good things, and even perhaps
our meeting there last monday in the
wind, and the dirty book i caught her

with. did you make the cats she owns?
one of them bites, you know, and i
felt like kicking it and I really did
while she was out riding one of your

horses. and i know you made her, made
her with her dewy eyes and clasp and
hair, made her as you wove satin and
the shade. god, you are the greatest.

had you added one last stroke, you
would have had a sly and savage peer.

Sands & Coral 1966

Nancy I. Teves

1967 Editor

Nancy I. Teves earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in English Literature, *magna cum laude*, from Silliman University. She was editor- in-chief of *The Sillimanian* in 1964-1965 and was department editor of the *Portal* in 1967. She also became the president of The Inquirers from 1965 to 1967 and the chairperson of the Public Communications Committee, CCMM, Negros Oriental Chapter from 1966 to 1967. Teves received various distinctions for her academic and extracurricular accomplishments in 1966, including the college honors, a scholarship key, and a talent award from the College of Arts. She was also named Most Outstanding Student in the same year. She was known for her involvement in different social work and civic activities while still a student in the university.

Hart Crane's Parabolic Stretch

Most students of literature would agree that an invaluable aid to the transformation of raw material into a work of art is the requirement known as aesthetic pressure. While this seems to be true about creative efforts in general, it seems especially essential to poetry. This pressure, which is primarily internal in nature, must encompass such complex considerations as the mood of the poet in relation to his feel for the embryonic object taking shape within him; it must encompass word arrangements drawn consciously and unconsciously from both the poet's usable and recognizable vocabularies; it must take into account the external working environment. If a delicate balance between these factors and other related intricacies is attained, the direction the raw material takes in the hands of the artist, is one of a transformation into art. A beautiful illustration of this thesis materializes in Hart Crane's poem "To Brooklyn Bridge." It goes without saying that whatever weaknesses and failures the longer and very ambitious undertaking that this poem is proem to are not relevant to this paper, since "Brooklyn Bridge" will be studied in isolation from the rest of Crane's works. Several literary scholars have pointed out that if Crane never wrote anything but this poem, his name would still remain unforgotten in the realm of great poetry. A study of this piece will show why such generous praise is accorded this short work.

Its foremost reason for success is the impact it creates in spite of its seeming vagueness and obscurity. What Crane accomplishes in "Brooklyn Bridge" is the absorption of the machine and all it stands for through a visionary experience that is both romantic and mystical in outlook. The poem because of the nature of this outlook is complex; after several readings, one feels it is continually suggesting some precise meaning, that the wealth one sees in the images and symbols can indeed be paraphrased and yet it remains fascinatingly elusive; and this is as it should be with a good poetry. A corollary reason for its success is its method of rendering the truth. In one of her poems, Emily Dickinson advised, "Tell the truth but tell it slant." This is exactly what Crane does in "To Brooklyn Bridge."

There are no statements per se. When the truth does dawn on the reader, it is profound in its impact because it takes one from the concrete to the abstract, and concludes with a powerful insight at the height of passion. Allow me to elaborate. A true poet's ultimate responsibility is the expressing of truth as he sees it revealed in the facts, impressions, passions, and experiences of his age and the unveiling of these elements in a synthesized form to his readers. "To Brooklyn Bridge" is faithful to this principle. In the poem, we see the yoking together of two legitimate but seemingly unrelated realities: that of the actual materialistic, tangled world of the late twenties in America, and the world of higher reality which, in the poem, is expressed as a promise of eternity. The dominating flavor that emerges from the poem's images, texture, tempo, and finally its vision is one of a successful fusion of the inward experience with the external world. Even with minimal training, one senses the power behind the testimony of the mystical experience. This is strongly implied in the paradoxical role played by the central image, the Brooklyn Bridge. Through it, Crane discloses the organic continuity between his own being (this is the inward experience) and that of his cosmos (the industrial America of the twenties.) The poet takes a concrete object, the bridge, built not through man's efforts alone, but through his ally, the machine and gives it meaning on two levels; a beautiful, rational manifestation of modern man's ingenuity, it is created to serve his needs; but the bridge, Crane believes, has a more fulfilling task, that of making whole again the chaos produced by industrialization. There is even a prayer-like quality in the way he invokes the bridge—starting with the lines, and ending with the poems last stanza:

O harp and altar, of the fury fused,
O Sleepless as the river under thee,
Vaulting the sea, the prairies' dreaming sod,
Unto us lowliest sometime sweep, descend
And of the curveship lend a myth to God.

The bridge plays still another significant role in the individual vision of the poet—figuratively, it is the reflection of his personal philosophy: his need to have something to cling to, to have something to quiet the despair and to furnish fuel to his hope, opposing factors that are so much a part of the enigma as Crane.[1] In the tradition of the historical romantic and mystic,

Crane inevitably searched for deeper foundations in the structure of life. It is almost as if in the struggle to articulate his vision, he is forced into building something that could provide steadiness and assurance in the face of overwhelming turmoil. Thus, he chooses the Brooklyn Bridge to symbolize the ideal for which he is groping. Note that the bridge, in spite of its concreteness and physical reality, is also strongly imbued with a different kind of vitality that implies a higher order of things. We see this in the last few stanzas where the poem suggests that the bridge can perform its actual, impersonal job of linking Brooklyn with Manhattan; it can only serve the rush of humanity that uses it for its individual purpose, but its work on this level is only a springboard to a more important task, for after all is said and done in the name of the mechanized universe, the bridge leads on to God. This revelation is the heart of the matter, for in it the sensitive reader sees delineated and successfully expressed, an intermingling of the physical—represented by science in the bridge, and, the spiritual—the promise that "the curveship lend a myth to God."

The essence to the justification of these observations lies in the poem's language. If we are to view this magnificent lifeless structure as something animate (as Crane obviously does), and as something more than a monument to modern man's endeavors, then we have to exercise our imagination in the romantic manner and look for implications in the rich thoughts of the poet. Only then will we understand Crane's thinking, and fully realize how he was able to create order out of what is basically a symbol of industrial hell.

The reader should bear in mind, too, that our age is essentially an anti-mystical one and as such, anything that even hints of the mystical experience is easy to brush aside by dwelling on matters that require less self-discipline and self-knowledge; for the mystical experience is often painful and demanding[2] but the willing reader will find profound insights seldom found otherwise. (I refer here to the idea of the continuity of the experience.)

In the second stanza, Crane begins: "Then with inviolate curve, forsake our eyes," a pronouncement that should suggest many things to the alert reader; on one level of meaning, the bridge's durability; on another, the concept that the bridge's curve which is its most distinguished feature can link two parts of a city, bring together the river and the sea and eventually stretch itself parabola-like into God's heaven. This theme is

constantly re-echoed throughout the poem. It is woven in even as the poet describes the many mundane activities taking place on the site. In this connection, it is essential to note the juxtaposition of either a violent, energetic or feverish word or thought with quiet and temperate ones. Each stanza has at least one such feature, some of the more striking ones being those found in lines one and four of stanza one: "How many dawns, chill from his rippling rest" and "Over the chained bay waters Liberty—" The movement in stanzas three and four also exhibit these same characteristics; a rip- tooth of the sky's acetylene;" in stanza six shows the poet's ability at apposition. The skill with which Crane balances the elements found in both his cosmos and his inward experience intensifies the resulting synthesis spoken of much earlier in the paper.

The poem's language and movement also reveal that the poet's thoughts define an unusual but nonetheless appropriate and exceptional insight: the bridge as a promise of eternity. It is as if his creative imagination allows him to watch and survey some unseen orderly world through a visible object. A closer look at stanza three where Crane uses a movie screen to illustrate this method will support this contention:

I think of cinemas, panoramic sleights
With multitudes bent toward some flashing scene
Never disclosed, but hastened to again,
Foretold to other eyes on the same screen;

This viewing of unseen order is peculiar to the romantic temperament, and his identification with modern man[3] notwithstanding, Crane adhered strongly to romantic tenets. This romantic influence explains the privateness of the poem: its passionate but vague language that relies heavily on the imagination, and is yet strongly relevant to reality and truth; the concern with an individual type of transcendental order—recall that the bridge's curveship is its promise to eternity, and the bridge too is used as an altar in the religious sense—but essentially, the poet's religious pronouncements are unorthodox and mysterious; the strangeness and the deep loneliness that permeates the poem—this is alluded to in stanza two, in the mention of the speechless caravan in stanza five and in the line "Only in darkness in thy shadow clear." These qualities add to the

difficulty of the poem, but they also provide a timelessness to it that the sensitive reader cannot help applauding.

Notes

Footnotes from the original article are compiled as endnotes.

1. Gleaned from reading "The Bridge" and from biographies on the poet, but more from "The Bridge." In this work, one runs across numerous contradictions that point up Crane's insecurities and lack of faith (in the traditional sense) but that also show his intuitive knowledge.

2. Frank Waldo. Introduction to *The Collected Poems of Hart Crane*. pp. xii-xiii

3. Frank, pp. x

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Sands & Coral 1967

Elsa Victoria Martinez

1968 Co-editor

Elsa Victoria Martinez is an award-winning poet, fictionist, and playwright from Dumaguete City. She finished her Bachelor of Arts, *magna cum laude*, and then her Master of Arts in Creative Writing from Silliman University, where she was also crowned as Miss Silliman in 1964. She went on to obtain her Ph.D. in Language and Literature from De La Salle University. She has received the Don Carlos Palanca Memorial Award for her poetry, short story, drama, teleplay, and screenplays through the years resulting in being given its Hall of Fame distinction in 1999. She has also received awards from the Cultural Center of the Philippines and the *Philippines Free Press*. As a poet, she is the author of the collection *Katipunara and Other Poems*, published in 1998. Martinez-Coscoluella (her married name) also wrote the full-length play "In My Father's House," which was staged at the University of the Philippines and at the Cultural Center of the Philippines in 1988, and in Silliman University in 2013. In 1990, she received the Outstanding Artist in Literature Award from the Negros Occidental Centennial Commission and in 1996, she was named National Fellow for Drama by the University of the Philippines Creative Writing Center. She became the Vice President for Academic Affairs at the University of St. La Salle in Bacolod City in 1991. She co-founded and directed the annual Negros Summer Workshops for Artists and Writers in 1991, and the IYAS Creative Writing Workshop in 2000 in collaboration with Cirilo Bautista, Marjorie Evasco, and the Bienvenido N. Santos Creative Writing Center of De La Salle University in Manila. Coscolluela is an Associate of the Silliman University Edilberto and Edith Tiempo Creative Writing Center.

BLOWN GLASS
(after Steuben)

Through etchings on the glass, water-clear,
Earthy Venus bursts on a bed of grass;
Airy grass splits to blades of jade
Under the fullness of her limber thighs.
In her arms, a child of pulsing dehiscence,
Cradles in the throbbing hollow of her breasts.

Mother and child, of birthing burning clay,
Fashioned by rapture's rupture, inmost fire;
Wakened by bathos and warm blood;
Heat thawed their spatial rims and borrowed time,
The span of silent voices, grass and earth,
The dense reaches of their finite souls.

From grains of sand, heaving with motion's birth,
To molten red, blown by some fervid breath,
Blown full, blown quickly before the sweeping
Dryness of obstructive winds;
Fashioned in this etching on the glass,
Caged in stillness, trapped from death.

This puffed breath blares the living voice
Of mortal deity, immortal artificer,
Whose fragile fingers and breathing mouth
Roused the fluid mass and clay,
Snared the fleeting patterns of the eye,
Touched and traced quick gestures into glass.

Sands & Coral 1968

Merlie M. Alunan

1969 Editor

Merlie Muyco Alunan, a poet, teacher, and critic, was born in 1943 in Iloilo. In 1964, she earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Education, major in English, from the University of the Visayas, and then her Master of Arts in Creative Writing from Silliman University in 1974. She has won several honors and awards for her work from the Don Carlos Palanca Memorial Literary Award and the Philippines Free Press. She was also awarded the CCP Literature Grant for the Essay in English in 1991, the Likhaan Award for poetry as fellow of the UP Writers Workshop, and the Gawad Pambansang Alagad ni Balagtas for English poetry from the Unyon ng Manunulat sa Pilipinas in 1997. Alunan has also received recognition for her literary works in Cebuano. In 2007, she won the first prize for fiction in Cebuano from the Palanca Awards, and second prize for the tula sa Cebuano from the Gawad Komisyon ng Wikang Filipino Literary Contest. In 2014, she was the recipient of the Ani ng Dangal for Literary Arts Award from the NCCA. She has published poetry collections including *Hearthstone, Sacred Tree* (Anvil Publishing, 1993), *Amina Among the Angels* (University of the Philippines Press, 1997), *Tales of the Spider Woman: New Poetry* (University of Santo Tomas Publishing House, 2011), and *Pagdakop Sa Bulalakaw ug Uban pang mga Balak* (Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2012). She also edited anthologies including *Fern Garden: Anthology of Women Writing in the South* (National Commission for Culture and the Arts, 1998), *Kaaging Bisaya: Gender Research in the Visayas* (U.P. Center for Women's Studies and the Ford Foundation, 2002), *Mga Siday han DYVL* (NCCA, DYVL Action Radio, UP Tacloban College Writing Workshop, 2005), *The Dumaguete We Know* (Anvil, 2012), *Sa Atong Dila: Introduction to Visayan Literature* (University of the Philippines Press, 2015), and *Our Memory of Water: Words after Haiyan* (Ateneo de Naga University Press, 2015). In 2009, she became a Fellow of the Ananda Coomaraswamy Fellowship for Literature in the Republic of India. Alunan serves as a panelist in prominent writing workshops, including the Iligan National Writers Workshop and the Silliman University National Writers Workshop.

TIME and Before MOONSET

THE denuded hill rose stark against the afternoon sky, a mess of dark and naked earth holding up against the clean pale blue of the sky the occasional thrust of a tree's dead hulk. The woman struggled up the sun-baked hillside, a small figure crawling on the dry earth that slid under her feet. The setting sun was hard on her eyes but she strained her look upward, anxious to catch the first glimpse of the shack on tap of the hill before the sun finally disappeared and plunged into darkness the mountain, and the plain sprawled at its feet.

Sweat poured down her face but she did not stop to wipe it away. Her breaths come hard and short and she felt the strong and sinewy muscles of her legs ache with every sliding step. She did not even pause when she felt the baby twitching inside her weighing down her belly. The quick cutting movements nearly knocked her breath off each time. Then she saw the roof of the hut, rotting and grown with weeds from the seeds that the birds dropped in their flight.

"*Mana* Loreto! *Mana* Loreto!" She could not tone down her frantic shouts even before she could reach level ground. Standing breathless on the yard she called again, "*Mana*! *Mana* Loreto!"

"Paula?" A thin wizened face peered out from the window. "Paula, what is it?"

"Leon. You must come quick!" She could barely hear her own voice with the rush of her breath coming harsh and quick from her exertion.

"What is it this time?" The old voice was cracked and tremulous. "Last month it was his coughing. What is it now?"

"Stomach pains, *Mana*."

"Is that all?"

"There is blood in his—"

"Since when has he been this way?"

"Three days."

The old woman turned into the house silently, a grim look in her eyes. When she came out she had a bundle with her. On the way down the creaking ladder she said, "Why did you call me only now?"

"He did not even want me to come, *Mana*. But he is in a bad way now and I do not know what to do."

All the time she spoke, her eyes were on the ground. Her toes dug into the loose earth that the sun had baked and turned to dust. "I think he

is going to die," she said tremulously, feeling the old woman's eyes on her. She spoke so softly the old woman had to strain to hear her.

"What kind of a man did you get for yourself, Paula," she said at last, breathing deeply.

Paula was quiet. She walked down the slope that led homeward for her and the old woman followed in a slow hobbling gait. Paula's eyes were dry although she felt very near to tears. Her face was stolid and set like a carabao's struggling through a furrow. They reached the foot of the hill after about an hour's walk and the way levelled off somewhat.

The old woman broke the silence. "What made you marry a man like Leon, Paula? Carpo would have been better for you."

"I do not know how to answer you, *Man*," Paula spoke without turning her head.

"You've never answered me at all, not since the day you returned six years ago heavy with your first-born. As if I had no hand in making you what you are. As if you could have become a woman if I had not fed you and clothed you and taken you under my roof when your mother died. I had wanted a better for you. Carpo—"

"But I have a man, *Mana*, and there is nothing you can do about it."

In the silence that flowed in only the thud of their feet sounded on the dry earth. Dimly in the distance Paula's hut showed grey through the leaves of the saplings along the narrow lane.

"Stop for a while," the old woman ordered in a new tone. "I want you to answer me now."

Paula stopped and waited for the old woman to come up.

"Tell me," old Loreto said, reaching out a large bony hand to grasp the younger woman's arm which was now warm and moist with sweat.

"Tell me, what made you marry a man like Leon? Was it to defy me? Was it to spite me because I had kept you in the house and did not allow you to fool around with the other young people in the barrio? Was it because of this that you ran away with him?"

"*Mana*, I cannot tell you. Truly, I can't."

The fingers tightened on her arms and she thought, If I can, I would tell you, *Mana*. It is so easy to show you how I suffer. I had been unashamed with my pain each time you helped me with my children. But this one that you want to know, I cannot tell you. Myself, I did not even understand why, when I went with him.

Paula remembered how he came, a fair-skinned stranger standing on the hilltop, at the edge of the clearing by old Loreto's hut.

"A drink of water, *Iday*, is all I ask," the stranger had said. "I have been walking for days and have not taste good water since I left Matalum."

She had feared him but he was gentle when he spoke. "My thanks. The water was cool and sweet." Then in a burst of gallantry, "It must be because you poured it for me."

She saw how tightly his skin was stretched against the cheekbones.

"What is your name?"

"Paula."

"I am Leon."

Old Loreto's voice came between them like a whiplash. "Paula! Get into the house."

She turned away—her obedience has become instant and instinctive—but she left him a fleeting smile. That night when she saw the thickset figure of Carpo in the yard she refused to see him even though *Mana* Loreto urged her to go out where he sat hunched on the mortar. Beside him flickered the torch that he used to light his way up the hillside.

"I will see him tomorrow," she told the suspicious old woma. "I am tired tonight."

Carpo left but early the next morning he was there, looking at her darkly when she came out of the hut to fetch water from the well. His large feet were planted solidly on the soft fine dust of the yard, how ugly and dark they looked, and his large, ungainly shoulders were hunched against the morning cold.

"That stranger. That's why you did not come down to see me last night?" even his voice rambled in his throat.

"No," she was unexpectedly tart and rebellious.

"I—I have spoken to *Mana* Loreto," he said awkwardly, "about us Paula."

"But not to me, you have not. I know nothing."

"Paula—"

She turned away despising his awkwardness and remembering the stranger's soft voice, the way his eyes almost seemed to speak to her while he drank the water.

That night the stranger came again. She sensed his presence in the thicket by the clump of bananas near their shack. As the birds and ants knew the coming rain she had known he would come. She heard a low whistle while she was putting away the dishes after supper and she knew it was he. She stole out to meet him while old Loreto dozed on her mat, and he had his way with her.

"Come with me," he said. "In Matalum, my hut is empty and needs a woman."

"Yes," she said. "Yes."

Because she felt she had to become his woman, that was all. They left the next night while old Loreto was out helping a woman deliver her baby.

"I cannot tell you why it had to be he, *Mana*, and not Carpo." She met the old woman's eyes. "He asked me and I went with him."

The tone of finality in her voice angered the old woman.

"I cannot tell you. I cannot tell you, that is all you say to me. But I can tell you why, woman. Because like an animal you can work. Like a carabao you can crawl in the fields breaking your back for the food to feed him. That's what he thought when he first saw you in my kaingin. 'Here's my beast at last. Now I can live in ease and comfort while someone works in the fields for me.' Hah!"

"Don't say that, *Mana*. He would work if he were wel."

"If he were well. But when is he ever well? Tell me that."

"*Mana*, it is my life. What is it to you?"

"I cannot stand it. I cannot stand to see you work in some neighbor's camote patch digging for roots to feed your children. I cannot stand to see you heavy with child and having to work under the sun because your weakling of a husband cannot lift a bolo for clearing. Ah, but he has strength enough to get you with child. That he has. Each time I see you like this I also suffer. Your mother did not suffer half as much, and I, who never had a man in my life and have none but myself to call for help, I think I have a much easier life than you."

The old eyes swept down Paula's body, nodding grimly at the broadened hips and the swelling belly. "Another child," she said. Her voice was old and tired. "In whose filed will I be picking you up half-dead and bleeding, because even before your strength returns you would have to work. When it happens I would not want to come and see you. It would kill me perhaps."

The last time it was in *Ñor* Juan's ricefields. Two weeks after she had given birth. No food in the house for the oldest boy and the little girl, and none for her, the milk in her breast drying up, and very soon the baby would be hungry too. Leon was in bed with fever again. So Paula had joined the women in *Ñor* Juan's ricefields where they were pulling out the seedlings for transplanting into the paddies. She thought she was strong enough already, her knees did not wobble when she walked to the fields earlier in the morning.

All the time before lunch the men and the women had been drinking *tuba*, she among them as she needed anything to keep up her strength. They had been merry and nobody noticed when she fell. It happened just before the sun stood right over their heads, and she too weak for all the blood that gushed suddenly out of her and spilling warm into the roiled water of the paddy, reddening it and staining the bright green leaves of the seedling at her feet.

It was Carpo who went for Loreto. When she arrived *Ñ*or Juan's wife was there directing the men who lifted Paula from the paddy to lay her in the shade of a *nanka* tree.

"God knows it is hard enough to bear children," *Ñora* Mameng had said. "It is hard enough, you didn't have to suffer this."

Ñora Mameng's face was pale and her knuckles showed white around the handle of the black umbrella that she carried to shield her own powdered face from the sun.

"Where's her husband?"

"At home," a neighbor of Paula spoke up, a gaunt woman with a rasping voice.

"And what is he doing there, with his wife out here and she barely recovered from childbirth?" The woman's voice was tight with indignation.

"He is sick," the neighbor countered.

"*Ñora*, I need help," Loreto interrupted. "She needs some dry clothes."

"I sent for some from the farmhouse."

Carpo stood by. His face was swollen and pale in the hot noon sun and he was clenching his fist.

"Maye I could kill him, *Mana*," he muttered to the old woman who was rubbing the unconscious Paula's arms and trying to staunch the bleeding. "I could kill him—"

Old Loreto hissed at him, "Stupid! You do not know what you are saying."

Carpo walked away.

The clothes came and they removed Paula's wet dress, the women forming a circle around her to protect her from the eyes of the men. *Ñora* Mameng had laid aside her umbrella and she knelt beside old Loreto in the grass, getting her own small white hands dirty with blood and the mud from the paddy.

"A woman must bear her husband's children, truly," she said, "but not when she has to come to this. It is a sin. It is not enough to sow life in a woman, they must sustain it too. Not this. It is a sin."

"We do not think of that any more, *Ñora*," a sheepish young voice spoke up. "We do not think at all when it happens, not when our men need us—"

"Be quiet, Tassia," Paula's neighbor was unhappy and embarrassed.

Ñora Mameng looked back at the group of women. "That's right, you do not think. And this is what happens."

"It is not her fault," Carpo spoke up roughly. "It is the man's. I can kill him—"

Everyone fell silent. Then Loreto spoke, "If you kill him, Carpo, then what? Would you still have her then?"

"Yes."

No one said anything.

Loreto had succeeded in staunching the blood. Paula lay under the shade like a pale quiet ghost. They took her home in a hammock when they thought it safe to move her.

Ñora Mameng called out after them, "I will send food and money. She can come again when she gets well."

Old Loreto thought Paula was going to die that time, but after two weeks she was strong once more. *Ñora* Mameng remembered to send food and money and very soon Paula was back in the fields. She left the baby with the eldest boy and came home only to feed him from her breast. Leon got well and helped her in the fields. It was all right for a time. Her body emaciated by her relapse after childbirth filled out and she became strong —strong enough to bear another child, Loreto thought, looking at the short bloated figure.

"When will you have this child?"

"In three months."

"Has your husband prepared for this child's coming? Is there food in the house? Money for the time you have to get back your strength?"

"*Mana*, there is no time to waste. You can talk to me in the house."

The old woman loosened her hold on Paula's arm. They walked through the haze of twilight that had stolen down silently from the mountain. The blue mistiness was fast thickening into blackness, but it was not yet too dark when they reached the shack standing dwarfed by the tall lauan trees around it.

Paula was relieved to see the children playing when they came in. The oldest was teasing the two-year old with a piece of coconut frond that his fingers had twisted into the form of a snake. He dangled it before the little boy's eyes and when the little brown fingers reached for it, he would quickly draw it away. Only the little girl stood apart, huddled against the wall and meeting her mother's entrance with wide frightened eyes.

"*Ina*," she whimpered. "*Ina*." She stood up and clung to her mother's skirt.

"Hush," said Paula. "Hush. Nothing is wrong."

"*Inaaa!*" the little girl cried out in a soft shrill voice.

But Paula swept past her and into the alcove where the sick man lay. "Come inside, *Mana*."

The man lay like a bundle of rags in the middle of the mat. The rigid flame of the kerosene lamp barely outlined his shrunken features.

"Leon, Leon," Paula called softly. "*Mana* Loreto is here."

The man opened his eyes. They focused with on effort on her face and his look grew frantic and compelling, clutching at her eyes and holding her.

Coward, weakling, the old woman thought, looking at them and sensing the sick man's active fear that reached out to Paula.

"Why did you call her?"

"You need help."

He turned his face away. The old woman came forward and knelt on the mat beside Paula.

"Let me see what is wrong." She reached out a bony hand into his belly. She kneaded the flabby muscles with her fingers and the man closed his eyes, but he was quiet and flaccid to her touch.

The old woman stopped kneading his stomach and turned to her bundle. She handed a sheaf of leaves to Paula.

"Heat some water and boil this."

In the kitchen Paula placed the pot on the hearth and stood by and watched for the water to boil.

Nothing but silence here in the kitchen. Nothing but the crackling fire and the insect noises outside, as if the great mountain was shifting in its sleep. She stood and gazed into the fire until the eerie whirring of the crickets in the deep dusk and the shush of the lauan leaves in the wind shut out the other noises, the thin sharp cry of the little girl, old Loreto's strident voice, her husband's soft shallow breathing. In her mind the mingled noises of the night merged into a rhythm that did not force itself on her. She drifted into the eerie peace born from the mingled noises. She merged with the even flow, no longer thinking of the dark room where Leon lay suffering. She closed her mind to his irregular breath that broke the night's rhythmic sounds. She did not want to hear it break.

The bamboo floor creaked and there was old Loreto.

"Why did you wait three days to call me?" the old voice rasped at her.

"He did not even want me to call you, *Mana*."

"Hah, so he has finally felt shame. When he came and took you from me like a thief he did not feel shame. When he made you like a bitch bearing his children one after another he did not feel shame. Only now he feels it."

Paula stirred the pot that was beginning to simmer. "What will happen to him, *Mana*?"

The old woman pretended not to hear and asked her instead, "Do you love him, Paula?" From her mouth the words felt like the leaves of a cut branch, harsh and dry and crackling to the wind's touch. "You must love him. You have three children by him and a fourth one coming." The old eyes surveyed the thickened waist and the wide hips.

"Do you need to ask, *Mana*?"

When the old woman spoke her voice was very careful. "I do not know how to tell you. But I think it is right that you should know. He has not long to live."

The pot boiled over. It flowed into the fire and the flames hissed and crackled and died into embers. Paula lifted the lid off and with a piece of rag she removed the pot from the hearth and placed it on the sideboard beside the other pots.

"When?" She stood very still and looked down into the steaming liquid.

"Tonight, maybe. Before moonset."

Paula drew a deep breath. She sank to the floor and covered her face with her uplifted skirt. No sound came from her. She just sat there quietly, and to the old woman looking down at her she was like a mound of earth, an anthill, a piece of rotting wood that the rain and the sun in the forest had shaped into a human form.

"Do not cry."

No answer.

"Paula."

"The broth is ready." The voice was muffled by the cloth over her face. "Give it to him."

"It will be kinder to let him die," the old woman said. "For you. For him. For the children."

"I will give it to him myself, then," she said, getting to her feet.

"There is no need for that any more."

"At least to stop the pain."

"There won't be any pain after a while." But she poured the liquid into the cup.

"Carpo is waiting," old Loreto said.

"Be quiet!" Paula nearly upset the hot liquid. The old woman's face was dead set and calm.

"You know until now he has not taken a woman." The old voice was very quiet. "Carpo would have killed him earlier if I did not stop him."

"And now you too. You also want to kill him—" Paula's eyes were bright with anger. "*Mana*—"

"Paula, there is nothing more I can do. I—truly, there is nothing I can do."

The fire died from the younger woman's eyes. "I will give him the broth now."

"Do what you want. But it will not help."

Leon's eyes met her at the doorway. "Drink," she said, lifting his head and holding the cup to his mouth. "It will do you good."

He took two sips and motioned the cup away. His eyes fastened on her but he did not speak, he had no strength even for words.

"You will be all right," she whispered. Her hand moved softly on his face. "I want to tell you something."

She took his hand and laid it on her stomach. Inwardly she shivered at the lifelessness of his hand, but she held it firmly in her strong clasp and moved it over her stomach until inside her she felt the quick surging of life. She pressed his hand on it and bending closer to him she whispered, "Your child. Another son. I have given you two sons already. I am sure this one is another boy, he kicks hard and in the night time he wakens me with his movement."

His eyes did not leave her face and she held on to his look as she spoke. "Many things will stay on whatever happens. You will live. There is nothing to fear." The words felt awkward in her mouth, she who knew only how to work with her hands and not to form words to speak of what she felt, and her speech was as labored as the steps she took up the hillside in the lowering sun that afternoon. She told him of his tender ways, his seeking need of her in the night time, stumbling over the words as she said them. She talked of the curled fingers of her babies when she nursed them and this time she spoke less haltingly, more surely. She told of the little boy's pride at catching his first mudfish just three days before, and the little girl playing, how she would deck herself with the red petals of the *española* gathered from the riverbank. All the while she thought of the way the sun glinted and warmed her that morning when she rose and went out after their first knowledge of each other. She would have talked to him of these also if she knew how.

The man's eyes closed. But she did not stop, as though by talking to him of the things she knew of life she would keep him there and compel his harsh shallow breath to become steady. She noticed his movement under the blanket, the spasmic twitch of the limbs and the short gasping breath, and a cold hand gripped her heart.

"*Mana, Mana!* Come quick."

The old woman hobbled into the room and knelt beside the man. Once more the hand probed into the flaccid body, making the accustomed motions of care, but her eyes did not see life. In their depth was the awareness of death.

The man moaned weakly.

"Be still. Everything will be over soon. You will feel well. No more pains. You will be at peace."

"*Mana,"* Paula's voice came through pleadingly, "*Mana,* don't let him know. Please. Don't let him know."

"A little while and there will be no more pain, Leon. Wait. Wait."

The man lay quiet on the mat. A foul taint hung in the air.

"I will clean him up," Paula said.

"No. Leave him be. It will do no good. Do not touch him— until later."

"*Mana*—" the cry was sharp and strangled and torn out from Paula's throat. But the old woman hobbled out of the room.

"Come out here. I want to talk to you."

Paula left the alcove. The old woman was stolid. "Send the oldest boy to the barrio. Tell him to get help. You will need it when the time comes."

Paula looked out into the deep night. She saw the moon low in the west. It was a new moon that set early.

"Do not delay. That moon will not wait for you. And you have many things to do."

"He will not die. *Mana.* You do not know. I know." She said with brave conviction, "He will live."

"Be quiet, woman. The children. Do not frighten them. I *know* what I know."

The old voice was also sharp with conviction. Paula knew that the old woman *knew*. Heavily she turned from the window and went to the children huddled together like puppies. She took the two-year old into her arms.

"*Intoy,* go to the barrio," she told the eldest. "Tell them to come tonight. Before moonset."

"Why, *Inay?"*

"Something very important. Something about your *Ama*."

The boy looked outside. "It is so dark. I—I am—."

"I know. You are afraid. But there is no one to go, my son. I cannot leave *Ama* alone now."

"I—I will bring a torch, *Inay?"*

"*Oo*, child. You will bring a torch."

Old Loreto had already prepared it. She lighted it and handed it to the boy. "Go to Carpo. He will know what to do."

"No!" Paula spoke up sharply. "No. Not to him."

"And who then?" She turned to the boy without waiting for a reply. "Go to Carpo. He will want to come, he will help."

"*Inay*, what will I do ?"

Paula, shuddering and wordless, clasped the two-year old boy close.

"Go," old Loreto said. "Tell Carpo your mother calls."

With one last look at his mother the boy went down the steps and before he was swallowed up by the darkness the old woman shouted to him from the doorway, "Tell them to bring more kerosene. The fuel is running low."

"Couldn't you have waited until he died, *Mana*?" Paula asked bitterly.

The old woman peered into Paula's face. "No, I couldn't wait." Her voice was very soft and decisive. "Neither can you, Paula, in your condition."

"Oh, *Mana*," she cried out and the child whimpered at the poignant unfamiliar cry.

"You are frightening him. Here, give him to me. You go to Leon. Stay with him. I will take care of the child."

Paula was crying now but she cried without sound, aware in her own helplessness that the little girl in the corner sat tense and frightened for all the things she could only see and could not understand.

"*Na-na*," the two-year old called out from the old woman's arms. "*Na-na*."

"Paula, do not go to him with tears."

She bent down and wiped her eyes on the hem of her dress. In the alcove she sat on the mat beside Leon. His face was small and white in the lamplight and she had the terrible feeling that it was growing smaller and smaller and fading slowly into the shadows and wavering before her gaze. But it was only her tears blurring her sight and when she wiped them away his face was still there, and her ears grown keen by the pulsing silence of the night picked up the wisp of his breath, so frail it did not even stir the deep stillness. She held on to the separate sound it made against the even flow of the night noises from the sleeping mountain and she thought, If I could only hold on to it long enough, I would not lose him. Not yet.

She felt a movement by the door and she saw the two-year old toddling towards her. "*Nana*," he called. "*Na-na*."

"*Intoy*." She opened her arms. "What do you want?"

"*Na-na*, hungry."

His fingers sought her breasts instinctively and she winced at the seeking hand on her nipples which were taut and tender with her pregnancy. She stood up with him in her arms and moving clumsily, she took him to the kitchen. Her movements were awkward and slow as she set him on the table and spooned some gruel into a tin plate. He ate it quietly by himself.

She said, "*Ama* is going away."

"*Ama* is going away?" The words were hardly formed by his tongue, he was just learning to talk. "Far?"

"Yes, very far." She bit her lips.

Each spoonful took more and more time to chew. His eyes were growing heavy. When finally he refused the food she took him in her arms again and went back to Loreto, who sat hunched against the wall with the little girl.

"Put the little one to bed. I will watch him," the old woman said. "When the people come it will be good for him to be asleep."

Paula sat down on the *papag* by the window. The boy was heavy but she did not put him down. She needed the small solid warmth of his body against the coldness in her heart. His weight in her arms pushed against the pressing weight of her tears.

The little girl went to her side. "Why are the people coming, *Ina*? Why are we calling them?"

"It is the custom."

The small furrowed brow looked up at her. "Like *Intoy's* baptism?"

"Yes, *Iday*, but this time, not to be happy. They are coming to help."

"Why, *Ina*?"

How do I tell her about death? Paula drew the little boy convulsively to her and the deep pain cut once more into her.

"*Ina*," the little girl's voice piped up, "*Ina*, I am afraid. When the people come, maybe I will not be afraid any more. Like you, *Ina*. You are not afraid."

"But I am also afraid, *Iday*. That's why we are calling for the people."

"Is it for *Ama*—"

"Watch for your *Manoy* Pedring," she cut in. "He should be coming home now." She lifted the sleeping child and laid her head on the soft little body. The boy whimpered.

"I want to know when *Ama* goes away," he murmured sleepily.

"Yes, I will wake you up."

But she knew she would not. She would let him sleep on into the morning when the time had passed and the time before moonset had been sealed in the night's dark passage. He was restless and she sang him a little tune, touching his head with her short blunt fingers. The old mountain song that the women had always sung to their children welled out from her heart, and before long she was singing the words too. She sang until the words would form no more and there was only the tune again.

"*Manoy* Pedring is here," the little girl's voice pierced through the rhythm in her and she stopped. She was too tired and too heavy with sorrow but the tune coursed in her mind, relentless like the westward flow of the rivers, like the swift-moving winds and the rainful in the changes of the seasons, the tread of time measured and remorseless and moving from one moonset to another.

The tune would not stop its course even when the torches danced in her yard and the voices of the men disturbed the eerie pulse of silence in the mountain.

"They are here, *Ina*." The little girl went to the door to meet them.

One by one they came in up the creaking ladder. "*Ma-opay nga gab-i*," they said soberly. "Good evening." They put out the torches with big puffs of their breaths.

"Come in," Paula was among them. "It is good of you to come."

They found places on the floor against the wall and talked in their deep throaty voices. "You would come too if it were us in need. It is understood."

"*Oo*, I would come. And so would he," she said, looking quickly toward the alcove. "We would both come if we were needed."

Carpo came in last with the five-year old Pedring. He came slowly to Paula and placed a bottle of kerosene on the *papag* beside her.

"The women are coming." His slow words rumbled in his throat. "They are putting the children to bed. But they will come."

"Truly, women know more about these things than we do," a man spoke up from the shadows where they all sat crouched against the wall. "Death and the things of life, they know more about these things."

"The men have come for the heavy things," Carpo countered. "For the coffin and all other things. The women—"

"Yes, yes," Paula cut in. "Truly, I am grateful."

Carpo turned away to a corner to join the men. Leon has not gone yet, she thought. Perhaps he will stay. The moon will go but—*Leon*, she cried out in her mind, and the silence that flowed in brought back the rhythm of the old tune she had been singing. In a fantastic way it beat it her senses and numbed her to all except the warmth of the small body she held against her swollen form. Leon—she thought, but the pulsing rhythm engulfed her

And so she sat, listening, waiting.

Sands & Coral 1969

Rowena L. Tiempo

1970 Editor

Rowena L. Tiempo was born on June 13, 1951, the daughter of Edilberto Tiempo and Edith Lopez Tiempo. She earned her Bachelor of Arts and then her Master of Arts, both in creative writing, at Silliman University, in 1971 and 1978 respectively. When she was a student at Silliman, she was crowned Hara sa Lalawigan (Miss Negros Oriental). She later obtained her Ph.D. in English Literature in 1983, also at Silliman, and became an assistant professor. She eventually joined the faculty of the English Department at the University of Iowa and as program coordinator of its International Writing Program (IWP). Her works have been translated into different languages, such as Arabic, Bulgarian, Croatian, Romanian, Hungarian, Hebrew, and Russian. She has published books of stories, poems, and essays, including *Upon the Willows and Other Stories* (New Day Publishers, 1980), *The World Comes to Iowa: The Iowa International Anthology*, co-edited with Paul Engle (Iowa State University Press, 1987), *Mountain Sacraments: Selected Poems* (De La Salle University Press, 1991), *Flying Over Kansas: Personal Views* (Giraffe Books, 1998), and *The Sea-Gypsies Stay: New and Selected Works* (University of the Philippines Press, 2000). A multi-awarded writer, Rowena has received distinctions from the National Book Award, the Don Carlos Palanca Memorial Award for Literature, and the Gawad Balagtas from the Unyon ng mga Manunulat sa Pilipinas. In 2004, she received the Outstanding Sillimanian Award for Literature and Creative Writing. She was Director-in-Residence for the Silliman University National Writers Workshop from 2010 to 2012. She is married to Lemuel Torrevillas, a multimedia artist and playwright. She currently lives in Iowa City with her family.

To A Filipino Friend

We were talking about sea deaths,
I think, and yes, if I learned,
like you, I was to die, I'd:
trace Katmandu to the Ganges,
wheeling to Lithuania or the cold
still of Bavaria when the pain began.
when you go, you'll take a grassy mountain—
top with you and leave it in Rumania
with a gypsy, his hair spread out
on the pillow; oh you'll hitch-
hike to Greece and swim out
where the Mediterranean's blue
eye
will hold you in its long
look upward, where
on your back, the sky
that holds in all mortality
will keep spinning
the white gulls that cry
between the shore and sea.

Sands & Coral 1970

Carlos O. Aureus

1971-1972 Editor

Carlos Ojeda Aureus has received numerous awards for his fiction, including the Philippines Graphic Award and the Don Carlos Palanca Memorial Award. He earned his Master of Arts in English from Silliman University and subsequently became a member of the faculty at the Department of English and Literature, later transferring to teach at the University of the Philippines in Diliman. Aureus is the author of the short story collection, *Nagueños*, published by the University of the Philippines Press in 1997 [later reissued by the Ateneo de Naga University Press in 2012]. As a Naga native, Aureus writes stories about his hometown, which have inspired critical study and literary adaptations of his works.

Literary Criticism as Personal Expression

Although the growing complexity of modern poetry has demanded increased competence in the field of literary criticism, the process of evaluating a poem has still deprived the critics of the dernier eri. Poetry, like life, is a complex thing: it cannot be pinned down to conform to any pat interpretation. Its very existence triggers a refraction of interpretations so that it seems that the Truth has, after all been scattered to the Four Winds. Recognition of this makes auditors return to the old lesson that all art in general has ab initio been meant to be contemplative rather than hortatory.

If poetry must give meaning to experience, what then is the role of the critic in the face of complexities in modern poetry?

Donald A. Stauffer, in his introduction to The Intent of the Critic, states that the literary critic has three main roles: that of an individual responding to the work of art; that of an interpreter to an auditor; and finally, that of a judge.[1] These roles merit analyses, for each of them leads to corollaries and conclusions in this paper.

It is not widely accepted that literary criticism, like the composition of a work of art, is a personal expression. A literary critic is an individual, and being one, he cannot escape from the excited awareness a person experiences before a poem. Ideally, literary criticism must begin with the critic as person responding intuitively and personally to the work of art.

The literary critic is a lens through which we see, and since literary criticism is a personal expression, we cannot stop here; we cannot accept the critic uncritically. In the reading of literary criticism—as in the evaluation of a work of art—the intent of the critic is as important a question as the intent of the artist. Moreover, since it is a personal expression, he is a bad critic who thinks of himself as the impersonal voice of truth. One should be wary of critics who assert that after ages of blind errors, they have found the truth at last. This type of criticism does not hold water, because of its limited position which pretends to be the only clue to truth and wisdom. Schools of past critical systems—of the

Augustans and Romantics, of Parnassians and the Naturalists—are now majestic ruins and fragments, because of their partial positions in imposing a limited system to art.

In his role as interpreter, the critic acts as communicator between art and society. He is a systematizer, so, he must above all be rational and systematic. He must not only feel a book, as Norman Foerster says; he must also think it:

By feeling the book, I mean passively responding to the will of the author, securing the total impression aimed at. If the book accords with the critic's tastes and beliefs, this will be easy; otherwise, he will have to attempt an abeyance of disbelief, a full acceptance of the work for the time being, in order to understand it. But understanding is not criticism, and therefore he must read it another way, "thinking the book," that is, analyzing closely the esthetic pattern and the ethical burden, and reflecting upon these in terms of his criteria until he is ready with a mature opinion of the book's value. If obliged to suspend disbelief when reading the first way, he is now obliged to state and justify his disbelief.[2]

If a wedge has to be driven between literary criticism and poetry in terms of the intensity of degrees in feeling, the latter takes more of it. Feeling, however, is not all there is in poetry, "but whenever feeling is absent whether in poet or reader, poetry is not known in its true nature."[3] However, feeling in poetry cannot be directly defined. It is original and undefined: one cannot completely describe the feeling when one touches Archibald MacLeish's "old medallions." Loneliness beggars all description, and if it has to be defined, it is simply uttered as the state of being lonely. Poetry is experience. We can know loneliness only by experiencing loneliness itself. The poet can only name the things or events that gave rise to the feeling of loneliness in the hope that by naming the things or events, other people will have a somewhat similar feeling aroused, and so understand his. Alfred Lord Tennyson, for example, in "Break, Break, Break" could not tell us directly how he felt. He could not: "And I would that my tongue could utter/ The thoughts that arise in me."[4] All he could do was to name the objects; the sights or sounds of which, through images, directly or by contrast, gave rise to or were associated with his feelings of loss. Having done this, he can only hope that his readers, calling up appropriate images and grouping them together in the manner suggested by the lines, will have a somewhat similar feeling aroused.[5]

In literary criticism, however, there is strict insistence upon logical analysis. Systematization, on the other hand, does not indicate that art is wholly rational and systematic. But since the literary critic is acting as middleman and translator to society, and the latter will not tolerate the imprecise, the indefinite and the shapeless, the mode of criticism forbids anything which is irrational. Society demands forms and standards, as the human mind takes delight in recognition, even the shock of recognition. Therefore, even when he is "dealing with the most intractable and irrational material, the critic maintains his systematic approach."[6]

But why need an interpreter? Are not all readers critics, whether they intend it or not? Is not the work of the art self-sufficient?

Edmund Wilson distinguishes between the emotions of a crude and limited man, and the emotions of a more highly organized man:

> … crude and limited people do certainly feel such emotions in connection with work that is limited and crude. The man who is more highly organized and has a wider intellectual range will feel it in connection with work that is finer and more complex. The difference between the emotion of the more highly organized man and the emotion of the less highly organized man is merely a matter of graduation…. When I was speaking a little while back of the experts who established the standards of taste, I meant the people who can distinguish Grade A and who prefer it to other grades.[7]

The work of art, then, is self-sufficient. But it may not be self-explanatory. And the reader may not have the necessary knowledge, or the knack, for full and immediate comprehension. The critic, then, is not trying to improve the work of art, but to improve its auditors, among them, of course, he may number himself.[8]

The literary critic, first of all, must be a highly organized person with a wide intellectual range, if he proposes to act as interpreter and systematizer. Neatness, organization, clarity, economy, and precision are some of the virtues of a highly complex individual with a critical mind.

Readers need critics, because the latter keep auditors from blind admiration of inferior works. It is in this role as judge, however, that the philosophical aspect of literature comes in. There are also those who assert that the literary critic must also be a philosopher, and there are those who

push him back to his own pen, saying that the literary critic has no business trafficking with philosophy, and that he should stick to art only.

Poetry is not philosophy. It is, as Mr. Foerster says, "the record, in terms of beauty, of the striving of Mankind to know and express itself."[9] Or, as John Ciardi puts it, it is a "performance of forces, not an essay on life but a reenactment, and just as men must search their lives over and over again for the meaning of their deepest experiences, so the performance of a true poem is endless in being not a meaning but an act of existence."[10]

But to extract all traces of philosophy from a work of art is to defeat the very impulse of its composition. Everyone has a philosophy, and art is simply one of the means a person communicates his philosophy. Following this line, Mr. Foerster gives a distinction between systematic philosophy and literary philosophy:

> By systematic philosophy, I mean of course, the kind of philosophy which is outlined in the histories of philosophy, the kind which university departments of philosophy busy themselves. With philosophy in this sense, the literary critic should seek friendship but not wedlock. In the equipment of a critic, as W. C. Brown well put it, "a tincture at least of philosophic training may be timidly prescribed… Drenched in philosophy, the critical faculty is almost certain to drown." Perhaps it would be better to say that the more philosophic a critic can carry without altering his center of gravity, the sharper his criticism will be in its logical niceties, the tighter and richer in its intellectual texture [italics mine].[11]

An excess of philosophy, however,

> may easily betray him into a rigid application of ideas to a field which is, after all, not amendable to philosophic standards. This is why the professional philosopher is so rarely a good literary critic. He is simply not at home. Despite all his training in thought, he is likely to manhandle thought in literary works. He is handicapped not merely because of his ineptness in the realm of concrete and sensuous, but, far more seriously, because of his inclination to want a

> writer to look as firmly philosophic as possible and then to belabor him when he is literary, that is to say the greater part of the time.[12]

Literary philosophy, then, is loose and open; systematic philosophy is exclusive, closed, and decisive. Literary critics are like creative writers; they too have working philosophies, not for informing works of art with significance, but for evaluating the significance for works of art, since they are "not makers, but judges."[13] And in evaluating, they should be more conscious of their working philosophies than creative writers.

Since literary criticism is a working hypothesis—a personal expression—of an individual responding to art, the statements a literary critic makes are not "impositions upon the universe."[14] The critic acts as a judge, but in doing so he does not consider himself as an oracle. He simply does not have the dernier cri here. He recognizes his own limitations, because he is always conscious of himself as a person, and a faux pas is always possible. W. H. Auden sets up this standard:

> Remember that like you and everyone else I am a weak fallible creature who will make false judgements; and therefore you must not take everything I say as gospel. I… promise to do my best to overcome my natural laziness and wooly-mindedness, and you who read me must try to do the same.[15]

Notwithstanding Auden's apologia, the literary critic, like the poet—the artist in general—belongs to the hierarchy of society, moves in the vanguard of contemporaneity, because literature is but a reflection of life. The literary critic's province does not beat within the frontiers of literature and art only, but within life itself. His corollaries and conclusions determine to no small extent the foundations of our whole culture.

END NOTES

Footnotes from the original article are collected as endnotes.

1. Donald A. Stauffer, "Introduction: The Intent of the Critic," *The Intent of the Critic*, ed. Donald A. Stauffer (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1941), p. 4.

2. Norman Foerster, "The Esthetic and Ethical Judgements," *The Intent of the Critic*, p. 70.
3. Arthur H. R. Fairchild, *The Making of Poetry: A Critical Study of Its Nature and Value* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1912), pp. 8ff.
4. Alfred Tennyson, "Break, Break, Break," *The Art of Reading Poetry*, ed. Earl Daniels (New York: Farrar and Rineheart, Inc., 1941), p. 266.
5. Fairchild, *op. cit.*, pp. 9ff.
6. Stauffer, *The Intent of the Critic*, p. 20.
7. Edmund Wilson, "The Historical Interpretation of Literature," *The Intent of the Critic*, p. 51.
8. Stauffer, *op. cit.*, p. 9.
9. Foerster, *op. cit.*, p. 68.
10. John Ciardi, *How Does a Poem Mean?* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1959), p. 67. 11 Foerster, *op. cit.*, p. 67.
11. *Ibid.*
12. *Ibid.*, p. 69.
14. Stauffer, *op. cit.*, p. 7.
15. W. H. Auden, "Criticism in a Mass Society," *The Intent of the Critic*, pp. 117ff.

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1973 Editor

Jaime Laude An Lim is a poet, short story writer, critic, and teacher. Born on January 7, 1946 in Cagayan de Oro City, he graduated *cum laude* for his Bachelor of Arts in English from the Mindanao State University in Marawi City in 1964, and later earned his Master of Arts in English and Creative Writing from Silliman University in 1968. An Lim was both a fellow of the Silliman University National Writers Workshop in 1973, and the University of the Philippines National Writers Workshop in 1974. After a teaching stint at MSU, he went to the United States in 1976 to obtain his Ph.D. in Comparative Literature, as well as MS and Ed.S degrees in Instructional Systems Technology from Indiana University. While he was a graduate student at Indiana University, he won several literary prizes including the Asian Student Essay Contest (1978), the Academy of American Poets Prize (1981), the Tutungi Prize (1983), and the Ellis Literary Award (1984). An Lim has also received the Don Carlos Palanca Memorial Award for the short story, the children's story, and the essay in English. In 2000, he was awarded the Gawad Pambansang Alagad ni Balagtas for poetry and fiction in English by the Unyon ng mga Manunulat sa Pilipinas [UMPIL]. He has published various books: one on literary criticism, *Literature and Politics: The Colonial Experience in the Philippine Novel* (New Day, 1993); two books of short stories, *Hedonicus* (University of the Philippines Press, 1998) and *The Axolotl Colony and Other Stories* (University of the Philippines Press, 2016); and two collections of poetry, *Trios* (University of the Philippines Press, 1998) and *Auguries* (University of Santo Tomas Publishing House, 2017). An Lim has held various teaching, administrative, and consultancy positions: English Consultant for Midwest Universities Consortium for International Activities (MUCI) in Indonesia; Full Professor of English at MSU-Iligan Institute of Technology; and Dean of the Institute of Arts and Sciences at Far Eastern University. For his excellence in teaching, the Metrobank Foundation gave him the Outstanding Teacher Award in 2003. He is also a mentor to many young writers through his involvement with writing workshops, helping organize the Mindanao Creative Writers Group, Inc. and co-founding the Iligan National Writers Workshop. He was also the Director-in-Residence of the Silliman University National Writers Workshop from 2017 to 2018.

Bye Bye Birdie

Shortly after my sixteenth birthday in 1964, I finally came to know some truths about life. Of course, I should have known better before then. But as it was, nobody told me anything. And certainly, none of this came from the neatly covered books I brought to the Misamis Oriental High where, as a senior, I listened to the sleepy wash of lectures Mondays to Fridays.

That December I received the card from Rich (bright sea gulls and sailboats at Maine), I was still home and did not bother with such questions as the nature of reality, the necessity of pain. For until then, until the middle part of my fourth year anyway, my world—though not exactly what one might call the heart of paradise—still revolved around the protective goodwill of Auntie Tita and Uncle Kee Chuan.

My sister Lu and I were orphans. I suppose it did disappoint some solicitous adults when they asked, "Don't you miss your Papa and Mama even a little?" and we would actually laugh, "Oh, you have a funny nose!" They would be mildly shocked at this but would excuse us just the same, we were such "poor darling babies" yet. Someone would now and then endeavor to impress on our young minds the grim tragedy of that car accident at Mangima, Bukidnon, obviously with little success.

They could not believe that we were quite happy as things stood. Auntie Nita was father's younger sister and having no children of her own, she lavished on us all the gifts of her maternal instincts. (The family story had it that Uncle Kee Chuan took so long in learning Bisayan that by the time he could manage a "*gihigugma ko ikaw*," Auntie was already thirty-nine and past child-bearing.)

Once and only once, did she get angry with me (I was 10 or 11then), that late afternoon she finally found me wading along the river bank behind the convento, a glorious reach of shoal beyond which the water danced so clearly you could see the texture of the bottom stones twenty feet deep.

"Never in the river!" Her face held an anger so resolute I howled even before her hand could cut into my buttocks. "Mama no! No!" I had called her Mama and, moved, she suddenly hugged me, her frail shoulders shaking remorsefully. Afterwards, Auntie had asked: "Promise me, David, hijo, you'll keep away from the river." I nodded and basked again in the fullness of her excessive love.

Uncle Kee Chuan asked even less: "You learn Chinese, actually very good language; when you grow, very good for business." So when somehow, I could fluently say "*Gua be khua iya hee*," he was very proud. After lunch, I got an extra Taiwan pear to bring to the movies.

So you might say that ours was a case of a happy misfortune. After I had given up those illicit escapades behind the convento, I went to the movies or played in the yard with Toffee, our mixed breed police dog. In the fenced backyard, among the many starapple and avocado trees, stalwart giants that punctually bore their generous fruits in the right season, love engulfed me so warmly I felt forever safe from any harm, from any pain. What illusion!

That day, I raised the card over the chocolate cake and the cheery greetings in light italics sang:

Happy birthday!
I wish you all the pleasant things
That meant the most to you—
Good luck, good health and happiness
For now and always too!

It was of course the printer's rhyme but at the bottom, he scrawled a postscript with his playful pen: "How are you, old man? Better do a double time, gypsy's coming and next day you're fifty!"

I imagined his blue eyes crinkling at this, the way his eyes crumpled pleasantly in that snapshot where he stood before their white colonial-style house in Inglewood, California: pressed khakis, merit badges, neckerchief, and all. He was named after his father who was in turn named after his father, so that Rich's full name became Richard Knight III, a name whose promise of medieval adventure proved too irresistible to confirmed romantics like me. It was a name you don't encounter just about anywhere, much less in our ancient wire-screened library at MOHS. But surprisingly, we crossed paths just there.

Mrs. Renes adjusted her round steel-rimmed spectacles over the plain blub of holes which were supposed to be her nose, and shrilled indignantly, "What! Nobody knows where the Mediterranean is! All right, assignment for next meeting then…"

And so that visit to the dusty reference section; an obscure magazine in Boy Scouting (aha, a classics illustrated, I had thought); an international friendship agency ("Building youth is better than mending men," its motto said); and there he was in the picture he enclosed in his first reply: blond, blue-eyed, and already nineteen, although the thumbnail sketch given after the hobbies named a figure two years younger, because the magazine was a yellowed back issue.

I thought it boiled down to the name and although that constituted a great part of my reason, I realize now, just as I would have realized then, had I possessed but an iota of insight into that strange structure of likes and dislikes called my Self, that my writing only confirmed my two fears: first my abject poverty when it came to intimate friendships; and second,

my frantic need for a confidante, because strangely I was beginning to be troubled by certain things.

You see, I was feeling lost, an anxiety which had absolutely nothing to do with hungry orphans or unremembered detours. I would have been grateful if all my problems were restricted to scheming an escape from P.E. (I could slip away during the confusion of the calisthenics formation, after the roll call) or to getting enough change for an orchestra seat at Lyric (I could always dip a finger into the emergency bowl behind the neoblue cut crystal vase where Auntie kept some loose coins for unforeseen crises—say, the salt container discovered empty in the middle of the stew, a thing like that).

But no. It had to be a catastrophe. I looked at my legs, rough knotty sticks in shorts, and I glozed over the ruined figure of a basketball star; my hair, instead of falling rakishly over my forehead like Elvis Presley's, bristled like mad; I stumbled in stairways and stammered in front of stupid giggling girls; I suffered from B.O., halitosis, and every other evil-sounding disease; pimples had a malicious way of flourishing on the shiny flares of my nose and for this, oh God, what would the people think of me now, a sex maniac?

"Of course you are not!" Rich wrote me later. "What a crazy thing to say. You think people notice your pimples and thin legs so much? Well, they don't and why should they care anyways? So why don't you just cut out all this melodrama. Really, it's so gluey. Nobody as yet died of adolescence, do you know that?"

Now, I did not like that. My agonies were real enough and if he thought I would sit back and enjoy the show, he was out of his nut. But then, I realized at the same time that rather than look for a Japanese friend who might not understand half of what I was talking about, I'd better stick around and listen to him say such profound and great things like "Himmler had only one small ball" or "A man has to face his destiny bravely."

I sank deeper in my agonies while Rich, in the plenitude of his insights and experiences, told me about another friend, Ed, whom he met in a hospital ward. Ed, he wrote, had been to the Philippines, taught somewhere in a place called Surigao ("How far is that from Cagayan de Oro?"), and came down with an exotic species of gastrointestinal worm. He said that Ed was forlorn not because of the worm, but because his girl who "promised to wait out the Peace Corps time" did not wait. He said that this was just another hazard of falling in love with very beautiful girls who were apt to be flighty to boot, "as you very well know."

It was then that, with an impossible ache, I confided in him another secret: that I had never fallen in love with a girl in my whole life and could not see the necessary connection between beauty and flightiness.

His quick retort was a startled, "What! And you're sixteen now you said?"

"To Rich," I wrote, hurt at what seemed to me a high-handed insult. "What do you expect me to do anyway?"

"To David," he answered. "Find a girl."

It was shortly after this that I noticed Shirley. She was Lu's classmate at Xavier U where they were taking B.S.E.Ed. or some other equally idiotic course. She had been to the house before but I never bothered. I had such prejudice against fat oysters and Lu's skirted coterie: both did not appeal to my sense of taste. But this time I looked, and she was pretty.

"Boy," my sister sweetly called to where I stood near the door waiting to be invited into their esoteric chatter. That sweetness was suspect. She had something cooking at the back of her mind, I was sure. But I lingered. "Come over, meet my friend," she said. "And by the way," she finally added, "go get some more boiled peanuts and coke."

I prided myself in defying feminine orders of this exploitive kind, but this time, I happily made an exception and hurried down to replenish their ammunition. I even brought up some thick pieces of cake and some ice.

"Well, well," said Lu. "If this is not something!"

"Oh, thanks a lot." Shirley beamed and her eyes were the softest brown I ever saw.

"That's okay," I stammered, quickly looking away from her. "Would you care for some more ice? I could bring you some more ice." I blushed like a virgin bride. They giggled. Oh, girls. Confusedly fingering my nose, swollen with passionate pimples, I stumbled down

the stairs.

That night, I sat at my study where the lamp cast a friendly glow upon the sheet I wrote: "You would probably be surprised but I already found one. She is slender and simmering, her small hard breasts tremble a little when she giggles, which she does quite a lot with my sister over their secret conspiracies. I think..."

And stopped. In the other room I could hear Lu cooing "Moon River." Ordinarily, she had a thin stringent voice, only this time it was surprisingly not bad at all. Somewhere, a tree lizard called *tuk-koo, tuk- koo* and another answered *tuk-koo*. From the window, I could make out the starapple tree stirring softly, like a dream. I loved that tree. Once, a *tamsi* fluttered among its branches and I wrote:

A yellow-breasted bird
Alighted on a bough. It blew
Quickly, it trilled a note—
Then as quickly it flew.

With this imagery I thought I had made some illumination about something, but nobody seemed to notice when it came out in the literary attempts page of our Misorien Torch, except my English teacher who simply said, with touching vagueness, that it had "promise." But that was

enough: I was pleased and began to love that tree and that bird, wherever it was now.

I went back to the unfinished line and added: "… something wonderful is going to happen soon. I'm happy, but strangely I'm also afraid."

"I'm also afraid of something," he wrote back. "I'm very afraid of death."

I thought of Rich as one who had learned to come to terms with the world, handsomely and well, whatever that amounted to. So it baffled me, for this was so unlike him, this unexpected elegiac turn.

At this time, in our literature class, we practiced a lot of empathizing, a pretty heavy word for the simple business of "standing in other people's shoes", as Miss Loyola put it. So I did it with Rich. I knew if I could only stand in his place, for a moment, I would learn something, a piece of wisdom, a truth, so that in my own dark time I would not be afraid, as much as he seemed.

I conjured a fearful vision: *It is night… I am alone… a loose board rattles in the teeth of the wind… a shroud billows darkly… death stalks, a cageful of rattling bones, breathes an icy kiss… a stickle whistles to the back of my neck… now…*

Try hard, I did. But I just couldn't be frightened enough. I was sixteen and I held my youth like a shield. I felt invulnerably certain death could never, never touch me. So failing to understand his fear, I could only reply with the thrust of his own exasperated accusation: "Oh, Rich, come on. You're getting melodramatic. Do you know *that*?"

In the weeks that followed, he never mentioned the topic again. If he felt disappointed, he did not show it in his letters. They were bantering again and recaptured his old lightness of tone.

In February, I wrote: "We had a competitive scholarship exam last weekend, the whole of Saturday. It was for nuts. It had stupid questions like: A farmer had 15 goats. All but nine died. How many did he have left? My answer naturally: six. What else, dopey blockhead?"

In March, he replied: "It's nearly spring now in the States. You don't feel the difference in Inglewood so much, though. This part of California has a more or less uniform tropical climate. But in the Mid- west or on the East Coast where I had been, your nostrils could feel the changing seasons sharply. It is everywhere, in the suddenly bright air, in the warmish sun, during the thaw. Spring is come and the rich green sap rises, flushing through veins, making things grow big. P.S. It's nine goats, wise guy. *Nine*!"

There too was a change of season in me. I felt it like a fever. My days were now touched with a sort of mistiness, about which enchanted birds twittered feverishly. I smiled to myself at strange times, saying foolish vows, and I seriously spoke to Toffee, or if Toffee was out in the yard, I talked to the chair or whatever was handy at the moment.

"What's the matter, hijo?" Auntie Tita fretted, feeling my forehead for wayward symptoms.

"You look very pale," Uncle Kee Chuan decided and looked into his medicine box for dried Chinese herbs and roots to boil.

"Na. I know why, Uncle!" Lu snickered.

I looked at the witch and chopped her, chopped her, to tiny shapeless pieces.

But she was right, of course. Before the long mirror, after my morning baths, I walked my legs, not quite as knotty as before. I examined the sparse curly patch where my sex slept like a brown innocent worm, waiting for a day that did not seem so far away now, when it would wake up, break into the light resplendent wings of manhood. My fingers sought my body with new amazement, touched the hardening mound of my chest, slid down the flatness of my stomach, there, O Shirley!, where the thighs grown taut at my own touch, as if pierced from a sting, the slumbering joys and anguish stirred and moaned a stranger's need, startling me, or although this was a land that grew with me and about me, it trembled so to my awareness only now, now trembling furiously as if from the wet brink of a thousand glories.

On the altar, the plaster cast of the Immaculate Conception watched all, saw all. My cheeks burned and my fingers clenched with a guilt I could not understand.

"Rich. Is it such a terrible thing to touch oneself? Why does it leave me so depressed afterwards? Why this wretchedness always? Everytime? Everytime?" I waited but my questions remained unanswered.

No such guilt troubled my moments with Shirley. There was only this sense of well-being, this trust in the rightness of whatever I felt for her. It was as if I walked, in light, among heralds and kings.

"I like you," she told me one time.

"Well," I stammered, thoughtlessly as usual. "You must like an awful lot of people."

"No. That's not true. I don't. I don't like Freddy, for example."
"Freddy who? Freddy next door?"

"Yes."

"Why?"

"Because he has such wild hair and he stoops. And also, he's a snob. I hate snobs."

"Well, he's supposed to be brilliant. He's taking engineering."

"I don't care. I don't like him. Really, I don't like him one bit.

Honest."

"I believe you," I said happily. "Shirley?" "Yes?"

"Will you be my partner during our graduation ball? That's in April yet, but—"

"David! You know I'd be happy to, yes!"

I felt so tall it seemed I could touch the sky. I leaped in the sparkling air and caught a dipping branch of the starapple tree. Swinging there, I shrieked with childish glee, amazed at the sun that danced and flashed through the intricate lacework of golden leaves and burnished twigs. It was, oh, so beautiful!

I wrote: "Dearest Rich. Do answer me now. Today! This minute! You procrastinator. I have so much to tell you! Life is happening to me!"

I had not long to wait. The following week I received two letters. The first one, an official-looking letter, was from the state university in Marawi.

"You flunked the exam?" Lu grinned, reincarnation of the devil himself, over my shoulder.

"Oh, scram, will you," I told her.

"My condolence," she offered solemnly, putting on a straight face. "It does happen, you know, despite our best efforts."

"Thank you, my dear Queen of May, but, as it is, I have disappointed your highest hopes. The registrar said to notify him when I decided to accept the scholarship. And do you know what this is?" I waved a check in her face. "My travel allowance."

"Oh," she said but I could see she was impressed and happy for me. "You'll go, of course."

"Go?" My eyes brightened, just then an idea began to beat joyously in my mind. "Who said I'm going *anywhere* at all?"

Expectedly, the other letter was from Rich. He said he regretted letting me know that his son died last March 20. His son, he wrote, had been irrepressible in life, and even during his last operation, his second this year, he had hoped… I stopped, puzzled. What was Rich talking about? He had no son. I examined the handwriting. It was too grave, too heavy. I looked at the signature at the bottom. It said: Richard Knight, Jr. His son, the man had written. His son.

I stood in disbelief. My mind refused to accept this unreality. But through the initial haze slowly fell into final place the inexorable fact of death. I sank on a chair.

A slight wind came, stirring the curtains, bringing into the room, what was it, a flicker of shadow. Although it was a cloudless day, I was suddenly afraid, just afraid, not sad: for now, I thought, I half understood this presence, this dark empty apparition they talked about. I thought of Father and Mother, the car skidding down to the floor of the cliff, the brownish photograph tucked neatly beneath the glass-top of Auntie Tita's dresser. I thought of Rich caught up by his one mortal fear. And I, who had not given him one word of comfort when he needed it, gave one to myself.

"Courage," I said, not knowing why, except that from now on, I had to grapple with my own ghosts. Alone. Tomorrow morning, I had promised myself in false hope and gladness. Tomorrow morning, I would go to Chali Beach. The water would be cool...

But it was useless. Even this could offer neither distraction nor comfort. I went upstairs to keep to my room until I could understand my

loss and learn how to take it. But Lu was in the hallway. With the way I was looking unhinged, she was bound to notice and crack a joke like, "*Unsa*, your girl just busted you or something?" I did not like to risk a chance like that so I decided to go someplace else. But she had already risen on her elbows. "*Unsa*," she was blurting out.

I hurried downstairs and tried the back bodega where they piled all the empty shirt boxes and the empty sock boxes, high against the wall. It was more crowded than I expected, no space except for this one small square of emptiness, behind the door. I took it just the same because, at least, there I could sit and hug my knees and be alone.

Only Toffee understood instinctively how I felt. He tagged along, disconsolate, his long ears dragging on the floor. He lifted round moist eyes to my patting and from his throat a thin plaintive whining of woe came. I held him tightly to me.

"It's all right, Toffee," I said. "It's all right." I pressed my cheek against the door and numbly mourned for my dead.

By the second week of April, we began practicing our graduation song religiously. In the library, our dim voices could be heard long after all the other students had gone home. "For Misamis Oriental our alma mater dear… so come and join us to sing to victoryyy." Passing by the Xavier U campus, after one such late rehearsal, I thought I saw Shirley talking with someone who looked very much like Freddy. The thick hair, the stooping stance. But already the tartanilla was clip- clopping past, so I was not sure.

There was no need to ask, though; the answer was clear that afternoon I saw her out for the final plans regarding the graduation ball.

"I can't make it after all," she said.

I stared at her. I seemed to be looking for that brown softness in her eyes, but it was not there anymore.

"My gown's too tight now," she said. "I mean, it's really quite faded now, you know." She kicked at a stone.

I stood numbed, my hands thrust deeply into my pockets. So it was Freddy, after all.

"I'm really sorry about this," she looked to me, sounding really sorry.

I was silent, wondering at my own calm, wondering when it would break.

"I hope you understand. There are such things as—"

"I understand," I said quickly. I was shaking. Must do something! "Bet I can race you to that fence," I heard myself blurt wildly.

Even before I spun on my heels, I knew the barbed wire fence was too high. But only the impetuosity of that senseless gesture could match my desperation. I ached with hurt and anger and helplessness. Before her surprised eyes, my feet thrashed the dusts, running toward my pain, toward my fall.

I did not even feel the steel thorns piercing the bone white. It was only afterwards that, toppled in disgrace and sprawled in the dry rut with

the gravel pricking spots of blood beneath the skin my palms, I felt the pain shot to my eyes.

"What did you do that for! Oh, foolish, foolish child!" She ran to my side and touched the torn skin. "Now look. You are hurt!" she said angrily.

My head swam, my leg throbbed in the swell of the pain, and my breath came in harsh ugly sounds. "I'm not!" I shouted. With savage violence, I flung her hand back. Then, I was running again, running away, running blindly in the darkening dusk.

When I returned she was gone. "Shirley," I said aloud, without meaning to. The name sounded unreal, like the ghost in some vanished mist. I thought: if only I had the courage to fight for my love, perhaps, things might have been different. But then, she loved him quite as much. Still, I should have tried. I should have told her how deeply I needed her myself. Now, it was too late.

The night had sucked out the bright colors from all the things around and there were only the massed grey-black shadows that stood back, against the deeper darkness, emptied of shapes and names. Somewhere, the tree lizard was again crying out *tuk-koo… tuk-koo*. But this time, only the dead night kept throating back its lonely echo. *Tuk-kooooooo*. The starapple trees in the yard grew hushed; a heavy wind pressed down. By midnight, a cold rain fell for quite a while.

In the morning, I sent a wire to the registrar at MSU. I said I was coming.

Crossing the street from the RCPI, I grimly hoped for some violent disaster, some monstrous tires screeching too late as the broken bits of my body were swiftly crushed against the corner curb. The blood did not stain the calmness of faces bobbing beneath the freckled shadows of the avenue trees. The cars rolled smoothly down the road. Life flowed on, undisturbed, in the bright untrammeled sunlight.

So death had to deny me this ultimate refuge. I could not die that summer. I saw May stretching itself into an eventless eternity. Then it was June noisily announcing its own arrival with the sudden hubbub at Divisoria, salesgirls calling out their opening school sales and mothers bargaining over ruled pads, pencils, notebooks for their children.

I thoughtfully packed my new suitcase: there was no escape from college.

In the Bukidnon Bus terminal, a strange world (which henceforth was to be mine) tightened like a knot while I stalled, uncertain and afraid. People were hurrying about in confusion. Passengers walked around looking at signboards, their brown bags scratching at their legs. A mother struggled with a wailing baby as she hailed her departing bus, but nobody paid her any attention. Newspaper boys shrilly cried out the latest issues into indifferent windows. An ice-cream vendor pushed a two-wheeled purple cart while tinkling a small hand bell. He looked almost clownish with his outlandish straw hat, although when you looked closer you realized he was sweating painfully in the hot sun.

The conductor took my new suitcase and heaved it expertly into the back. “Get in, hurry”, he said. All about me, the treacherous tide of humanity washed and swelled. The late passengers were clambering into the jam-packed Ciento Once and already an arm was pushing me aside. Then I knew one thing for certain: no royal seat was going to be offered to anyone, much less to me, and if I needed one I had better start fighting for it.

With this, I struggled through the sweating backs and hoisted myself into the bus. I stepped on a few toes and I got stepped on in return. At one point, an umbrella caught sharply at my ribs. I felt angry and tearful. I finally managed to squeeze between the window and a kopiahed man. There, the hard glare of the sun struck me casually like a fist.

I formally squinted at my watch, my first one, a gift from Uncle Kee Chuan, and composed my face. It was time to go.

“Take care, David,” my archenemy said, now become merely my worried sister Lu. For once, I noticed she did not call me Boy.

“Do you really have to go?” Auntie Tita said anxiously. Obviously, she too saw the stranger sitting next to me.

“You know I have to, Auntie. Don’t worry. I’ll learn to manage, in time.”

“Yes, David, I’m sure you will.” She smiled and fondly touched my forehead. “Good luck, hijo, and don’t forget to write us.”

“Yes,” I said in a voice that was level and grown but my eyes were blinking furiously.Oh, Rich, I thought suddenly. So long old pal. I leave you a young boy’s broken heart and his thousand secret agonies. You said once a man has to face his destiny bravely. You’ll be glad: I’m doing very well. I even manage to fling one gallant brilliant smile.

The motor started. The entire wooden hulk quavered within the metallic purring and the Ciento Once began to ease toward the road.

“Goodbye, David!”

“Goodbye, Lu. Goodbye, Auntie!” “Goodbye, hijo. Study hard.”

“I will,” I shouted.

In the end, it did not matter that my voice thickened to a strange timbre because they were now too far away to hear. I glanced at the swiftly diminishing figures for one last time and then firmly set my eyes ahead. On the way, the conductor handed me my ticket. The amount P2.75 was punched out. It was the fare for adults.

Sands & Coral 1971-1972

Ma. Paloma Alburo

1974 Editor

Ma. Paloma Alburo earned her Bachelor of Arts in Creative Writing from Silliman University in 1975. A story she had written as a campus writer won second prize at the Graciano H. Arinday Literary Awards. Her poems have also seen print in various national publications. She has attended both the Silliman University National Writers Workshop and the University of the Philippines National Writers Workshop. Alburo-Sandiego (her married name) co-edited *Centering Voices: An Anthology* with Erlinda K. Alburo and Erma Cuizon, which was published in 1995 by Women in Literary Arts. At one point, she was the business editor of *The Freeman*. She is the author of *Labyrinth of Dreams* (National Commission of Culture and the Arts, 2003).

Melancholy

I gulp down
my screwdriver in an amber room,
facing the sea.
hardly seeing but hearing,
the guitarman wailing
his pains, begging sympathetic souls a glance.

down here,
the air-conditioned air,
controlled lights,
melting cubes
agitate my fingers,
clamped
to a transparent glass;
a drowning man
anchored to a floating trunk.

the glowing city sleeps
silent, in a malignant illness.
unwaiting for her son, still out.
roaming,
i'm a migratory bird
without orientation,
gnawed with dried out,
faded appetites.

dawn comes
creeping, coloring the sky,
a broken re-run movie,
a once box-office hit,
that nobody goes to see.

Sands & Coral 1974

Pearl Gamboa-Doromal

1975 Editor

Pearl Gamboa-Doromal was the wife of Silliman University President Quintin Doromal. She spent her childhood in Oxford, England, the daughter of the Philippine Ambassador to the court of St. James. She eventually earned degrees in arts from George Washington University and Wilson College in Chamberson. Later, she pursued a graduate degree in creative writing from Silliman University. Even though she was the First Lady of the university, she also participated in extra- curricular activities, becoming editor-in-chief of the *Sands & Coral* and the *Portal*. During Doromal's tenure as Silliman president from 1973 to 1982, Pearl Doromal was considered the "epitome of elegance," known for receiving ambassadors and other important guests with gracious hospitality. Her support and generosity to local artists is evident in her involvement with Repertory Philippines and a local artist group in Dumaguete, the Order of the Golden Palette. She published a book of poetry, *The Artist: Hand and Breath* (Giraffe Books, 1995). Edith Tiempo, writing of Mrs. Doromal's poetry in her introduction for the book, noted that she possessed a "delicate touch, almost fragile, with which Pearl depicts the bright green world of creation—even while simultaneously, by using the devices of poetic art, she transforms this gossamer touch into a vehicle of expressing life's weighty and inescapable truths." In 2011—a year after her husband's death—she passed away at the age of 87.

Three Poems

April sees the wood violets
Peep from under the green
And the trees dress up for her,

And the forest will always be there. . .

I have had laughter and tears
Tossed to me penny-free
While my waiting hands formed the catchment.

But I would have had more laughter
For already my hands are moist.

I must go out to the woods
For all the leaves have fallen
And I can have my way.

Do not follow me.

Sands & Coral 1975

Anthony L. Tan

1976 Editor

Anthony Lu Tan is a poet, essayist, fictionist, and teacher. Born on August 26, 1947 in Siasi, Sulu, he obtained his Bachelor of Arts in English from Ateneo de Zamboanga in Zamboanga City in 1968. Later, he earned his Master of Arts in creative writing from Silliman University in 1975, and then his Ph.D. in British Literature, also from Silliman, in 1982. When Tan retired after 43 years of teaching, he had taught in four schools, including Notre Dame of Siasi in Siasi, Sulu, Silliman University, Mindanao State University-Iligan Institute of Technology (MSU-IIT) in Iligan City, Lanao del Norte, and De La Salle University in Metro Manila. His poems and short stories have appeared in various magazines and journals here and abroad, including *Mānoa*, the literary journal of the University of Hawaii, and *The Atlanta Review*, a prestigious poetry magazine in the United States. His poems have been anthologized in *A Habit of Shores*, edited by Gemino H. Abad (University of the Philippines Press, 1999) and *In Time Passing, There Are Things: 100 Home Life Poets* edited by Leoncio P. Deriada (Home Life, 2000). Tan has also published several books of poetry, including *The Badjao Cemetery and Other Poems* (Center for Research and Development of MSU-IIT, 1985) and *Poems for Muddas* (Anvil Publishing, 1996). His recent collection of poetry, *Crossing the River: Poems Old and New*, was published by Xavier University Press in 2019 and his *Intimations of Mortality: Sulu Stories and Other Essays* was also published in the same year by Pawn Press. Tan's works have garnered awards from Focus Philippines Magazine, Home Life magazine, and the Don Carlos Palanca Memorial Awards for Literature. Although retired from teaching, Tan continues his engagement with writing workshops as a panelist. He is also an Associate of the Edilberto and Edith Tiempo Creative Writing Center and the Director-in-Residence of the 58th Silliman University National Writers Workshop.

Silliman in the Seventies

I remembered the words of Rilke's "Ninth Elegy": Maybe we're here only to say: house,/bridge, well, gate, jug, olive tree, window--/ at most, pillar, tower…but to say them, remember,/ oh to say them in a way that the things themselves/ never dreamed of existing so intensely." Albert Faurot, the music teacher, gave me a bilingual edition of Rilke's Duino Elegies and the Sonnets to Orpheus. His dedication "To another poet and friend" gave me one of the high moments of my life in Silliman. His End House was a favorite haunt for Butch Macansantos, Armando, my younger brother, and me; yet when he passed away I was not even around to pay him my last respects.

When for the first time I came to Silliman, I was trying to escape from the limitations of my island home in the Sulu Sea. I was in search of another island, disdaining a humdrum destiny that was mine at birth, the destiny my ancestors, even from their graves, seemed to have foisted on me. I had thought then that I was urged on, like Tennyson's Ulysses, by hunger for new knowledge. Even before this hunger had been appeased, a deeper kind of hunger was growing inside of me. It masked itself as the hunger to move about, but in reality it was not wanderlust but, my enemies would think, the other kind of wandering and lusting. I must be kind and just to myself and think simply that this new kind of hunger grew out of the demise of an old love, unfortunately because of my immaturity. I wanted to make up for that loss, and I thought a new island would be the right place to start anew because in a manner of speaking, my old island home had been washed away by the waves of time and misfortune.

So it was then that in the summer of 1970 I found myself in Silliman.

I was like a shipwrecked sailor who had come upon an island, and I was learning the names of things which I thought did not exist.

Many things crowd into my memory when I look back to that time nearly 30 years ago. I remember the languor and rhythm of the afternoon, the horses' hooves clip-clopping down the asphalt streets, the pleasant rattle the cochero made when he touched the spokes of the turning wheel of his tartanilla with the handle of his whip. In the noon heat the sea just off the boulevard would be shimmering and blinding as if someone had thrown a million shards of mirrors on the water. It was just like in the old home with the sea breeze coming in from another island. The stead, white

houses of the elite facing the sea, reminded one of the relaxed atmosphere of the boulevard. Late afternoon it would be full of the happy sounds of the children, their concerned parents or yayas watching over them. But there would also be wrinkled habitues promenading in the sunset, or into the sunset of their years. Meanwhile, the boats docked at the wharf, but soon to depart for other ports and to carry away someone to another country, to strange seas and climes.

After sundown or early evening, as you walked down to the university cafeteria to eat supper, you would hear again the clip-clopping tartanilla pass by. And again late at night when you paused from whatever it was you were doing or reading. The ending of one of Nick Joaquin's stories would come to life except that here there was no resonance or suggestions of romance but simply the humdrum sound of tartanilla. But who knows what was taking behind the cochero: maybe a pair of lovers, coming home from a movie downtown, were kissing behind the cochero, their hearts beating each to each.

Unbeknownst to a provinciano like me, living in this untroubled paradise, with only my yearning for love as a kind of unrelieved pain, deep trouble was already brewing in many parts of the land. There was profound discontent among the masses. The president who proved to be a dictator, was stealing money from the people and depositing it in banks outside the country, while his wife was buying shoes and shoes and vats of perfumes and body lotion to keep her young and beautiful. The generals were jockeying for power while their wives were ingratiating themselves with the First Lady. Meanwhile, the lowly-paid, underfed, ordinary foot soldiers were dying daily in the hinterlands of Mindanao at the hands of the communist rebels, or in the jungles of Jolo, redolent with the smell of durian and rotting lanzones, they were being slaughtered by roving bands of bandits and zealous mujahedeens. Unbeknownst to many in the country the president was planning to suspend the writ of habeas corpus and later to declare martial law.

As a graduate student in English in 1970, I had to enroll in a creative writing class. In summer this class happened to be the famous National Summer Writers Workshop. Although I had no ambition to be a creative writer, I was excited to be in a writers workshop. Here was an opportunity to sharpen my skills in writing even if I did not intend to be a writer. At that time I did not know what exactly I wanted to do with my life.

Some of the writing fellows in the 1970 summer writers workshop, mostly from Manila-based schools like U.P., Ateneo and De La Salle, have today become nationally famous, although not all of them turned out to be the poets that they first thought they would be. Many of course are hardly

heard of these days, deciding perhaps to do something better. Some joined the underground movement in order to fight the coming dictatorship. In the aftermath of martial law some changed their occupations, becoming journalists instead or copy editors in some lucrative advertising firms. And some went abroad, to the USA, to do something else like driving a taxi. Taxi driving might seem embarrassing, but it is not without precedence in literary history, a precedence that move Albert Camus to remark that art is gratuitous because look what Rimbaud did in Abyssinia after he had left the writing of poetry.

The few who persevered have become well-known writers and are now harvesting the coveted awards that are given annually by the Manila-based weeklies and the Carlos Palanca Foundation. One name stands out today, Carlos Ojeda Aureus, the Bicolano writer whose book of short stories, Naguenos, is the Philippine counterpart of James Joyce's Dubliners. The other famous name is Ricky Lee, a scriptwriter of Tagalog movies. And of course there is Conrado de Quiros a well-known columnist with the big time Philippine Daily Inquirer.

There were others in that batch like Willie Sanchez, Albert Casuga and Celedonio Aguilar who for one reason or another have stopped writing. The members of the panel of critics in the 1970 workshop, aside from Dr. Edilberto K. Tiempo and Dr. Edith L. Tiempo, were Myrna Peña-Reyes, Raymond Llorca, Bien Lumbera and Mig Enriquez.

In retrospect the writing fellows and the critics formed an august body of intelligent men, but at that time, because of my ignorance and naivete, because of my lack of ambition to be a serious writer, I did not feel the awe that was due to this group of men and women. There is something about me that until now is not impressed by importance, literary or otherwise, but I take off my hat to kind, honest, intelligent men and women.

Since I was not a writing fellow but a graduate student enrolled for credit, I had the leisure to sit back and listen 99 percent of the time to the fellows and critics discuss the manuscripts submitted to the workshop. I remember that the only time I had the opportunity to speak was when Dr. Lumbera thought that it would be good to let the fellows and the students talk first. Uncharacteristic for a timid person like me, I immediately, boldly grabbed the opportunity, opened my big mouth, bared my fangs like a dog lately unleashed. Having honed my critical sword in the periodical section of the old Silliman library, on the whetstone of such periodicals as Modern Fiction Studies, I decided to wield it on a short story that did not live up to the standards of good fiction, pointing out the failure of the story. Apparently Dr. Lumbera noticed what I did because at the end of the

session he approached me and talked to me about something, maybe it was about work. I remember saying that I was looking for work because I had already resigned from a teaching job with the Notre Dame of Siasi. He suggested that I see the Tiempos, but I was too timid to follow his advice. O would meet Bien again six years later when I was a writing fellow at the U.P. Writers Workshop.

How Doc Ed got me into the English Department of Silliman is a long story itself. Looking back I could say it was one of those turning points in one's life that did not seem, at the moment it was taking place, momentous at all.

After the workshop, after we had gone back home and had returned to campus, when classes for the first semester were about to begin, Caloy Aureus, who had become a friend, asked me to accompany him to the residence of the Tiempos because he had to arrange the schedule of his classes. The Tiempos had promised him a teaching job so that he could at the same time study for his master's degree in Creative Writing. As a writing fellow, Caloy had submitted a short story which, in spite of its subject matter (a rape near a cathedral) impressed the panel of critics. Dad, as we later came to call him, was the dean of the graduate school, and Mom Edith was the head of the English Department.

I had no inkling that that very evening, that Friday evening, still warm and pleasant as if the long days of summer were not over yet, the tide of my fortune was going to change.

It was my first time to be at the residence of the Tiempos in Amigo Subdivision. I remember the warm glow of the lights in the sala and in the adjacent dining room. There was snack for Caloy and em, brewed coffee I think it was, and cookies. While Caloy and the Tiempos were busy with the schedule of Caloy's classes, those that he was going to teach in the undergrad and those that he was going to attend as a student in the graduate school, I sat back, looked around the sala, at the books and a bric-a-brac on the shelves, the large, wooden stereo and the large records, hardly enjoying the brewed coffee because in two days I had to pack my things up and go back to that God-forsaken island in the Sulu Sea where I came from. The prospect of going back, of repeating history, that is, the family history of store keeping gave me that sinking feeling that there was no justice in the universe, the feeling of a sailor in a rickety boat driven into the teeth of a storm.

We were walking to the iron gate when some good angel bend over Doc Ed and whispered to him, urging him to ask me what I was going to do. As calmly as I could, although the tide of dejection was rising to my head, I explained to him my situation, the dreadful prospect of return,

without giving him a hint of that dread, and the desire to stay on if possible. He said there were available scholarships in the graduate school. Was I willing to work as a graduate fellow and also study for a master's degree? Could I postpone my return trip that Sunday? Could I see him on Monday in his office and see what could be done?

Those words and my affirmative response cancelled out the order possibilities of my life, turned the possibilities to might-have-beens: like I could have been a rich but discontented store keeper in a loveless island, or a rebel with the MNLF.

In Dumaguete and Silliman I stayed on and stayed on for the next thirteen years.

Every year I looked forward to summer and the workshop. In 1972 I worked as the assistant of Mr. Joe Torres, the reliable typist of the workshop manuscripts. I mimeographed the stencils that he had cut in that small room on the ground floor of the old library, which was an extension office of the English Department because at one time or another Mr. Jess Chanco, Mr. Darnay Demetillo, Mr. Joe Teague and Mr. Antonio Enriquez held office there.

The following year I qualified as a writing fellow, I submitted a few poems and a short story about Tausug vengeance. It had an epigraph from a William Butler Yeats's poem about things falling apart because the center cannot hold. The story was hotly debated by the panelists and writing fellows. I was thrilled by the reactions of the participants, whether they were favorable or otherwise. It was then that I realized that anything about Tausug was interesting to many readers. Somewhere on the fringe of my subconscious I began to entertain the idea of someday writing a novel about my God-forsaken island.

The late Mr. Rolando Tinio was a panelist that year, and he played the role of the devil's advocate to the hilt. There was no story or poem that pleased him. I remember an incident one afternoon when a literature-teacher fellow showed his poem to Mr. Tinio. It was under the acacia tree in front of Larena Hall. A circle of benches surrounded the tree. It was where idle students would make a tambay, where the laundry women on Saturday and Sunday afternoons would wait for the students to pick up the laundry. After a quick reading of the poem, Mr. Tinio dropped the piece of paper, bent down and covered it with a pile of sand, and remarked that the poem deserved the burial. The way he scooped the sand with both hands, wordlessly pouring the grains of sand on the paper, how he quickly stood up and delivered the punch line was a brilliant comic action. We were all entertained. We all laughed, including the mustachioed victim of

this joke who, we learned later, he invited to teach with him at the Ateneo de Manila.

Except for the summer of 1976 when I was at the U.P. Writers Workshop in Diliman, I attended the Silliman workshop every year in various capacity sometimes as tour guide to the visiting writing fellows from Manila and Cebu, the role being performed by Mickey and Victor today; sometimes as an unofficial, unpaid panelist; and later with Butch Macasantos, as jester who entertained the writing fellows with ethnic jokes. I remember those long, carefree evening hours, lying on the ballfield between the men's dorms and the nurses' home, exchanging jokes with the fellows while above us the moon sailed by in the cloudless summer sky.

The writ of habeas corpus was suspended in 1971. The rumor of martial law was in the air. The campus weekly was full of omens and poems of thing to come, side by side with pictures of Fidel Castro and Che Guevarra as icons of rebellion and liberation. Although Mao was equally qualified to stand as icon, his picture was not often reprinted in the weekly because (and this is a wild guess because I did not know the editors of the paper) Mao had some ethnic resemblance to the aspiring dictator. Everywhere in the dormitory rooms the walls were plastered with these pictures. The excessive presence of Che's bearded image moved one run-of-the-mill lawyer to complain that instead of Che the students ought to hang the picture of clean-shaven Richard Nixon, then president of the United States. With his lower lip protruding, he asked in earnest "Why not Nixon?"

We would get free copies of various Marxist writings. Mao's little red book was easily available; the quotations were familiar. The Internationale, in English and Pilipino, sounded inspiring. When sung in protest against beauty pageants on campus, or some irrelevant cultural shows, it could move you to righteous anger. Let me hasten to add though that the airwaves were still dominated by American pop songs, by "McArthur Park" and "Leaving on a Jet Plane."

One day, the late Senator Benigno Aquino came to campus and everybody was at the gym to listen to him. A brilliant, charismatic speaker, he warned the country that Marcos was going to declare martial law, that the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus was merely a dry run in order to gauge the reaction or opposition of the body politic. According to Aquino, Marcos had repeatedly denied he was going to declare martial law, but don't you believe Marcos, he said, because Marcos, Goebbels-like, was a congenital liar. I had heard of incorrigible liar and inveterate liar, but it was my first time to hear of congenital liar. Imagine, to lie as soon as you

are born. True enough, exactly a year after the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus, martial law was declared.

The night before September 21, we were already burning our piles of the Weekly Sillimanian, retuning the little red book to its rightful owner, removing from the walls and cabinets the pictures of bearded heroes and replacing them with glossy pages from some magazines whose heroines had long legs but were not necessarily beardless. I learned early on that you can be a rebel but you don't have to go to jail; that when your enemy is pushing you against the wall, a quick change of hair, color or wave, is absolutely necessary. Put the hair somewhere. It can save your life. So while some of my dormmates had to flee to the provinces, I stayed in the third floor of Woodward Hall, partly our of necessity because I didn't have the money to go to far Zamboanga.

There were three kinds of rebel heroes. The real one lived in the mountains, shoeless and in rags so that the suggestion that they were naked was not without basis; hence they were called hubad na bayani. The ones who believed they were rebels but who couldn't let a day go without smoking imported cigarettes, and who devoured PX goods, were referred to as huwad na bayani. The last and worst kind were those who sold their souls to the regime so that they could enjoy the luxuries their neighbors were enjoying. They were referred to as tuwad na bayani because in order to sell their souls they had to bare something physical.

It took Silliman a long time to open again, probably the last of the private schools to resume classes. The reason was that according to military non intelligence, Silliman was full of rebels. It had that impression because he campus paper printed Marxist writings, and there was hardly a week when some pictures of Fidel or Che did not grace its pages. But as a matter of fact, there were hardly a hundred students who were really that serious about rebellion. I had been a witness in one protest march against a cultural show held in the gym. There were only about thirty placard-carrying students who marched and shouted in front of the gym. They hardly made a dent on the show inside the gym until an agent provocateur advised them to get into the gym and do their shouting and marching there. Only then did they succeed in disrupting the show. But sheer number there was none. Out of a population of 5,000 students, you have only thirty. What percentage of the population is that? Is that enough to say that the campus was swarming with rebels?

When school resumed some changes were in order. Before martial law, the physical setting of the campus was such that it was integrated into the larger Dumaguete community. Anyone could get I and out of the campus. After martial law, some wire fences had to be put up per

instruction from the military. The freedom to move about was already restricted by the construction of gates near the dormitories. Curfew was imposed on the residents of the dorms. We had to climb the fence once the gates were already closed, or we had to cut away a few feet of wire to make a hole in the fence. The administration, trying to tow the line, had to impose the wearing of short hair. In protest, one of my professors had his head shaven.

It took some time before the campus paper was given the license to operate again. When it came back there was none of the usual Marxist writings, absolutely none of the pre-martial law pictures. In its first year of resumption I was the technical adviser, meaning my job was to see to it that no such thing happened in the paper. On the other hand, the paper did not sing praises to martial law, but went quietly about its job as a campus paper and as a workshop for aspiring journalists of the School of Communication.

The presence of the wire fences and the uniformed security guards manning the gates made the campus look like one huge garrison. Under the seeming sense of normalcy there was a seething hatred for the dictator. The Silliman community as a whole consistently voted no in the referendums and plebiscites when the dictator asked for a yes, and yes when he asked for a no. An excellent example of how students thought about the so-called virtues of martial law was the English translation of it as One Day, One Eat.

Slowly, imperceptively, people got used to martial law except the occasional outpourings of hatred for the dictator and his dragon lady. We returned to the library to read again the complete works of such and such poet. It was Eliot, then Auden, then Yeats and Frost and Dylan Thomas. Later it was Conrad, Lawrence, Joyce, and James. Then the critics. Then the journals put out by American universities. We were becoming Anglophiles. Even on Saturday nights, when most of the undergraduates were out with their friends, we were in the desolate library poring over books or periodicals.

It took me some time to finish my thesis so I did not graduate until 1975. Caloy had finished earlier, and as soon as he had his master's degree, he left Silliman and went to U.P. Lack of ambition, lackadaisical attitude, and the desire to just stay on in Silliman campus were the reasons why I did not finish in two years. But one day it occurred to me to that I wanted to move up to Baguio City. To inspire me to get the degree I wrote on a piece of paper Next Destination: Baguio. I pasted it on the mirror so that I could see it every morning. In one semester I finished the thesis and defended it in time for graduation in March of 1975.

I went to Baguio with the intention of finally moving there, but when I saw the city I was disappointed. The U.P. Baguio campus was so small. The terrain of the city was so uneven. The houses were perched on hillsides and gave the impression that any rainy time they would fall on the houses just under them on the next tier. It felt like it was being on tenterhooks everyday of your life. I did not want that kind of precariousness. But I think the main reason was that it was too far from the sea. Having grown up along the seashore, I could not for the life of me live far from it.

So I went back to Dumaguete, back to old, cozy Silliman, in the security of the century-old acacia trees. And I stayed on until finally I thought I really needed a change of scene.

In 1983 I resigned from the English Department, quietly, without fanfare. When Dad learned about it, he did not talk to me. He could not accept that I was leaving, that I who had stayed the longest when everybody else had left for one reason or another, that I too was leaving. I couldn't shake off that Et tu, Brute feeling. But I had to leave for the sake of my sanity. I am amused now when I remember that morning during the 1983 workshop. Krip Yuson, Cesar Aquino, and I were in Krip's room at the Alumni Hall. Dad came in to see Krip who had just arrived from Manila. Although he talked to both Krip and Cesar, Dad completely ignored me. Oh where is that angel that made him talk to me thirteen years ago? I tried to put myself in his shoes. How would a father feel when his son was going away from home?

Life indeed is a series of arrivals and departures, mostly departures, someone said. And when we bid goodbye in this life, we are just rehearsing for the final good-bye we all must bid someday. Right, Mr. Laurence Sterne?

Another thirteen years went by. In September 1996 I learned that Dad had passed away quietly. Like a dutiful son I came to Dumaguete to pay my last respects. I crossed two bodies of water, traveled ten hours just so I could be at his funeral. For the first time in my life I became a pall-bearer and delivered a eulogy. But I envy what Mr. Ernesto Yee did when he learned that "Dad had passed away": he went to the house to polish Dad's pair of shoes. I wish I had done that myself, for Dad deserved that act of kindness. In spite of his detractors and enemies, he was a kind man whose heart was not only in the right place but was also, as Cesar Aquino put in a glowing tribute, as large as Africa.

Leoncio P. Deriada

1976 Diamond Jubilee Edition Editor

Leoncio Pedronio Deriada is a multi-awarded writer of plays, poems, and stories. He is also a multilingual writer, having produced works in English, Filipino, Hiligaynon, Kinaray-a, and Cebuano. Although born in Iloilo, Deriada earned his secondary, college, and graduate education in Mindanao: he graduated *cum laude* for his Bachelor of Arts in English at the Ateneo de Davao University in 1959 and received his Master of Arts in English from Xavier University in 1970. In 1981, he received his Ph.D. in English and Literature, with a specialization in creative writing, from Silliman University. He taught in Mindanao at Assumption College and Xavier University, and in Silliman University, where he became the chair of the Department of English and Literature. He then transferred to the University of the Philippines in the Visayas in Iloilo City in 1985. With his advocacy of writing in the mother-tongue, Deriada is acknowledged for his contribution in reviving Kinaray-a and Aklanon, serving as editor of various anthologies on West Visayan literature. He was former poetry editor and columnist for *Home Life* of St. Paul Publications in Makati, former Director of Information and Publications Office of the UP Visayas, former Coordinator of the Sentro ng Wikang Filipino of the UP Visayas, and associate of the U.P. Institute of Creative Writing. His works are collected in *The Road to Mawab and Other Stories* (New Day, 1984), *The Dog Eaters and Other Plays* (New Day, 1986), *Night Mares* (New Day, 1988), *The Week of the Whales* (New Day, 1994), and *Little Workshops, Little Critiques* (Seguiban Publishing, 2003). He also wrote two novels *People on Guerrero Street* (Seguiban Publishing, 2004), which received the National Book Award for fiction, and *People on Claveria Street* (Seguiban Publishing, 2015). With his numerous Palanca wins, Deriada was inducted to the Palanca Hall of Fame in 2001. He was also the recipient of the Outstanding Sillimanian Award in 2006. UP Visayas also conferred on him the title of Professor Emeritus in 2008. He received the Gawad Pambansang Alagad ni Balagtas for Hiligaynon fiction and drama by the Unyon ng mga Manunulat sa Pilipinas in 2000, the Taboan Literary Award in 2010, the Taboan Lifetime Award for Literature in 2013, and the Gawad CCP Para sa Sining Award in 2015. Leoncio Deriada passed away at age 81 in 2019.

There Are Things Sadder Than Grandma's Death

There are things sadder than Grandma's death.
When she died, all her ninety-two years compressed
Into a tuft of white hair, I did not weep.
Today some men tore down a building across the street.
I cried. (There are things sadder than Grandma's death.)
Who would not weep watching the death of a child-
Hood spent loving the doves on the tiled roof?

The doves have gone, and the building is no more
But a relic of three posts and a past. These
The men cannot uproot or deface with hammers. My father
Says good wood lasts longer than men and
Molave posts will sure outlive their carpenters
And the assassins of the house…

And there across the street, three molave trees
Stand. They are ghosts that cannot be exorcised
By new walls as Grandma's memory has been lost
In the expensive facelift of a spinster aunt. For
They have roots that penetrate the earth's core
And branches that will forever catch
The fever of the sun.

There are things sadder than Grandma's death.
I will stand here and watch with a hundred unspoken things.
I will stand here and wait.
The doves will return from their long flight and roost
On the branches of the three trees
Across the street.

Sands & Coral 1976

Christine Godinez-Ortega

1977 Editor

Christine Godinez-Ortega was born in 1952 in Dumaguete City. She obtained both her Bachelor of Arts in English and American Literature and her Master of Arts in Creative Writing from Silliman University, where she subsequently taught for three years. She attended De La Salle University in Manila for her Doctor of Fine Arts in Creative Writing, major in fiction, graduating with high distinction. She teaches at Mindanao State University-Iligan Institute of Technology, where she has held several positions, including associate editor of *Mindanao Forum* (formerly *The Technician*, the journal of MSU-IIT), editor of *Gazette* (MSU-IIT's official newsletter), director of the Office of Publication and Information, and Senior Special Assistant to the Office of the Chancellor. She is a founding member and has chaired the Literary Arts Committee of the Cultural Center of the Philippines-Iligan Arts Council since 1991. She has also served as regional coordinator for literature for Mindanao for the CCP since 1992. With the National Commission for Culture and the Arts, she was Chair of the National Committee on Literary Arts, the Coordinator of the NCLA for Central and Northern Mindanao, and the Secretary of the Subcommission on the Arts. Her articles and plays have seen print in various newspapers and magazines. She has also read papers across the Philippines and Asia (Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia, and Japan). Together with Jaime An Lim, she has edited the anthologies *Mindanao Harvest I* and *Mindanao Harvest II*. Godinez-Ortega is also the author of a poetry collection *Lanterns in the Sun* (New Day, 1987). She is co-founder and current director of the Iligan National Writers Workshop where she edits the annual proceedings of the workshop. She received the 7th CMO Asia award for Education Leadership and the Gawad Paz Marquez Benitez Award from UMPIL Philippines in 2016. She has also helped organize regional writers' workshops across Northern Mindanao. She was married to the late poet Eduardo P. Ortega with whom she has two sons.

Poetry Without End

Like Sesshu, she paints woman across
oceans, steep mountains, sturdy
pine and stolid rocks revealing firm
brush strokes framing time.

Her sure fingers traced half-wings
of butterflies and song-birds
on her gown, the reds, magenta and muted gold
dancing little dances when she heaved.

over temple offerings of mangoes, papaya,
beer, honey and canned peach,
we swapped ideas of beauty and love
a language gods use when they're pleased
her face now Sybil's, now Madonna's
lit up when a Persian cat rubbed its head
against her legs.

we jumped at the doorbell's sound—
our talk turned to mundane chatter
trailing lampshade light on our faces
casually turning to look at screen
doors checking if some phantom's there.

after a time, we shifted in our seats
teacher's heart tugged at mine to unsay
more visions of a loving woman
forgiving infidelities tucked
in a pulsating mole as her

hands fretted over mango pulp breaking
—stranded flotsam.
That night, the heavens opened up
ilang-ilang scents filled us both.

Sands & Coral 2011-2013

Erlinda K. Alburo

1977-1978 Editor

Erlinda Kintanar-Alburo graduated with a degree in AB English Language and Literature in 1965 from the University of the Philippines-Diliman; with an MA Literature in 1972 from the University of San Carlos; and with a PhD in English and Literature in 1987 from Silliman University. She served as the Director of the Cebuano Studies Center in the University of San Carlos (June 1996 to May 2011), where she also taught undergraduate and graduate courses on language, literature, folklore and research. A published author and scholar, her many research interests and expertise include Cebuano heritage and culture, Philippine and Cebuano literature, folklore and expressive culture, and popular culture. She is also a prolific poet in both English and Cebuano. She currently sits in the Cultural and Historical Affairs Commission of Cebu City and of the Language Commission of Cebu Province. For her contribution to Cebuano culture and arts, Dr. Kintanar-Alburo has received various recognitions and awards, among which are: Recognition for being one of the Founders of WILA (Women in Literary Arts-Cebu, Inc.) on its Silver Anniversary, September 2016; Honoree, Special Program to pay tribute to Dr. Alburo for her contribution to Cebuano culture and arts sponsored by the NCCA, Robinson's Galleria, Dec. 8, 2016; and One of Top 15 Literary Writers in Cebuano after the War, awarded by Bathalad-Sugbo, Inc., Feb. 25, 2019. Her fiction and poetry are included in local and national anthologies (e.g., *Diliman Review*, *Philippine Literature: A Mindanao Reader*, *Poetic Tryst* (WILA audio-cd), *Haling* (WILA), *Brown Child* (CD and book), *Babayeng Sugid* (Anvil), contributions to Cebu Arts Council's Art to Art: Visual-Literary Arts Dialogue. and Femi.Nest (NCCA/WILA) and her latest book publications include the following: revised edition of *Manuel Segura's Tabunan: The Untold Exploits of the Famed Guerillas of World War II*, 2018 (as editor/annotator); *Duhawit* (a collection of the poetry of Erlinda K. Alburo and Ester Tapia), 2018; *Lapulapu: Ang Bantugan by Paulino Gullas*, 2018 (as translator); *Mga Tinagoang Bahandi: Mga Dula ni Msgr. Agustin V. Ancajas*, 2019 (as editor). In 2021, she published her latest book, *Sugilambong: The Pre War Cebuano Novel* with the National Commission for Culture and the Arts.

Inday Lulay

When Nanay Petra and Insi Daya decided to get married they felt they shouldn't leave their youngest sister Lulay behind, and finally persuaded their husbands to build a long long house the exact center of which was to be Lulay's domain so that she did not, in a manner of speaking, really miss her train after all.

Hers could have been a felicitous set-up, a logical liaison office between the homes of her sisters, one facing the sea and the other facing the street right across the *municipio*; but Inday Lulay seemed to withdraw into the housecenter more and more as the two families rustled and bustled on both her sides. It is true she sometimes would admit a brat or two into her room when Nanay or Insi had to be somewhere else, but only with the eldest kids. Later, as more kids came, she would close the door on both of her sisters' faces when such occasions arose, claiming she was indisposed. Probably she thought the world owed her something more than an unpaid nursemaid's position. After all, wasn't she the most talented (if not the prettiest) of the three? She was in fact the first lady pharmacist of Cebu and could speak French. It is said that during the war she charmed not a few Japanese with her faulty Nippongo. She was also a pianist.

In the meantime her nephews and nieces grew in number and up, got married, and themselves had kids. I was the eldest daughter of Nanay Petra's eldest son.

A ritual even us kids could not escape every after-supper time was the rosary. On numberless drowsy nights we would gather alternately seaside and streetside before almost identical baroque altars and mumble our *Santa Marias*, *Gloria Paters* and even the Latin responses to invocations that are now lost to me. Sometimes we would remain and demand of our lolas what we considered our reward for suffering a minute purgatory throughout the prayers—tales of friendly Lugdoy, the *agta* in our *talisay* tree, or stories of the town and of our great-grandparents. Inday Lulay never stayed for these narratives, so we never found out how good a storyteller she may have been.

Thus it was that Nanay Petra, from the seaside of the house, used to tell us kids (as grandmothers will), while all the time we were huddled close to her knees squat on the bamboo floor if not rubbing out the grain from the cobs of corn regularly delivered from the farm, that their father,

who was the biggest fish dealer in Candabong, had built a large *botica* for Inday Lulay but this went in the blaze of 1918 that claimed my great-grandparents as well as their every material possession (that meant everything that used to be on that longitudinal piece of land lying perpendicular to the shore and on which stands the house). To this day still are those variegated jars and bottles in multi-shapes and colors all kept in the *kamalig* in a backyard corner, remnants of the once-popular *Botica San Miguel*. Many many times my sisters (four of them) and I, as well as my brother and our citified cousins on vacation, when the weather forced us all indoors, would live the time in that *kamalig* keeping store, filling and emptying those containers with as many as many little things as our front and backyards, vegetable and flower gardens (to Mama's great dismay), the shore and even street could afford. We were careful, though, not to break the bottles since Inday Lulay always treasured her things even when there couldn't be (to our minds) better adult uses for them. Thus, the bottle array inside her glass cabinet which we could see from her immaculate doorway we thought were merely decorative vases, with their fragile paper and cloth flowers that she had made herself.

Inday Lulay's sanctum sanctorum (we didn't know what that meant then and were merely parroting a phrase given by Papa, who was an ex-seminarian) was almost a holy place since she kept saying that it was a sin for any of us dirty kids to set foot in it. We often wondered what she did inside, when she was not sleeping or singing an aria, fo she spent all her waking hours in there, between trips to the dining room (now seaside, now streetside) or to her own comfort room below. We knew of course that she sewed and embroidered her own clothes by hand, but the few though elegant ones that she wore to church sometimes were not enough explanation to our curious minds. So one day, while she was downstairs in the bath, we decided (after making the sign of the cross) to bore a little peephole from our seaside wall. Through it we took stock of the books, boxes, and bottles in the glass cabinet beside her bed against the streetside wall, and we would have given anything to be able to see what those contained. Later that day, after naptime but before afternoon snacks, we made a queue before our peephole and were each treated to what looked like a preview of a soundless opera. There she was, running her fingers over the surface of a piano-like structure made entirely of wood, with black and white ivory keys improvised with ruled lines in paint (for her own piano had gone with the fire), while her whole attitude was rapt, her eyes closed and her lips moving in an incantation perhaps. That was what first made us declare she was a little crazy, maybe. Another time we peeped and saw her reclining on her bed, staring at the ceiling, looking like Pinocchio

with a wooden clothespin on her nose. Perhaps she saw us try the clothespin bit later because we never caught her at it again.

My Lolo had bought a piano for Papa and my uncles, to keep them out of mischief, he said. Now it was time our generation tried it. I plowed through the usual Johnson and Hanon beginners' volumes in two years. At ten, when I was in the middle of Czerny's dexterity exercise book, Inday Lulay started to stamp her foot to correct my measures. How I often wished that Papa had chosen another spot for a piano room other than where I was subjected to her intermittent intrusions! Once, when I was feeling especially confident with Lecuona's "Cordoba," she suddenly came straight through the communicating door with mouth puckered and hands twisting. But it was her suffering eyes that caught me.

"Oh that's not it, that's not it at all! It's not enough that you strike the right keys. You've got to feel it. Here, let me show you."

It was the first and only time I heard her on a real piano. She played my piece so that the boat I was imagining while playing rocked like a cradle in tune with her swaying body, very slowly at first then *moderato*. I could not know what she saw with the last three bars; I only remember they made me quite breathless with their beauty, and wondering how the piano could ever be played that soft. It was impossible to do that piece with frenzy, yet I thought she was going crazy. Later, when the piece had been replayed (nervously by me) at least six times to her satisfaction, she told me that "nothing could not be perfected with a lot of practice." When she said that, I remember wishing for the first time that she had touched me, or smiled, or done anything to show approval.

Whenever I played the piano again after that, I would first close my eyes in order to get into focus whatever the music suggested. It was not always easy, because many of my pieces had numbered titles and so did not hint at what I should imagine while playing but the lesson paid off, I think, for my piano teacher was to tell me that I had acquired a feel for music. Perhaps because I felt I owed Inday Lulay something, or perhaps just because I was the eldest and thought there were reasons for everything, I found myself scolding sisters, brother, and cousins alike who had started to cry out, sometimes for lack of any new games to play, *Si Lulay, buang!* in that merciless way that children always adopt when they do not know any better.

One day (I was 12 then), a week before the town fiesta on Sept. 29, Insi Daya, who could be as cranky as an old maid when crossed, was inside Inday Lulay's sanctum and could be heard from the seaside sala demanding angrily from her sister where some papers were. None of us kids knew what it was about, but we heard Inday Lulay weeping

uncharacteristically right afterwards. We had advanced to the piano room out of curiosity but we dared not peep through the hole for, being subject to many crying bouts ourselves, we knew hot to respect sorrow. Our grand-aunt from the other side could still be heard from across the footbridge to the well, where we were taking turns at bathing and playing laundry, two days after the incident. The helpers had washed and cleaned our curtains and furniture covers, and we were busy hiding the soap from each other or filling and emptying our makeshift *batya* with rags and water. We were not bothered at all then, although we sensed an emotional cloud in the air.

I was disturbed later in the day by curdling words between Inday Lulay and Insi Daya. As I was watching the cook churn the *torta* mix with hands and feet on a contraption I did not know how to use yet, I was surprised, even shocked, to find my single grand-aunt shouting like any fishwife.

"Ha! Don't you talk to me about selling my land, I'll let you do it over my dead body."

"And how do you expect to go on—by sponging on your sisters? You know very well my sons' families are growing and they'll be wanting their share soon. Don't you let us keep you forever! And after all, what good will that land do you when you've got nothing on it but grass and flowers and that ridiculous waterless fountain? Not to mention that dilapidated *kamalig!*"

"You're jealous because I was always Tatay's favorite, remember? But I'll find a way. Who knows, I might even get married. I'll find me a rich widower or retiree from America."

Uy, Doña Paula, and who's going to court you this late, except maybe Lugdoy? Only a miracle can do it."

"Shut up, will you? Just wait and see, I'll survive you yet."

Immediately after that I heard the bang of her communicating door. Our Nanay Petra did not seem as upset about it as Insi Daya, but they were both seen to confer a few times at several points along the footbridge, which ran parallel to the house. Much much later it occurred to me that Nanay and Insi had been planning to sell Inday Lulay's share of land adjacent to our garden in order to secure her upkeep, for they said she herself was helpless where money matters were concerned.

The day of the fiesta fulfilled all our senses and we were in the midst of everything—the carnival, the parades, the visitors, the programs, even the dances for grown-ups. We could hardly escape them, anyway, since the *municipio* and the plaza, centers of activities, were just a stone's throw away. But sometime in the afternoon, a conspicuous quiet fell among the

guests in our house for Inday Lulay emerged from her room and trailed down the stairs bedecked in finery—with jewelry, silver combs, a golden beaded bodice, even a mantilla—and looked so much like a peacock that my brother Joaquin could not help giggling, although he froze as soon as Inday Lulay's fiery gaze fell on him.

Thus she strutted past the plaza and the gaping crowd towards the *convento* where she demanded an audience with the parish priest. Nanay Petra later enlightened me on that day when our Inday Lulay became the laughingstock of the town. For she has insisted on waiting inside the church on the front pew beside a kneeling curate, for the appearance of Señor San Miguel, patron saint of Candabong. She had told everyone that the night before, the Archangel had visited her in a dream revealing that he would come the next day to grant believers any requests they have of him. Naturally, no live angel stepped out of the lifelike bronze statue on the altar. I then understood why Inday Lulay never set foot outside our gate again.

A month afterwards the land was turned over to the Chinise merchant Kima who had coveted it for a retail store because of its strategic location. All the plants were uprooted to make way for the building, but the fountain was allowed to stand to become gradually a loafers' *estambayanan*. Many times as I walked past that store I would wish it could be peeled off one's sight like the scabs on my legs. I never bought anything from Kima if I could help it, and would rather walk a little farther to the corner where our cook's daughter had built a smaller store. My sisters and brother had no qualms though, and would get their supply of rubber band and candy the more convenient way.

In my last year in elementary school, my father had promised to send me to an exclusive girls' school in the city if I graduated at the top of the class. In my excitement, I forgot my piano practice and concentrated on books. My parents as usual left me alone. Towards schoolyear's end, I started practicing my valedictory piece aloud in the piano room, which everybody conceded was *my* sanctum, forgetting that there was a live metronome only a wall away. Though she did not come through the communicating door nor directly comment on my delivery, Inday Lulay still would stamp her foot to correct my phrasing. On March 12 I knew she was listening to my speech over the microphne and across the plaza, where the exercises were held. That night, when I came to arrange my gifts on the piano, there on top lay a beautiful handcopied score of *Liebestraum*. Tracing the delicate flourish of the title with my finger, I knew it was from her. I took my bouquet of white roses and laid it by her door. The next day it was gone.

I was away four years in high school, and I rarely came home except for Christmas and summer vacations. Papa or Mama would visit me now and then with news of home, bringing fruits and vegetables from the farm. A few times I asked them about Inday Lulay and was told that she had gotten more and more strange. She was sick physically, too, with wracking coughs on account perhaps of night exposure to the cold in the garden. Mama said they often found her wandering there, sometimes past midnight. One morning, they found her asleep inside the *kamalig*. But it was Nanay Petra who died in my third year in high school.

When I came home with the prospect of study at the State University during the fourth summer respite, I was 16 and my time was crammed with visiting friends from the city as well as the exciting experience of first love. I had completely abandoned my piano playing, and spent many hours instead at the beach, picnicking and often swimming despite my natural deep tan. I never saw Inday Lulay that summer though I heard her cough the few times I was in the piano room to get and return some albums I was showing to my friends. I remember looking for our peephole but it was already well-covered. My sister Naty (who eventually became a pharmacist herself) told me that Inday Lulay had caught my brother peeping once and promptly stuck thick plaster through it. She had also taken to dining from a tray inside her room, and a maid would bring and get the tray back each time. Insi Daya often complained about how much she was spending for her sister's medicine. Her husband, a rural doctor, attended to Inday Lulay at the time.

In Manila, I was preparing for my future for a total of six years.

I had rediscovered the piano, reviewing the pieces I knew by heart and tackling Grieg as well as Stravinsky on my own since I couldn't afford to enroll in the School of Music. During this time I fervently wished I was back in the piano room with Inday Lulaya over my shoulder. I was doing well, however, for I won twice in the music contest held each year among the girls' dorms. Papa and Mama bought me a year's subscription to the *Readers Digest* for a prize the first time and a whole new wardrobe the second time, but I did not really care much for either.

When I was in my junior year, my father died of leukemia. We knew he was sick since my freshman year, and the two trips to Manaila were as much to see a specialist as to hold our reunions. I naturally came home for the last rites. Inday Lulay appeared then in the seaside sala, still erect but with sombre grey on her head. There was nothing even a little queer about her as I was led to believe; in fact, she was probably getting better for I didn't hear her cough at all. She wouldn't take anything from the table though, even when all visitors had emptied their places and returned with

glasses of wine. I ventured near her and asked how she was. I thought at first that she had not recognized me for she just stared at me a long time. Then she rose and walked slowly towards the streetside part of the house though the piano room. I hesitated but finally followed her, wanting to make sure that she remembered me. When she opened the communicating door, I asked softly:

"Inday Lulay, don't you know me anymore?"

She turned on her heels and in a small rasping voice replied:

"After all, Paula, it has been seven long years." With that she swiftly closed the door, but not before I had a glimpse of faded beribboned roses in the last bottle on her shelf. Then I realized that I hadn't kissed her hand as I had all the other grand-relatives who had come to the vigil.

That was the last time I saw her. That same year, when I was back among my books in Manila, I got a wire that Inday Lulay too had gone. So Insi Daya had survived her after all. I didn't have the time to come home, but I offered Mass at the Chapel of the Holy Sacrifice. When the Mass was over, I was surprised to find that the candle I held was burnt up. For although its drippings were all over my fingers, I hadn't felt the pain.

Sands & Coral 1977-1978

Marjorie M. Evasco

1981 Editor

Marjorie M. Evasco is an award-winning poet. Born on 21 September 1953 in Maribojoc, Bohol, she obtained her Bachelor of Arts from Divine Word College of Tagbilaran in 1973, her Master of Arts in Creative Writing from Silliman University in 1982, and her Ph.D. in Literature from De La Salle University-Manila in 1998. She became a member of the faculty of De La Salle University, while completing her doctoral degree. For many years, she was director of the Bienvenido N. Santos Creative Writing Center. A SEAWrite awardee in 2010 and an Ani ng Dangal awardee of the NCCA in 2011, Evasco has garnered awards for her books. Five of her books have won the Manila Critics Circle's National Book Awards: for poetry (*Dreamweavers* and *Ochre Tones*); for oral history (*Six Women Poets: Inter/Views*, co-authored with Edna Zapanta-Manlapaz); for biography (*A Life Shaped by Music: Andrea O. Veneracion and the Philippine Madrigal Singers*); and for art (*Ani: The Life and Times of Hermogena Borja Lungay: Boholano Painter*). She has published poetry in English and Spanish translations by Latin American poets, including *Skin of Water* and *Fishes of Light/Peces de Luz* (co-authored by Alex Feites). She contributed poetry in groundbreaking anthologies like *Agam: Filipino Narratives of Uncertainty in Climate Change* (2015) and *Sustaining the Archipelago: Philippine Ecopoetry Anthology* (2018). She edited an anthology of memoirs, *The Bohol We Love* (2017), which was a finalist in the 2017 National Book Awards for the anthology in English. Recently launched in Bohol was the biography *Valentina's Valor: Stories of the Life and Times of Valentina Galido Plaza* (2018). She has been translated and published in German, Spanish, Japanese, Chinese, Kannada, Vietnamese, Romanian and Estonian, and her poetry has been published in different parts of Asia, Europe and North America. She has also received various international fellowships, among them a writing fellowship at the International Retreat for Writers in Hawthornden Castle, Midlothian, Scotland in 1991; a Rockefeller grant and residency in Bellagio, Italy in 1992; the 10th Vancouver International Writers' Festival in 1997; International Writing Program fellowship at the University of Iowa in 2002; a University of Malaya Cultural Centre grant in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in 2003; the Wordfeast 1st Singapore International Literary Festival in 2004 and the Man Hong Kong Literary Festival in 2006; and the XVIII International Poetry Festival in Medellin, Colombia in 2008. Evasco credits Bohol for her literary roots and serves as resource person for Bohol's literary heritage. As director and panelist in various workshops, she is committed to promoting creative writing in Binisaya and English. Evasco is also an Associate of the Edilberto and Edith Tiempo Creative Writing Center in Silliman University.

Animasola (One Who Flies Alone)

It was never a question of grandeur
But of some secret power, hinted at by the
Slight quiver of wings before the flight
At the thought of conquering vertigo or the fear
Of being lost in that sea of blue intensity,
And the unforeseen encounter with angels.
There is always a point to be reached
Higher than moon or brightness star, the unmarked
Heights that counterpoint this rootedness,
Magnetic pull ascertained by the heart
At the sight of of these farther reaches.
We would leave the learned and loved things
Of previous flights, maps rendered useless
By another desiring, for worlds change accordingly.
It is our personal universe, this impenetrability:
Ourselves not knowing what alien moons and stars
Are in the dark of this not knowing ourselves.
"We should not wait but seek to seize
That sudden luminosity." It took me a while
To learn to look the sun in the eye,
To burn and then to fly.

And there is no question of going back
Only a matter of going further,
Each perspective of height presenting
The pale landscape of the past reflecting
The peculiar glow of memory: our gestures
Were horizonal then, and intimate---
Hands clasping, arms locked, bodies melting,
In recognition of one's own kin, this human feasting.
But in this spaciousness, self unmoored
There is one theme to flying: to fly alone.
For in the rarer regions only dying stars collide
And survival lies in the tracks of one's singular orbit.
It is solitude that is the necessary caliper

With which we chart our present reach
Or measure the feel of infinity.
"If we are to fly in no time at all
From here to the eternity of stars,
The exact measure of the distance spanned
Is the point where we are."
The wings of the luminous bird beat alone,
I felt it, even now, deep in my bones.

No more is it a question of defying gravity
But of skies waiting. Self spread between
Wingtip to wingtip, the beak perfectly aligned
With its aim, we probe the heavens
For dust particles, debris of ancient explanations
For this longing to explore worlds and know them,
As self is, by name, known.
We can never foretell what it is that waits;
We are divers, respecting our fear for the vast and deep
Yet knowing, back of this fear is our own daring
For coral kingdoms outspread and glowing
Or sirens chanting secrets between the reeds.
But again, we may find a white nothingness only
And our eagle eyes go blind with knowing
Such fatal purity. Perhaps, we shall fall upon
The void of black stars and we shall feel them
When we lose all sense of being
And this precious luminosity of wings
Is swallowed in a quiet singing.

Sands & Coral 1981-1982

Antonino S. de Veyra

1989 and 1997 Co-editor

Antonino Salvador Soria de Veyra—or Nino—is assistant professor of the Department of Humanities at the University of the Philippines Mindanao in Davao City, handling courses for their programs in Communication and Media Arts and English (Creative Writing). He earned his Bachelor of Arts in Literature from the University of the Philippines Visayas [Tacloban College] in 1987. He soon became a graduate fellow at Silliman from 1987 to 1989, and completed his Master of Arts in English (Creative Writing), also from Silliman, in 2001. He also received writing fellowships from the Silliman University National Writers Workshop, the University of the Philippines National Writers Workshop, and the All-Visayas Centennial Writing Workshop at Tacloban College. At UP Mindanao, De Veyra has served various designations, including Chair of the Department of Humanities (2004 -2014), Chair of the UP Mindanao Chancellor's Committee for Culture and the Arts (2013-2016), Senior Editor of the *Banwa Journal* (June 2014 to May 2015), and the Director of the University of the Philippines Mindanao Interactive Learning Center/Learning Resource Center (October 2015 to May 2016). His literary works have seen print in various publications—*Sands & Coral, Caracoa 19, Dagmay/ Sun.Star Davao*, and *ETAS Journal*. Some of his poems in Waray have been included in anthologies edited by Merlie Alunan, including *Our Memory of Water: Words after Haiyan* (Ateneo de Naga University Press, 2016) and *Tinalunay: Hinugpong nga Panurat nga Waray* (University of the Philippines, 2017). He is a resource speaker for communication research and panelist in various writing workshops. These past years (2018-2021), Nino has been busy with his academic requirements for a PhD at the University of the Philippines Dilliman.

At a Writers Workshop

I draw the drapes a little and peer
Out: the sky is dark, rain starts to fall.
I cannot hear its sound---
Leaves twitch at every drop, the pool ripples.
The frogs in the rain play, hopping around.

Cased in the thick glass that mirrors back
The room: I see myself, the other writers,
The glow from our cigarettes, ribbons of smoke
Rising up to a cloud hanging over our heads.

Like a cartoonist, I imagine balloons of words ---
Please string and fly them, light as poetry.
Someone, croaking a protest, with angry fingers
Stabs the air, and the words drop into
Mouths that open and close and close open close:

I remember another rainy afternoon,
Waist-deep in a pond, I saw on a lotus leaf
A frog snap at a fly—its tongue a blur of quick.
So unlike me with a temper, and net in hand.
In Zoology class I cut open
The specimen I finally caught, found its tongue
Shriveled, gray like the sky above the factory
Beside the swamp where the frogs have a field day
With falling ashes.
So I cast off my sewn-up
Frog in a paper boat—and a chorus of mating calls
Was struck and my prayer, rain on paper.

The rain has stopped but the frogs are still out.
I can almost hear them singing to each
Their need and love. O listen ---
outside it is raining poems.

Sands & Coral 1989

Noel C. Villalba

1995 Editor

Rev. Noel C. Villalba was editor of the *Sands & Coral* in 1995. He came to Silliman University in 1967 to pursue a degree in Journalism. As a student, he served as editor of *The Weekly Sillimanian* in 1970-1971. He stopped his schooling, and from 1971 until 1977, at the height of martial rule in the Philippines, he conducted organizational work for the College Editors Guild of the Philippines [CEGP] in the Visayas. Between 1978 and 1979, he became the advertising manager of *The Gold Ore*, a community newspaper in Baguio City, and was a freelance writer for Who Magazine of Bulletin Today, as well as for *Times Journal*. From 1988 to 1994, he was director for Documentation for Action Groups in Asia, Christian Conference, doing training programs for Asian documentation action groups and communicators. He finally graduated with a degree in mass communication in 1995, and obtained his Master of Divinity in 1998, all from Silliman University. He was a member of the faculty of the School of Communication until 1998. In 2007-2010, he served as University Chaplain for Silliman then became the project coordinator for Silliman on Air for DYSR in 2010-2012 while doing part time teaching at the College of Mass Communication, Divinity School, and the Graduate School. Today, he works as Senior Minister at the United Church of Christ in the Philippines [UCCP] in Cagayan de Oro. He has also served as a member of the Board of Trustees of Silliman. His works have appeared in other non- literary magazines in the Philippines, Hong Kong, Sri Lanka, and Malaysia.

Himalayan Miracle

For words and air I gasp
when crested heights unfold a grandeur
and suck the breath away

Somewhere deeply a verse
strains to fly and aims
to span Himal's commanding frame

and in its leaden weight
constructs a meaning that downward spins
like wind's tail.

How does one scale the Himalayas
with mortal form, let alone with words,
that do not shrivel in rarefied air?

> With pure spirit the heights say!
> Let your eyes behold
> the gleaming crown of Earth
> a miracle at play.
>
> In the interlude.

For this is also Siva's shrouded home:
from whence he breathes and ravages the mindscape
with nail and tooth.

Hence, let me swiftly,
steal away and strike the words from page
before the miracle crumbles

in scraps of truth.

Sands & Coral 1995

Dinah Rose M. Baseleres

1996 Editor

Dinah Rose Maxino Baseleres became *Sands & Coral* editor in 1996 after serving as editor-in-chief of *The Weekly Sillimanian*. In 1997, she graduated *magna cum laude* with a degree in Physics from Silliman University, where she was also awarded the Most Outstanding Student of the Year, the BPI National Service Award, and the University Talent Award. After a stint in banking, she pursued a nursing degree and graduated cum laude at Florida Southwestern College where she delivered the graduation speech in 2011. In March 2015, Baseleres-Clemente (her married name) became part of the Nursing Honor Society and in the following year, she became a member of the Academy of Neonatal Nursing. She then obtained her Master of Science in Nursing Education at Nova Southeastern University.

Child

To Stephanie, 10, of Kentucky, USA

Cotton candy clouds she sees
through heart lenses cut from stone
stone from dwarf's mines. she smiles
and chases dew taking flight.

there are stars in the sand and
candy in young leaves, fairies
on flowers by the roadside.

she sees angels' wings floating
in miniature pods, mud settling
like hens laying golden eggs:
warm, smooth and lovely. she sings

songs butterfly monks taught her
way way up in a castle
of dried-up dung and dead grass.
live, grass. she hums to herself.

there are worlds underneath ponds,
frog princes skating on slime,
a million treats in a dime!

Sands & Coral 1996

Shielfa B. Alojamiento

1997 Editor

Shielfa B. Alojamiento obtained her Bachelor of Arts in English (Major in Creative Writing) from Silliman University. She was fiction editor for *Sands & Coral* in 1996 and editor-in-chief in 1997 and in 2001. She is currently based in Davao City where she heads Hags Incorporated, a research group that works with women and minority Moro tribes in Mindanao. Alojamiento is often tapped by Mindanao State University in Marawi City as visiting lecturer or workshop facilitator in various activities organized by its English Department and graduate school. She has also served as an instructor at the Ateneo de Davao University. Her poems and stories have appeared in *Davao Harvest 2* (edited by Ricardo M. De Ungria and Tita Lacambra Ayala), and she has also published articles on the plight of women in various journals. Her play "Boy-Gel Ang Gelpren ni Mommy" was staged at the Cultural Center of the Philippines as part of the Virgin Labfest in 2009, directed by Carlo Garcia. She won the 2002 Palanca Award (2nd Prize - Cebuano Division) for her short story "Ang Mga Babaye sa Among Baryo." She has also been involved with non-government organizations for projects that empower Badjao and Tausug women in Sulu and in other communities.

Cousin Pol

He died when he was twenty-five. I was at some far-flung university, trying to finish a degree when Mother wrote: They had him buried in the forest.

I packed up and headed home, furious. Mother cried when she saw me: hair stringy with dust, clothes grimy from the long ride, weighed done by boxes of things undone. "What has happened to you? What has happened to you?" Grandmother was kneeling before the altar, closing her novena and fanning herself with one end of her patadyong. "He never gave me repose when he was alive...Oh most merciful God..."

Not that it shattered us. In those years, Death stayed close, like a waiting friend. And each time we only said, Now God has taken him away. Now, he can rest. As though the dead were just silent numbers walking by.

Cousin Celia was happy, triumphant. As though what happened to Cousin Pol was thunderbolt she had called forth from heaven. She kept on laughing and muttering to herself. "Huh. He deserved it. He deserved it..."

She had always [blamed] Cousin Pol. She even held him responsible for her epilepsy. "He frightened me a lot when we were children, that's why I got sick." He liked jumping right in front of her, his eyes red, blazing, his face and arms charcoaled, his fangs bared, and his laughter devilish. She would cry trembling, while he rolled away laughing, vicious. Aunt Mely had a hard time trying to clear Cousin Pol of her accusations. "Of course, Polding did not cause it! The doctor said something went wrong with the communication system in her brain! Not Polding!"

She couldn't stand Cousin Pol. When he was home, she would hurry away to our house and fidget around the kitchen. It annoyed Aunt Mely. "As though Polding would do her any harm." By and by we would find her at the back of our yard, her eyes rolled up, her mouth twisted, saliva drooling out, and a horrible sound that seemed to come from the pit of her guts issued forth in rising crescendo as her whole body jerked and twisted uncontrollably. It was an ugly spectacle that always sent Grandmother scampering away and crying for help from the neighbors—which

displeased us: Grandmother could not keep things to the family; in moments of crisis she sold out.

We were a little clannish. Between Grandmother's and Aunt Mely's houses, dishes, shirts, slippers interchanged almost inadvertently. Grandmother would always blame Cousin Celia. "Who else could have taken it? No one else sneaks into the house!" She was never wrong. For in a little while, Aunt Mely would come limping, with a twig for a cane, bringing with her one missing item or another.

"Don't mind Celia, Nanay. You know that she loses her mind from time to time."

She had a way of slipping in and out of both houses without being noticed, Aunt Mely and I would scrounge the neighborhood to look for her, only to find her by the highway, trying to crush a stone with her foot. If we tried to take her by the arm she would brush us aside and walk to the house ahead of us.

We didn't really expect much from her: she was sick. It was Cousin Pol we worried about. He isolated himself, never taking the slightest interest in the family's affairs. He seemed to have locked himself inside himself, inaccessible to us all. While Cousin Celia piled bundles and bundles of firewood and hauled pail after pail of water up the stairs to fill the big earthen jar in the kitchen, he never budged from his perch on a bench. Neither did Uncle Jaime ever consider asking him to help with the work in the farm.

Most of the day he just stayed in one corner of Aunt Mely's yard, gazing at the vacant lot across the round and spinning records on the phonograph. He had quite a file of 45s—lent him by a high school buddy now in college; the rest he bought out of the money he earned from the occasional housepainting he did for the neighbors. On Sundays when both Aunt Mely's and Grandmother's houses would be empty as everyone turned in to the barrio chapel for Mass, he would be sitting under the star apple tree, sipping coffee or water, and listening to songs he played on the turntable: the last of father's property which hadn't gone to the shop or in someone else's living room after he shot himself in the head.

"And why are you not at Mass, an-an?"

"I went! But the seats were full!"

"Full of God, An-an? Full of God?"

I would roost there on Aunt Mely's balcony—to escape my sister's broom which she wielded furiously right above my head when I sat on the kitchen table—while Cousin Pol sat downstairs on the bench, his eyes riveted somewhere.

This is for all the lonely people
Thinking that life has passed them by
Don't give up until you drink from the silver cup
And ride the highway to the sky

I would go down to fetch the pencil I had dropped between the bamboo slats and he would hold me by the tail of my hair and pinch me on the elbow.

I Me Me Mine!

I Me Me Mine!

"Aymememay, Aymememay. That's all everybody is thinking of, An-an, Aymememay. Do you understand me, An-an? Do you understand me?"

But the songs died down. In the year that followed, he was sent for Army training. At that time, all the boys in the neighborhood were enlisting to fight the Moros. Two of our other cousins had already died in battles and we thought it a shame if no one went to avenge their deaths. I was by then enrolled in an all-Catholic high school. On afternoons during the flag retreats, our principal always told us, "Go straight to your homes. Anytime now the war in Buldon might spill over to our town."

We who lived in the barrios would walk to the terminal in groups, our parent's tales about the war magnified in our imagination by our credulity. Sometimes we would pass by the town plaza and find people milling about, crowding around some scene there: dead Moros with their noses and ears cut off, and their eyes gouged out.

I seldom saw Cousin Pol in those years. At school I was doing badly, playing peekaboo with my teachers, hiding Wakasan komiks between newspaper pages at the library while my classmates broke windows and chairs. We were a boisterous lot, sitting through our Religion classes, memorizing all the books in the Old Testament and our ancestors names, and making fun of our teachers, the saints, and the crucifix on the wall. Then my schoolmates turned to other things—Jonh Travolta, Hagibis, VST and Company, marijuana. I was so ignorant. The boys would deck me

weeds and flowers while their girlfriends looked and laughed and I would go home scratching my neck, back, and arms. As soon as I got to our house I would run to Aunt Mely's, take out the phonograph, and spin Cousin Pol's records.

Imagine if there's no Heaven
It isn't hard to do
Nothing to live or die for
And no religion, too
"Hoy, go home! Mother wants you. Go home!"
You can say that I'm a dreamer
But I'm not the only one

Cousin Pol came and went. And each time, he didn't stay long. He had grown more aloof, more detached from our everyday life, and had taken to drinking and fighting. Coming home a little past midnight, he would bring in disquiet as he forced the door open and break in raving about the Mayor and the Mayor's son. The house would quiver with his weight as he strode across the bamboo floor, past the recumbent bodies under the mosquito net. He would stumble onto the floor, get up cursing the slats, kicking at objects that blocked his way. Upon reaching the kitchen's end he would be flinging pots and kettles as he groped around the stove for the match and the gas lamp.

"Where's your hot water? You don't even have hot water? Putangina."

Uncle Jaime would lie still through all the tumult, too weary from work and too weak to get up and enforce whatever authority remained in him.

Some other nights he would come to our house, asking for a Band-Aid and hot water, and I would get up, let him into the kitchen, make a fire and heat the kettle. He would rage against the war, against the government, and against the Moros. He would chuckle as he talked, wince, blink, fall silent, his eyes mirroring every place and emotion he recalled.

"You think life is easy in the Army, Ana? You think life is easy in the Army?"

"You don't know the place, you don't know the people. The ground is wet, your stomach is empty, and mosquitoes are feasting on you. You think that easy, Ana?"

"You want to go down to the plains to buy food, but you cannot, as you might be ambushed. While your officers are having a good time in the city, issuing orders from the cabarets and pocketing the money that should have gone for your supplies. You think that easy, Ana?"

"And the women. Putang, mga Mora. If they looked at you, hah! They'd give you a glass of water and you wouldn't know if they'd spat at it. They hate us, Ana. They hate us."

I would not know what to tell him. As much as I could, I would not look at him. I did not like the cut on his brow; I did not like the sight of wounded men. I would stay close to the fire until I would singe my face and tears welled up in my eyes as smoke got into them. A complete uselessness would strike me—aware of the opaqueness of my back facing him, while he was pouring out his anger, his hurt.

He would shove aside the face towel and bowl of hot water which I laid on the table to wash his bruises with. I would stand there, kettle and cup in hands, feeling too small, too weightless for the mountains and the terrains he was raging against.

"Do you understand me, Ana? Do you understand me?"

I left my hometown in the month of May and went south, to take advantage of a government scholarship given away to so-called poor and deserving students—against my family's strongest fears of the Moros. I lost track of Cousin Pol as I got immersed in my new world: bright boys, brighter girls, royal houses, walking princesses, and a thriving bazaar of brass plates and brightly colored fabrics amidst a rubble we called Marawi City. In between classes, I and fellow Catholics would steal out of the campus and ride a jeep to the city to buy a malong, a new bedcover, a tablecloth, or any antique. We would keep our eyes down as we walked the garbage-filled streets, afraid to chance upon spiteful eyes. We would enter the deepest crevices, tread along blackened fences between dripping houses, and peer through the doors of dilapidated mosques. As we climbed back the stairs that led up to the highway and to the University, we always felt as though we just stepped on a prohibited place. Mother would deluge me with letters, full of worries and full of God, with a little about relatives here and there. Cousin Pol, she said, had been reassigned in an area in Lanao Sur. If I found him, I should tell him about his mother's illness.

On weekends on my way to Iligan for a movie with friends, I would peep into the faces of Army men flagging down our jeep for inspection, half-fearing and half-hoping that I would see Cousin Pol's face from under those green caps. By then I was growing aware of the road of rebellion which Cousin Pol was trying to find. And the sight of soldiers on the road trying to look unafraid, too far away from their homes and following someone else's orders always filled me with fright. At the dorm at night my roommates and I would jump out of the upper decks and duck under the windows as machine guns roared from not so far. I would wonder if Cousin Pol fired a shot or if he was hit by a bullet.

The campus was afrenzy with ideas. In my third year, I dropped my Literature courses and joined the rowdier class of Political Science students who addressed their professors by their first names and took up Marcos's economic policies as though they were conversing with his cabinet ministers. The department chair blinked when I told her I had shifted to another course because I wanted to be a lawyer. She understood what I meant, she said, but feared I had walked into the wrong place. Why not take Accounting, instead, or Philosophy, even English, she suggested. She still took me in perhaps to pad the dwindling number of students in the department that made it to the graduation rites. The course had a high dropout rate, and not all the dropouts were flunkers.

My classmates were motley rebels: surrenderees who claimed to have carried mats and thermoses for MNLF commanders; politicians' sons who sympathized with NPA insurgents; Catholic devotees who preached about Muslim-Christian unity; and unsleeved, skimpy-skirted young things who defied both foggy weather and the code of ethics of the newly-proclaimed Islamic city which at the time had just begun to veil itself black. I was becoming scarce at home and Mother's letters were growing more sorrowful. She finally left house and work behind, took the boat, and saw me in the dorm.

She brought news of Cousin Pol having deserted the Army with charges of insubordination lodged against him. He had also run away with his gun. Cousin Celia fell from the stairs, and Aunt Mely's arthritis was getting worse. Sister was in Manila, taking her Midwifery board exam. "The phonograph was sold. For her fare and for your Aunt Mely's medication." I listened to all her stories and promised to be home during the semestral break.

I did go home, and bumped into Grandmother running to the highway; she was in such a tremulous state that she did not recognize me. "Si Polding! Si Polding! Guinapanguita sang mga tawo!"

Armed emissaries had been frequenting both our houses, throwing Grandmother into a perpetual state of panic. My sister, by the time, already a licensed midwife, was faithfully monitoring Grandmother's blood pressure. She and mother had to drag the poor old woman out of a neighbor's house each time, for she ranted endlessly about Cousin Pol's night visits. My brothers, undistressed, were having a good time, scaring Grandmother and getting a good laugh out of her nervousness.

Cousin Celia had become unusually pale and even more taciturn. She did not want to see me or accept my discarded shirts and skirts. She had contusions on her arms, bruises on her face, and a fresh stitch across the chin. A tooth had been broken and her lower lip mutilated as though a slice of flesh had been taken away. Hers was an irreparably damaged face that seemed to portend an ugliness that goes beyond physical deformity. She had stopped coming to our house and had refused to talk to anyone even in her monosyllables and abhorrent grunts. Mother said she had had a terrible fall from the window one noontime when Aunt Melly was trying to snatch some sleep and that since the night Cousin Pol appeared in the house and flung a chair and shoved her out of his way, she had been having frequent attacks.

Aunt Melly had a different story: She was seen by Cousin Pol's friend pacing around the barangay captain's house and had Cousin Pol informed. The night he sneaked into the house and accosted her, she glared at him, spat in his face and ran to the kitchen for a knife. He hit her and beat her until her mouth and nose bled and she turned toward the door screaming I'll tell the kapitan! I'll tell the kapitan! then fell down from the stairs convulsing.

Uncle Jaime sold half of his one-hectare farm, hired someone else to work the other half, and stalked the camps for weeks, haranguing Army officials in an attempt to work out a settlement of Cousin Pol's case. The task had somehow relieved him of the agony of having to go home each night to the fact of his elusive son, his hideous daughter, and his half-crippled wife.

Before I returned to the University, I saw Cousin Pol one last time. He was thinner, darker, angrier. A tremor of fear blurred his otherwise stolid

face—as though he was summoning all his furies to master himself and his despair.

"So you're going to be a lawyer, Ana" Hah. Are you going to put me in jail, too? Hah. I'm going to be a rebel, Ana. I'm going to be a rebel."

I went back to the University heavy with responsibility. In the classroom, the boys' religion was equality. I kept away from the boys and shut myself in the library, promising to defend the likes of Cousin Pol in courts. When a teacher got shot, I came out of the carrel and caught up with them holding a prayer rally under the falcatta trees. Then Mother wrote to tell me that Cousin Pol had burrowed himself in a remote mountain in Bukidnon, after shooting the mayor's son. By then I was in every place: straying into EDs and GDs, dropping by my thesis class, reading bestsellers, barging into peace forums. I was in a daze. When I went home, I stumbled into a clandestine conference at Aunt Mely's house.

Up to that time, the mayor's men had not stopped harassing the family, motoring around our houses and grabbing my brothers on their way to school, threatening and bribing them into revealing Cousin Pol's hiding place. The barangay captain had been paying Grandmother visits, soothing and warning her, offering to mediate and promising pardon if she could just ask her grandson to surrender. The night I came, she was snoring on the floor, her back to us. Beside her slept Cousin Celia, recuperating from an attack, her arm covering her eyes. The boys sat in between their elders, their arms on their knees, looking serious and responsible. Uncle Jaime was most quiet, a trace of hope in his face, though his arms hung weaker and wearier.

There was a ripple of excitement that ran through everybody's faces as they whispered to me Cousin Pol's current state of affairs. He was now working as a security guard for a logging company in Bukidnon, they said, and had been adopted by a Bukidnon family in the mountains. Should anyone happen to come by, this is his new name and this is how he could be reached.

I wanted to go since there was nobody who could go. Auntie had difficulty getting up, and could not leave Cousin Celia alone. Uncle could not leave his crops; Sister had a job elsewhere, while Mother could not miss a day's wage on the farm. They all told me to go back to the University. "Stop getting yourself involved with things that has nothing to do with your future. A degree is still a degree."

I reported to my professor and I found out that our group thesis had been left unfinished as my three groupmates had disappeared from the campus. Harried, I buried myself in the library and plodded through the paperwork. Then mother wrote me about Cousin Pol's death.

They did not know how the Mayor found out, she said, but his security men managed to tie up with the police in Bukidnon and hunted Cousin Pol down. They pursued him across the forest and the dry riverbed and finally cornered him inside a culvert. His blood and brains splattered on the cement wall, one of the Mayor's men, a neighborhood bum who swore not having fired a shot at Cousin Pol, had recounted. The Bukidnon woman with whom he lived was crying inconsolably, saying Anak ku! Anak ku!

The barangay captain paid Grandmother one last visit and told her that the Mayor's men could have spared Cousin Pol's life if he had agreed to surrender. But he fired back, he said, and the men had to shoot him to defend their lives. She had stopped running to the neighbor's houses and had turned to praying all day before the altar, crying and whimpering, and wiping her tears with her patadyong.

"Oh Merciful Father, forgive us sinners all, bless Polding that his soul may find rest, that we may not sin again…Oh Most Merciful Mother…"

I went over to Aunt Mely's and told Cousin Celia of the details of her brother's death. She was incandescent with hatred, with happiness: "Hah. I could have gouged his eyes myself…"

Sands and Coral 1997
(dedicated to E.K.T.)

Victor John T. Padilla

1997 [Special Issue] Co-editor

Victor John T. Padilla was born in Cebu but grew up in Iloilo City, and studied creative writing in Silliman University. As a student, he was president of the Order of the Golden Palette, a scriptwriter for Miss Silliman, and a member of the Creative Writing Program and the Society of Discourse. He was also a fellow of the Silliman University National Writers Workshop in 1991. His first novel came out mid-2021, entitled *The Flores de Mayo Rebellion of 1879*.

Coming to Waterloo Beach

To discourse on blind waters when
We see them feeling with nervous waves a beach,
Boulders, barnacle-hoard;
We must touch the ocean where we can,
Haen of poisonfish, unchronicled monsters,
That keeps a secret sacred to man;
And if the god of sight would grant
A second, make us watch
The ocean's vastness in the palm
Of our hand, to see through ciphers
And breach a language, so an unspeakable
Truth finally shown its face
Could be understood
Then banish us without clue or story
From its presence when the ocean
Once more becomes what it is.

Sands & Coral 1997
Voices in the Wilderness: Writers in Their Environment

Douglas C. Crispino

1997 [Special Issue] and 2001 Co-editor

Douglas C. Crispino is based in Digos City, Davao del Sur. While studying in Silliman University, he was co-editor of the *Sands & Coral* in 1997 and 2001. His literary works have been featured in *Dagmay* (the literary journal of the Davao Writers Guild) and *Davao Harvest 2* (edited by Ricardo M. De Ungria and Tita Lacambra Ayala). His fiction is also published in *Banwa*, a journal of the research communication section of the Office of Research at the University of the Philippines Mindanao.

Refining Flavors

Tightly capped for
two decades,
I recall with
a drunken blur
oaked trivialities
drunken silences
frozen tears
at family dinners.

Grace distilled for
two decades,
I opened with
a quick sobriety
bottled epiphanies
at family members
wondering where I
learned the brew.

Sands & Coral 2001–2002
The Silliman Centennial Issue

Ian R. Casocot

2002 and 2011-2013 Editor

Ian Rosales Casocot was born in Dumaguete City, and graduated from Silliman University High School in 1993. He earned his Bachelor of Arts in Mass Communication from the same university in 1999. He also earned his Master of Arts in English (Creative Writing) in 2012 from Silliman University, where he is a member of the faculty of the Department of English and Literature. He was founding coordinator of the Edilberto and Edith Tiempo Creative Writing Center. He was also a writing fellow at the Silliman University National Writers Workshop, the Iligan National Writers Workshop, and the University of the Philippines National Writers Workshop. He is the author of six collections of short stories, including *Old Movies and Other Stories* (National Commission for Culture and the Arts, 2005), *Beautiful Accidents* (University of the Philippines Press, 2011), *Heartbreak & Magic: Stories of Fantasy and Horror* (Anvil, 2011), *First Sight of Snow and Other Stories* (Et Al Books, 2014), *Don't Tell Anyone: Literary Smut* (co-authored with Shakira Andrea Sison, Anvil, 2017), and *Bamboo Girls* (Ateneo de Naga University Press, 2018). He has also published a biography, *Inday Goes About Her Day* (Locsin Books, 2012). *Beautiful Accidents* was nominated for the National Book Award in 2012. A critically acclaimed fictionist, he is a recipient of multiple awards, including the Don Carlos Palanca Memorial Award, the NVM Gonzales Prize, the PBBY-Salanga Writer's Prize, and the Fully-Booked/Neil Gaiman Philippine Graphic/ Fiction Awards. His novel *Sugar Land* was long-listed in the 2008 Man Asian Literary Prize. He has also edited *Cupful of Anger, Bottle Full of Smoke* (a collection of stories by Jose V. Montebon Jr.) in 2017, *Handulantaw* (a coffee-table book celebrating the arts and culture of Silliman University) in 2013, *Future Shock Prose: An Anthology of Young Writers and New Literatures* (a special fiction anthology of the *Sands & Coral*) in 2002; and *Celebration: An Anthology Commemorating the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Silliman University National Writers Workshop* (another special anthology of the *Sands & Coral*) in 2013. His works have also appeared in both local, national, and international periodicals. In 2010, he was Writer-in-Residence for the International Writing Program of the University of Iowa. He also does graphic design, and has produced the documentary *City of Literature*, directed by the Chinese filmmaker Zhao Lewis Liu. He is the Vice Chairperson for Literary Arts and Cinema for the Silliman University Culture and Arts Council as well as Execom Member of the National Committtee on Cinema for the National Commission for Culture and the Arts.

Old Movies

On good days, Mother comes out of her room in an Ava Gardner stupor. She is a sinewy siren with mischief in her hair. She has a glass of Scotch in her hand, daintily handled. She lights a cigarette, and blows smoke into my face, all the while keeping an ice maiden stance perfected after so many nights watching Kim Novak in Vertigo. Auntie Nida, on the way to the kitchen, pinches her ass while I gag from the smoke. "Stop that, Charo," Auntie Nida tells her, "the boy's only ten."

"The boy's a bastard," Mother quickly says. Then she laughs, the ashes from her cigarette spilling into the slinky black of her Holly Golightly dress. She ruffles my 10-year old hair and coos. "Don't you just look like your father, Jaggy? Named after him, too. Travis the bastard. All Travises are bastards, yes?"

"Charo! You're drunk," Auntie Nida hisses from far away, cloistered with her chopping boards and black-bottomed skillets. There are telltale odors of escabeche stealing into the room.

Sometimes, I catch a flicker of life in Mother's tipsy eyes. "Ma?" I ask.

"Ava," she will insist, her voice a bit more throaty.

It never usually lasts long. Ava Gardner fades away, always by the second glass of Scotch.

"Come on, Jaggy," she will then say. "I suppose we can watch a movie in my room now."

I do not remember much what sobriety can be. On bad days when she is not Ava Gardner, or Kim Novak, or Lolita Rodriguez, Mother is a weeping shadow, her room locked and curtained off—her darkness as dramatic as the lull before an evening's last full show. People call me Jaguar, like the wild animal, for no apparent reason except that under proper lighting, I can pass of as a young Philip Salvador. My name is Travis actually, because that was how my Auntie Nida remembered my father's name when I was born. This I learn later on.

My father's name was Travis, and he was a security guard over at the big pawnshop on San Juan Street. He had a motorcycle and a killer mustache, and told everybody he was once a taxidriver from Carcar, Cebu. Other than that, there was nothing else to remember about him except his face in a terrified blur—people said—as he cranked his way out of town on

his motorcycle the day after my mother's water broke during dinner at Lolong's house, and fainted dead away.

That was the first time everyone knew she was pregnant—and laboring. "But she was so small, her tummy was so small—she was wearing baggy clothes all the time. Nobody knew!" Auntie Nida would now say, if anybody at all cared to ask. Pregnancies were a dime a dozen.

Everyone thought mother just peed over the bad escabeche.

She had been sick the past few months, Auntie Nida remembered. Refused to eat anything, except hamburgers, which she ate constantly. She had grown pale and was dizzy most days—would not see the doctor even, despite Auntie Nida's constant nagging.

"I'm fine. I'm fine," Mother would say.

Nay Gloria, Mother's cousin, swore to Auntie Nida that mother was getting out of bed at the strangest hours of the night, to vomit at the upstairs toilet. Nay Gloria would ask, "Are you all right?"— rubbing her eyes to squint into the garish whiteness of the fluorescent tiles.

"I'm fine. I'm fine," Mother would say.

Food poisoning. And they would go back to bed, and Nay Gloria would think, yes, the fish was bad that evening at supper, and perhaps Nanang Conching could get fresher meat next time? Nanang Conching was getting careless. It was very difficult to get good help these days.

So nobody saw it coming. Not that night, when Lolong was telling everybody at the dinner table that the mayor of the town was up to some dirty tricks. "How the fool got elected is beyond me," he boomed, just as Nanang Conching was serving the food.

Auntie Nida was nagging along, too: "Perhaps you can eat proper, Charo, Inday. None of those hamburgers now. Bad for you. Bad meat—I hear they use cats for meat, those restaurants. Catburgers! Ay, the horror. Here, Nanang made some fish escabeche." She scooped a piece into mother's plate, and ladled a generous amount of the sweet brown sauce over it. Then Mother's water broke, and she fainted at the shock.

Lolong thundered. "What in God's name...?"

Nobody was able to eat the escabeche except Pudding the cat, but by that time everyone was in the car. Four in the back—mother, Auntie Nida, Nay Gloria, Lolita the neighbor—and three in the front—Dodong the driver, Lolong, and Gerardo, Lolita's son—, which made the whole car quite tight, but nobody seemed to notice or to care, except mother who was beginning to come around, and was screaming.

"Breathe now, Charo, like a good girl—huff, huff, huff—you wretched child! How can you be so stupid! Why didn't you tell anyone you were pregnant, for God's sake! Breathe!"

Mother went on screaming.

Lolong fumed. “It’s that Travis ba, inday? Putsa! Oh Jesus. Are you all right, inday? Are you? This is crazy. Where’s the hosp—?” Mother’s screams drowned out Lolong’s voice.

“Now, now, just breathe, okay?” Auntie Nida said. She was holding her arm over mother’s head, and wiping mother’s sweat from her brow with a tissue paper. “Are we there yet, Dong? Can’t you hurry, you turtle, you son of a bitch? Have you been drinking again?” “No, ma’am,” slurred Dodong the driver, as mother screamed some more.

In the grim rush, everything seemed like an old Buster Keaton sketch —slapstick tragedy, with no screen irises to fade off the scene, only breathing and cramped space to puncture the soundtrack of tires screeching, and mother screaming.

“Breathe now, Charo, breathe,” Auntie Nida said.

“I can’t breathe!” Mother screamed. “I can’t breathe!”

“Well then, maybe you should have thought of that before you got yourself knocked up,” Auntie Nida said angrily, and then in a beat: “Is Travis really the father?”

Mother screamed.

Nobody saw the car that came from the right of an intersection, rammed into them, and turned like tootsie roll melting on a hot day. Their car skidded to the sidewalk, and crashed, wrapping itself around an electric pole. But they were packed in so tight they just bounced a little bit —except for Dodong the driver who flew through the windshield like a paper plane and landed a good ten meters away with head cracked open like a ripe watermelon.

When the police and the ambulance arrived, which was a long time, I burst through with a wail, into the backseat. Nay Gloria would later tell me there was blood and glass everywhere. Mother had fainted again, and Auntie Nida was screaming. Lolong just kept muttering, “Travis... Sorry. Sorry...” before senile dementia took over, almost on the spot, and he was seen walking around the car, talking to his friend Mike, who had already been dead twelve years. Lolong was 62.

Auntie Nida named me Travis, “to make us all remember this lecheng yawa, this night,” but she couldn’t really think of anything by the time the ambulance screeched into the hospital, and the nurse was pestering her for the father’s family name. “Travis... Travis...,” she just said.

“That would be the father’s name, ma’am. And his last name?” “Peste, I don’t know his last name!”

“Okay, then. I take it the mother’s... single?”

Auntie Nida wheeled around like a mad bull. “The child’s a bastard, okay? Call him Travis, if you want, just like that bastard.” And like a willowy Delia Razon, she crumpled to the floor weeping and shaking.

“Is this story true?” I prod Nay Gloria when I’m old enough to listen, and ask. “It’s a little too dramatic.”

“Ambot, ‘noy, uy,” she shrugs. “If you don’t ask questions, you don’t get lies—or worse, the truth.” Nay Gloria sighs. “Then again, I could be lying. I don’t know ... Go ask your mother.”

But Mother is too busy being Bette Davis.

My name is Travis Silayan. I have my mother’s eyes. I don’t look like my father. I should know: I have seen him tucked away in my mother’s purse when she is in bed, endlessly and silently watching old movies on her TV, as if she is waiting for nothing to come from the cold of the night, and only has this vicarious comfort of the dark and the flickering pictures before her.

Cofradia. Casablanca. Gone With the Wind. Shane. The Betamax whirs away the silent nights.

The whirring is my first memory.

Sometimes she settles for something new, but the new ones are almost always violent and terrifying—“This is the romance of the present,” she murmurs to me when she remembers I am watching the movie with her.

We do not sit near each other.

“I named you after Robert DeNiro in Taxi Driver, you know,” she says. “You had killer eyes, like Travis Bickle.”

I am five. I do not know who Robert DeNiro is.

Later she tells me she doesn’t really know why my name is Travis. “Your Auntie Nida named you Travis. Go ask her,” she whispers, and turns away.

I have no memory of my mother not crying.

The man in the photo has chinky eyes and short hair gelled back. He slings a black coat over his shoulders, “like James Dean,” mother tells me. She does not care I am rifling through her things.

He poses with peacock masculinity astride his motorcycle—of a vintage model that I once have seen in one of those magazines. But it is an old photo. The colors are almost gone, and the borders are frayed with time. And the spot where his face is is somehow faded, but you can still see the tentative smile, and the way it crinkles his eyes.

I am six when I first see the picture, and I think the man strange. Nobody I know poses like that, not even Lino the doctor who comes now and then to check on Lolong and my increasingly frail mother. Not Noy Ishmael—Ishmá, Nanang Conching's husband—who has become our driver after Dodong. (Nobody is allowed to talk about the past.)

Certainly not Lolong who is doubled up most days in geriatric gravity, and snaps without his dentures at everybody, and demands to see Lolang night after night. "But Nanay's gone, 'Tay. You should know that," Auntie Nida tells him, as she leads him to bed.

"What do you mean, woman?" Lolong booms back. "She was just here a moment ago, showing me this beautiful child... this beautiful child..."

"Okay, 'Tay."

"Do you know that beautiful child's name?" "No, I don't, 'Tay."

"Aw, you wouldn't know, anyhow. It was Charo. Yes. Sweet Charo. She was a beautiful child."

"Okay, 'Tay."

"What are we talking about? Who are you, woman?" "It's Nida, 'Tay. Your eldest daughter."

"I don't have a daughter," he snaps. "I'm not even married yet." Auntie Nida looks old for her age.

"You are so Rock Hudson," Steve tells me. We are sitting up in bed past midnight, watching TNT. Marlon Brando is screaming "Stella!" and rips his shirt. Stella comes down the stairs, swaying in the wanton heat.

"And I suppose you want to be my Doris Day?" I tell him, as I catch my breath. In the darkness I reach for his hand. He gives me a squeeze. I tell him I love the way the bluish tint of the TV bounces off his curly hair.

Steve laughs, and turns serious. "Come on, Travis. This is the '90s, you know. You really don't have to hide who you are anymore, not from your family. Did you know that they published Ladlad last year, and it has since been flying off the shelves? I don't know what that tells you--"

I sigh. "It tells me nothing."

Steve reaches for the remote control and turns the TV mute. "Something. It tells you to be open is to be free."

I grin. "You talk like a goddam queenie activist." "Jesus, Jag, we're too old for these things."

"I am only 26."

"Well, I am telling you the truth. And you know why Jason Gould's gay."

"Who's Jason Gould?" "Barbra Streisand's son."

We laugh. "I think I know what you're talking about," I tell Steve. "Still, my mother's my mother."

"It's always someone's mother," Steve says.

In my constant nightmares, Mother becomes a crazed Joanne Crawford, immortalized by Faye Dunaway as Mommie Dearest, shouting "No more wirehangers!" I picture her with a glass of Scotch in her hand, spilling liquor down my face.

"Jag," Steve says after a while, "do you remember Humphrey Bogart in The Maltese Falcon? Do you remember he was cold and hard, like his name, Sam Spade? He beats up Joel Cairo—the Peter Lorre character—not just because he has to, but because Cairo carries a perfumed handkerchief. Get it? You know what that meant in a 1941 movie."

Maybe we watch too many movies. Just too many Judy Garland musicals.

I am eight when I manage to read the note at the back of the photograph: "To Charo. Sa atong kaugmaon, Travis"—and think how strange it is for this man to also have my name. But stranger things have been said to me. That I am a "special" child, for one thing.

"Like Jesus, you know?" Nay Gloria says, "Oh, you know what I mean..."

"No, I don't," I tell her.

I am exasperated with the evasiveness of adults. My Grade Two teacher, for example, tells me I am too far advanced from my other classmates. I have an urge to tell her that is what you get when you have watched Judy Holliday ten thousand times in Born Yesterday since you were five.

Nay Gloria sighs. She is still unmarried. She lives with a friend named Carmen.

"Okay, Jaguar," Nay Gloria is saying. "This is what I mean. You ask me who your father is? Nobody knows. Maybe your birth was some kind of... of an, uh, Immaculate Conception, just like Mama Mary. You know?"

I'm eight. I don't exactly know what she means. But it sounds nice. Chocolate Connection. Which is like the name of the ice cream Nay Gloria buys me when we go to the movies with Tita Carmen. They are always happy, and are always glad to take me along with them, "as long as you remain quiet and be a good big boy that you already are." I nod gratefully, because I like real movies—the big ones on screen, and because my mother never takes me anywhere anymore. Nay Gloria and Tita Carmen buy me popcorn and Pepsi, and if I want, they will buy me ice cream, too. I stuff

myself as E.T. flickers in the dark. There is something about Elliott that makes me understand.

And he has the most beautiful eyes on a boy I have ever seen.

Lolong mistakes me for a mirror while I am dressing to go out with Gerardo and the gang. He has been too cranky lately—78 years old and making everyone miserable. Only mother seems content with his old age.

I wonder when the old coot will die.

Lolong studies my face. "Oh my God... Oh my God," he whispers, almost afraid.

"Lolong, are you okay?" I steady his shaking hands. The faint brown blotches on his skin snake like a curse. His skin feels cold and balmy. For a moment, clarity enters his eyes, and he regards me with the careful scrutiny of an interested, yet wary, stranger.

"Charo?" he croaks.

"Mother is in her room, Lolong," I tell him. "She's tired. She's watching a Shirley Temple movie." She is not. She is crying again, and refuses to see me.

I tell all these to Gerardo when he comes up the drive in his new red Jeep.

"Forgive the old man, Jaguar," Gerardo says, as we drive to the Dumaguete Music Box. "I remember, when you were born and we had that accident—I think I was six—he went completely nuts. Never recovered from it. I suppose he remembers you during that time."

"I was a baby. Nobody remembers a baby's face."

"I remember you. When you plopped out into the backseat, you did not cry. You boomed."

I fidget with the car radio. Soon I clear the air with Madonna singing "Papa Don't Preach." We have our high school girls to score with. I am 18, a virgin. I am ready. I am enthusiastic. I am eager for the bravado of beer.

Tonight, mother dies of ovarian cancer. I suppose she must die from something. She has already been dead a long time.

She does not tell anybody she has the disease until she emerges one day from her room, her face a frightened blur, clutching her groin in a staggered fashion to Auntie Nida's room, screaming from the pain, and fainting dead away.

That was the first time everyone knew she was sick—and dying.

Everyone thought mother would just fade away, like the iris vanishing point of her old movies. Nobody sees her around anymore.

She did not tell anyone she was cringing, night after day, from the pain, from deep inside her, for the past months. Auntie Nida only knew she had refused to eat anything, even hamburgers. She had grown pale and was dizzy most days—would not see the doctor even, despite Nay Gloria's constant nagging.

"I'm fine. I'm fine," mother would say.

Tita Carmen swore to Nay Gloria that mother was getting out of bed at the strangest hours of the night, to cry at the upstairs toilet. "Are you all right?" Tita Carmen would ask her, partly irritated from the constant visits, which interrupted her sleep and Nay Gloria's, their bedroom only a jump away from the creaky toilet door.

"I'm fine. I'm fine," my mother said. "Just remembering Tatay, that's all."

Lolong has been dead six months.

And they went back to bed, and Tita Carmen thought that perhaps she could oil the hinges of the toilet doors tomorrow. The house was getting old, and its occupants even older, and crankier. It was very difficult to get good sleep these days.

So nobody saw it coming. Not until that night when mother screamed.

I remember that night. I am in Steven's arms. We have finished watching Spartacus. We try to memorize Laurence Olivier's poolside seduction of Tony Curtis. We are hungry for oysters and snails.

Now we are watching Ingmar Bergman's The Seventh Seal at Lolong's house when the call comes from the hospital. "It's Auntie Charo," Nay Gloria cries on the phone. It takes forever for her to speak intelligibly. She breathes deeply. "Jaggy, your mother's dead."

"I suppose," I finally say.

Something collapses inside me, but, as yet, there are no tears. Mother, I think, has cried for me all these years. The coincidence of moments is suddenly too strange: death coming in as I am seeing Death—hooded and ominous, cinematic—playing chess with the knight. A negotiation. It is easier to think of yesterday when—

When I visit her in the hospital, and she sits up in bed, eating an apple, and smiling. I have never really seen my mother smile.

"Hi."

"Hello, Ma," I hesitate.

She laughs weakly and puts the half-finished apple away. She looks terrible and cheap—Loni Anderson after the facelift. "How very An Affair to Remember. Do you remember how that scene with Deborah Kerr goes

after she sees Cary Grant again after the accident, and he comes up to her and says a nonchalant hello?"

"Yes, Ma."

"Deborah Kerr goes, 'And all I could ever say back was hello'... That was a sad movie, wasn't it? It was the sadness that made it more beautiful, I think."

"Yes, Ma."

"Is your mother still beautiful?"

"Yes, Ma. You look like Ali McGraw."

"Ah, Love Story. Do you remember that? Ali McGraw dying of a dreadful disease, yet growing more beautiful by the minute. Hollywood's beautiful, Jaggy. I just wish life could be a little bit more like that."

"I'm sorry, Ma." "I'm sorry, Travis."

This is the longest conversation we've ever had. "Ma, I'm—."

She looks at me quietly, and nods faintly. "I can understand," she gently says. She closes her eyes, and I move to the door. Her voice, weak now, stops me.

"Travis never touched me, you know," I hear her say. "But he promised to take me away—away from all that fright. But I guess he forgot. I guess he got too frightened. Your Lolong was capable of anything, even when he was already getting old."

"I know."

"I'm sorry, hijo, I could have been more of a mother, you know?

Like Ann Revere—"

"National Velvet. Elizabeth Taylor was just 12." "—or somebody. Like one of those Brady Bunch." "Mr. Brady died of AIDS."

"Yes, but all we really remember are the toothpaste smiles." "The toothpaste smiles..."

"I still can be Mrs. Brady, you know." "I suppose."

"Just give me time, okay?" I nod.

There is silence, punctuated only by the soothing whir of the air-conditioning. I move to the television to turn it on, and to the light switches to turn them off. This is the only right scenario: the silence, the blue hue of the muted TV screen, and the encompassing darkness.

"Goodnight, ma."

But I think I have always known this is coming. Now, I push down the cradle of the telephone with my fingers, and Nay Gloria becomes a persistent buzz in my ears. I have promised my mother I will not cry: I can only see around me and breathe in the comforting darkness, and hear the soundtrack the scene will have wrought—John Williams as he takes me to the stars? Nino Rota, perhaps, with a haunting score, as beautifully sad as

the trembling of my feet. I slowly walk now to where Steve lies sleeping, waiting for my arms to engulf him goodnight. He wakes a little, buzzes my cheek, and whispers: "Is it all over?"

"Yes." I, too, speak softly. "I'm sorry."

"I know."

"We'll see her tomorrow, Jag." "I know."

"Okay, then, good night." "Okay."

In the dark of the room, the blue shadows still flicker, but they only lull me to sleep. The last thing I remember is the solicitous dusk, which is the authority of dreams, the keeper to the vicarious life that becomes the seeking hearts' devoted companion. Steve, Lolong, Auntie Nida, Mother, my so-called father, my so-called life—and this, my redemption, my wishes for a happy ending: they all collide in a dreamy sepia kaleidoscope, and I breathe deeply. Like the old films, the night fades, and I descend into the movies of my dreams.

Sands & Coral 2002

Misael P. Ondong

2006 Project Coordinator

Misael P. Ondong earned his AB in English degree at Silliman University in 1994. In June of the same year, he started his MA in English Program (major in Literature) and taught at the Department of English and Literature as a Graduate Teaching Fellow (GTF). From Sept 1998 to July 2002, he served as the acting City Information Officer of the City of Dapitan in Zamboanga del Norte after being the LGU's Tourism Officer l for nearly a year. After his stint with the Dapitan LGU in 2002, Misael went to teach English at the Monfort School in Chiangmai, Thailand but came back home after two years. He returned to Silliman in 2004 and became a fulltime faculty member of the English Department, where he stayed for more than a decade. Misael P. Ondong used to be a freelance feature writer in the *Bohol Chronicle Lifestyle Magazine* and wrote a column for the *New Nandau* while working as Information Officer of Dapitan City. He translated for the Department of Budget and Management the 2012 National Budget Primer from English to Bisaya, which was used as reference in the deliberation of the 2014 national budget.

Episode 2006: The Students Write Back

Finally, the Sands and Coral is back.

It's been a while since the last issue, which was dedicated to short stories, came out in 2002. This time around, we place emphasis on personal essays, which are mostly what the young people write these days. More importantly, we are giving back the pages to the Silliman students.

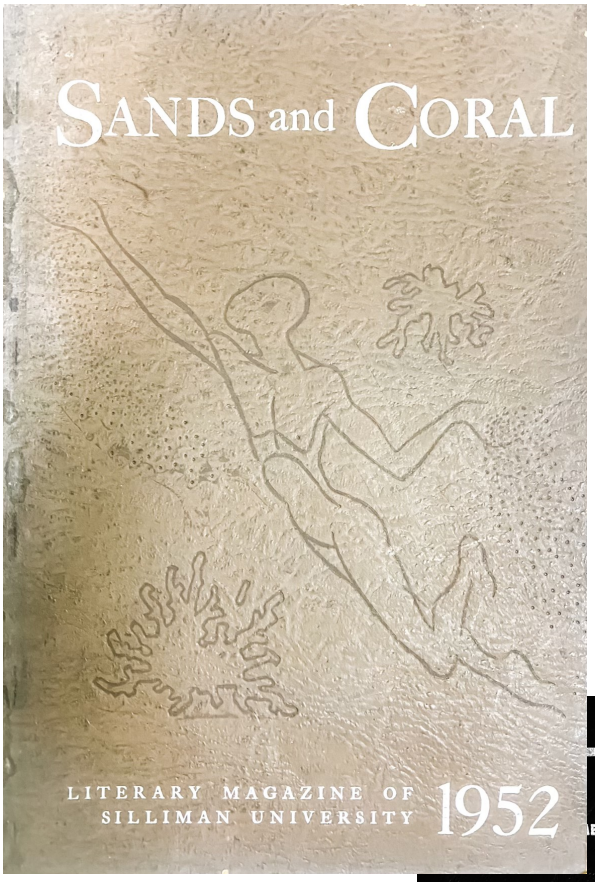
Originally conceived as a student literary folio, the Sands and Coral soon evolved into a semi-professional affair, with many of its featured writers—linked to the publication as past editors or contributors—already established names in the national writing scene. A quick glance at the list of former editors is a virtual review of who's who in Philippine Literature.

The materials in this issue are written by the students and geared for the students, just as the Sands and Coral was intended. Some are taken from those submitted in the first-ever Sands and Coral workshop a couple of years ago, some from the works submitted in our writing classes. We chose those whose style and content appealed to us and kept the editing to a bare minimum.

Whether the Sands and Coral will eventually revert to its old format or explore other directions, only time will tell. In the meantime, we feel that we should feature how our students really write, warts and all—partly in the hope that doing so will encourage our featured writers to hone their craft, in part to spur other students to write.

It's about time the students write back.

Sands & Coral 2006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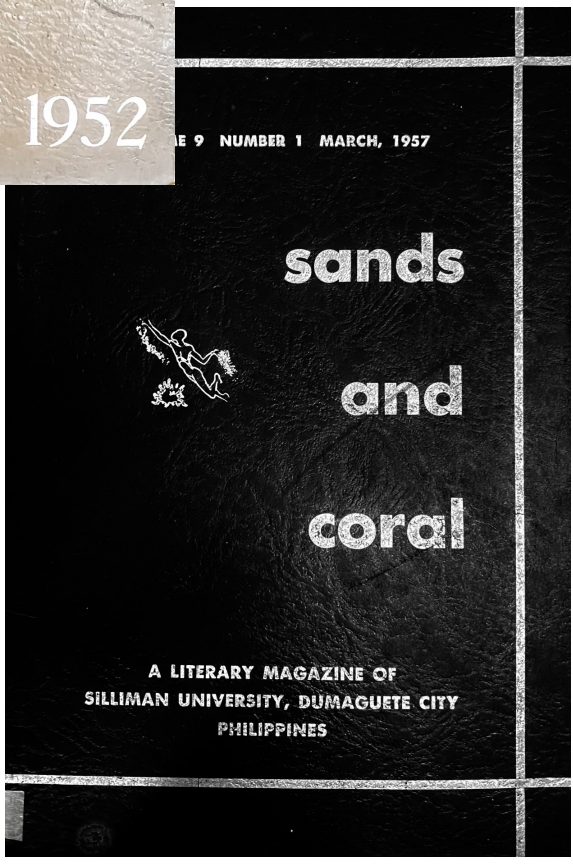
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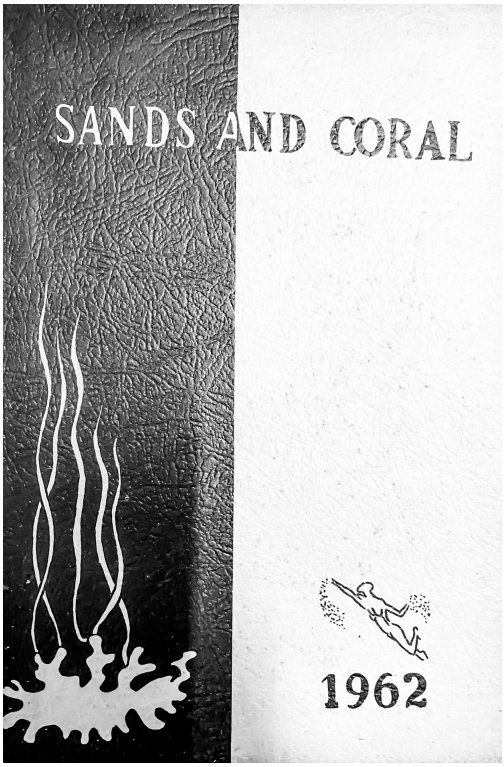
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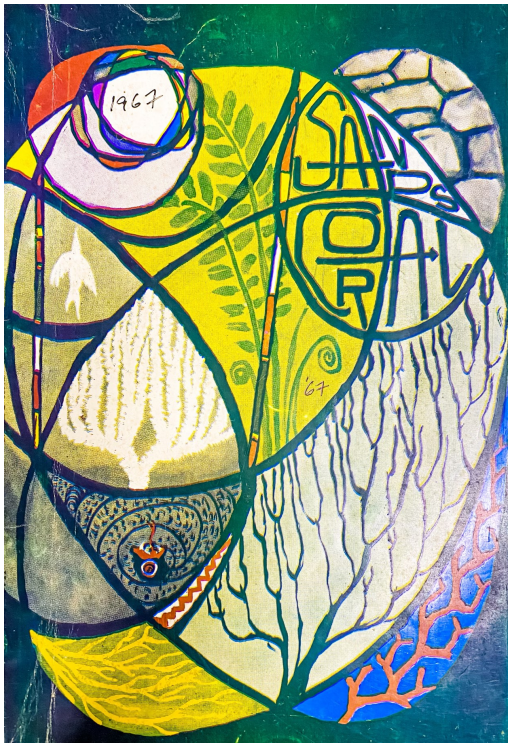
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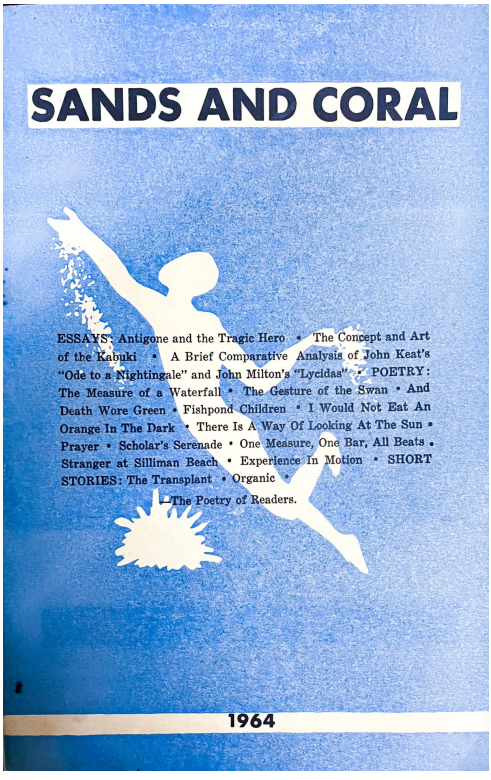
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ESSAYS: Antigone and the Tragic Hero • The Concept and Art of the Kabuki • A Brief Comparative Analysis of John Keat's "Ode to a Nightingale" and John Milton's "Lycidas" • POETRY: The Measure of a Waterfall • The Gesture of the Swan • And Death Wore Green • Fishpond Children • I Would Not Eat An Orange In The Dark • There Is A Way Of Looking At The Sun • Prayer • Scholar's Serenade • One Measure, One Bar, All Beats • Stranger at Silliman Beach • Experience In Motion • SHORT STORIES: The Transplant • Organic • The Poetry of Readers.
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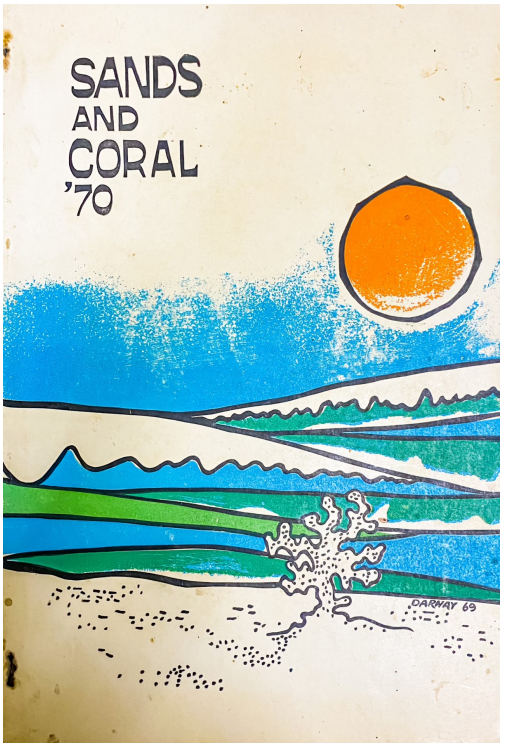
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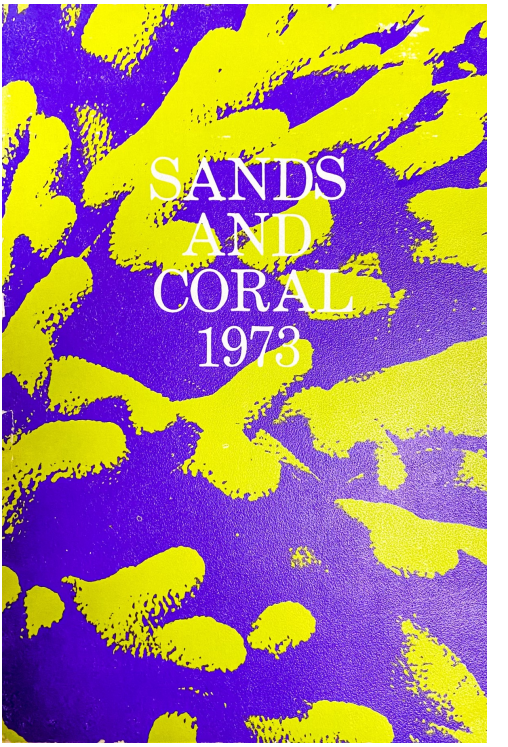
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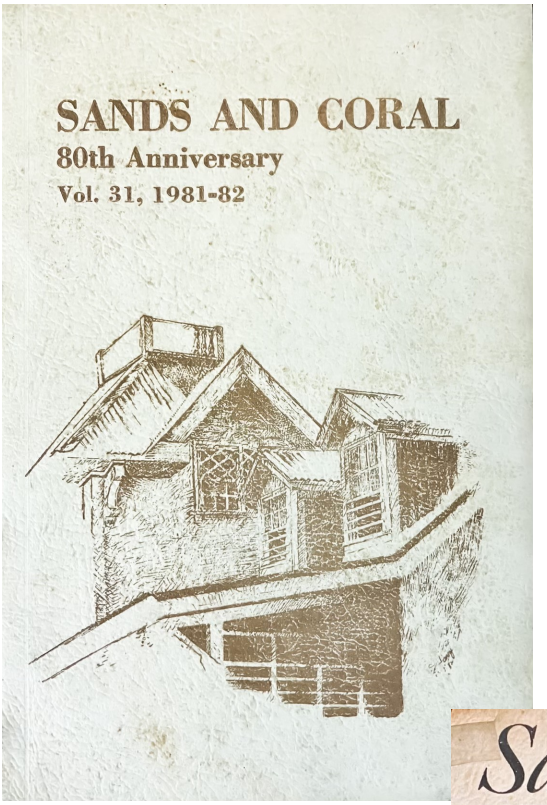
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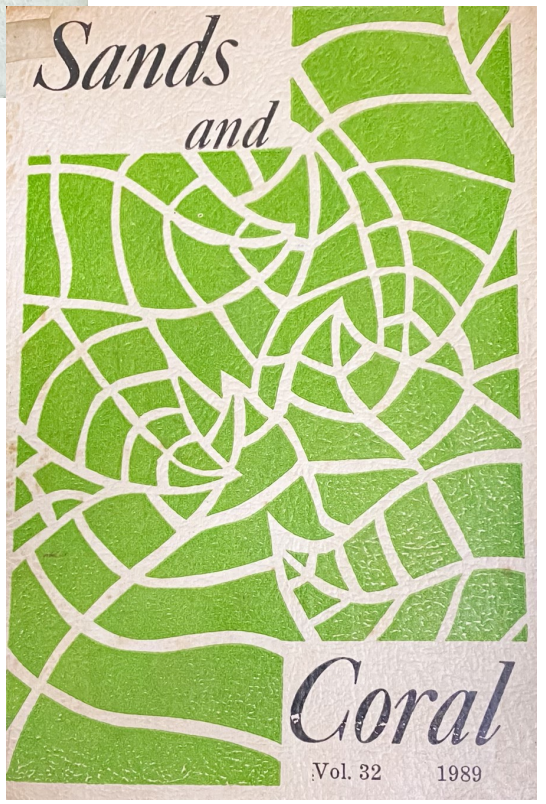
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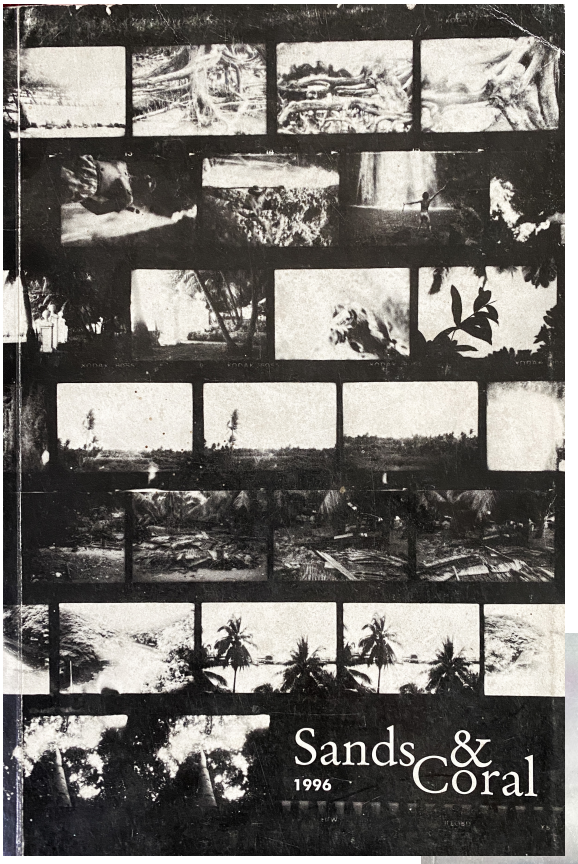
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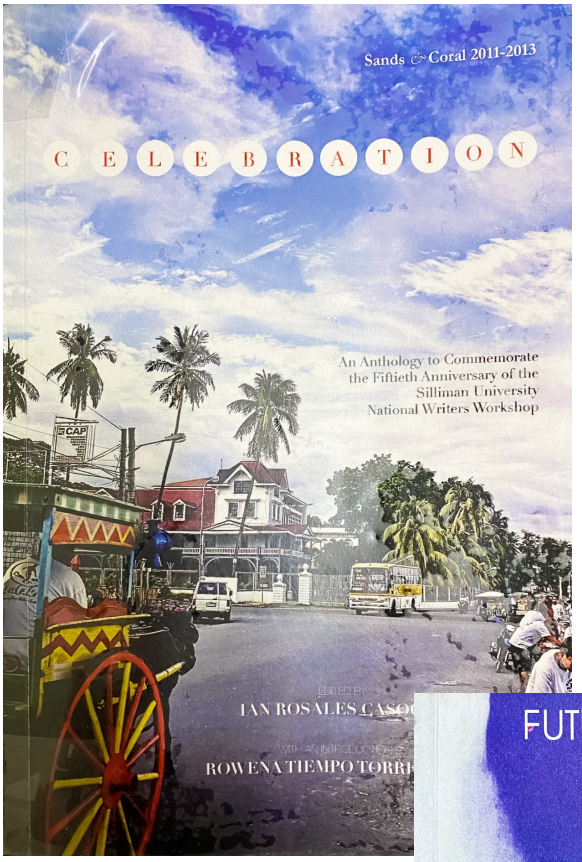
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the Fiftieth Anniversary of the
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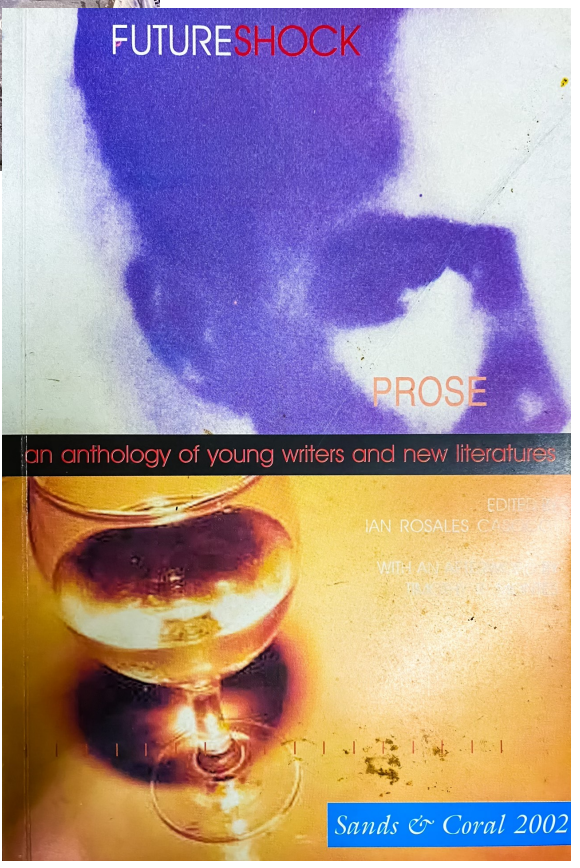
National Writers Workshop
IAN ROSALES CASO
ROWENA TIEMPO TORR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PROSE
an anthology of young writers and new literatures
IAN ROSALES CASO
Sands & Coral 2002

ABOUT THE EDITORS

REBECCA DE LA TORRE currently teaches literature subjects as a part-time faculty of the Department of English and Literature at Silliman University. She also paints and writes. She finished Fine Arts at the University of Sto. Tomas, and later transferred to Dumaguete where she became a student of the three Tiempos [Edilberto, Edith, and Rowena] when she pursued her M.A. in English (major in Literary Studies), at Silliman. She is credited for improving and expanding the list of editors found in the previous issues of the *Sands & Coral*.

LADY FLOR PARTOSA teaches basic English communication courses, research, and literature at the Department of English and Literature at Silliman University. After getting her Bachelor of Science in Education major in English in 2007, she pursued her Master of Arts in English major in Literary Studies, which she completed in 2010 through a graduate teaching fellowship. From 2013 to 2014, she was a Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant at Skyline College in California, USA. At one point, she also coordinated the Silliman University National Writers Workshop and the Edilberto and Edith Tiempo Creative Writing Center. She was a recipient of the Faculty Merit Award and Most Productive Faculty Award in 2016. At the moment, Parts—as she prefers to be called—is pursuing a Ph.D. in Cultural Studies from Lingnan University, Hong Kong.

ANDREA GOMEZ-SOLUTA is the current Chair of the Department of English and Literature at Silliman University. She earned both her AB English and MA English degrees from Saint Louis University and her PhD in Philippine Studies from the University of the Philippines-Diliman. She was the first to coordinate the Silliman University National Writers Workshop after the workshop was returned to Silliman in 2009. Understanding the historical role of *Sands & Coral* in continuing the illustrious writing tradition here at Silliman, she pushed for its revival after a long hiatus during her first term as department chair, resulting in the publication of the *Sands & Coral* 1995 issue.

The *Sands & Coral* primarily accepts contributions from students currently enrolled at Silliman University. It is our belief that students are capable of producing literary pieces which can endure comparison with those of more experienced writers, thus the literary folio also accepts submissions from faculty, staff, and alumni, as well as formers fellows of the Silliman University National Writers Workshop. The publication aims to maintain a higher literary standard among campus writers, to stimulate genuine creative thinking, and to develop a keener appreciation of the more serious creations of Silliman writers.

Reuben Canoy's immortal emblem or seal for *Sands & Coral*… shows a human figure, decades ahead of Marvel Comics, looking very like the Silver Surfer, poised skyward or heavenward but clearly bonded with Gaia, the air, the earth, the ocean, the sands and coral.

- *Cesar Ruiz Aquino*

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