



What Happened

A Novella

by VeryWellAged

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If life was so simple, maybe someone would know how to live it.

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None of this story may be used by others without the express email consent of the author. You may contact the author at: VeryWellAged@ymail.com.

Foreword

The following novella is connected to the work and stories of VeryWellAged, which can be found in various formats at the website: <http://www.asstr.org/~VeryWellAged/index.htm>

While it is not necessary to have read the stories referenced in this novel, to understand the references, all the stories can be found on the website.

Preface on Language and Culture.

The Philippines, a cluster of over 7000 islands, is not homogenous in its culture or language. There are two national languages, English and Filipino, also called Tagalog, on which it is based.

However a culturally native Tagalog speaker may use what is called “deep Tagalog” which is not the Filipino/Tagalog taught in the schools.

English is the language of the Philippine Senate and House, but that does not mean the average Filipino has a very good grasp of the language. Nor should the reader assume that Tagalog is well understood by all. It is not! In the Visayas, (the middle islands,) it is not the preferred language.

According to Wikipedia, the count of the number of languages spoken ranges from 120 to 187 depending on how you count. There are major language groups, called dialects (they are actually separate languages) and smaller regional “dialects” with a circumscribed set of speakers primarily based on a tribal affinity.

Where this story is set, Bohol, the major language is a subdialect of Cebuano, (which is also called Basaya or Visayan, as it is spoken on more islands than Cebu), the subdialect spoken in Bohol is called Boholano.

As an example, here are the four languages saying the same thing.

Cebuano/Basaya:	Akoa baya ning sinilas.
Boholano:	Ahoa baja ning sinilas.
Tagalog:	Akin itong tsinilas na ito.
English:	This is my slipper

I will not use Boholano in this story, but rather when a non-English word appears, it will be either Basaya or Tagalog. These days Tagalog frequently creeps in to common language as it is heard in national media and taught in the schools.

This story involves an American English speaker, living in the Philippines and interacting with Filipinos.

For those of you whose primary language is English, it may surprise you that compared to some other languages, your language is a highly precise

stew pot of words, nuances, and structures that allow for a strict understanding of exactly what is intended to be conveyed. We have rules upon rules of what constitutes correct speech so that ambiguity is removed.

The languages of the Philippines are the converse. Ambiguity is part and parcel of their lives. States of being we use are completely missing from their casual lexicon. Where a child might come to an adult and say, ‘*Mom says to tell you it is time to eat dinner.*’ A Tagalog speaker might simply say *Kain na*. That Tagalog translates to *Eat now*. If you hand me a sack of potato chips, I might say, *I have had enough*, in Tagalog, it would be *Tama na*. Now, *Tama* actually means *Correct* and *na* means *now*. But when strung together it is understood as *Enough*. So *Correct now*, means *Enough*, and nowhere is there a verb of being.

The result is a spoken English which sounds a bit odd to your ears until you remember that the missing words come from people who are unaccustomed to using anything like them. An example is: *What you do her?* Which can mean: *What did you do to her?* Or *What did you do with her?* Or *What did you do for her?* You are supposed to gather the meaning based on the context of when the question was asked.

In this novella, you will find the sentence: *Shayla a bruba (a witch), and the girls you get lucky.*

Here there are two assumed verbs and an implied meaning. The average Filipino would understand the English, as if I were to put into “proper” English as:

*Shayla **is** a bruba (a witch), and the girls you get **are** lucky to **be with you**.*

Within these pages, the dialog is as accurate to the place and type of conversation as I can make it given the above comments on dialect. There are things I don’t do.

In real dialog, **he** is confused with **she** and visa versa. Filipino dialects do not use gender pronouns and so the speaker will often make this mistake.

In all Filipino languages, pronouns are used freely within sentences and often do not refer to any identified subject. Further a number of individuals may be identified by the same pronoun in the same sentence. If there are four sisters, which sister is being referenced, is anyone’s guess. If you ask, you often get a look, like, why does it matter?

That is the nature of the ambiguousness in lives led. You will often hear a Filipino complain that a foreigner is strict. The foreigner is trying to untangle the ambiguity and it is not appreciated.

So I have done as much as I can without making the reading completely impossible. I hope you enjoy what follows.

Sierra Bullones,
Bohol, 6320
Philippines

23 November 2017

Dear VeryWellAged,

*I read your story, **Sideways**, with great interest, when it was released about six months ago. I did so because of what has happened to me.*

I have known for a long time that your stories have more than a mere gloss of truth about them. But this time, this one, was eerily similar to my life here in the Philippines.

After the first reading of your story I brooded about it a bit, and reread it. And read it yet again. I wanted to write to you, but didn't know exactly what to say.

In August I decided to write out my own experience. It is not easy, but you know that. In fact it's damned hard. I don't know if this is of any interest to you, but I enclose it as an attachment to this email. I don't know if you care to read it. I guess it's just something I needed to do.

Respectfully,
Herbert Lombardi

enc: Attachment "My Story"

My Story:

I too married a Filipina. I am not a Vet. I didn't know much about these islands, then, when we first married. Nor did I understand the culture here. Far from it! I didn't have a fucking clue.

I had been married once before. My first marriage lasted twenty-one years. We were in love when we married and as routine replaced excitement, we learned what I guess every couple does over the years, we learned to live as a couple, if not always knowing why. It's inertia... social inertia, emotional inertia.

That first marriage failed mostly because I lost my job in 2001. It was the tail end of the burst of the tech bubble. Thousands of guys in my field had already gotten their walking papers before I got mine. There were thousands of us where I lived in California and thousands more all over the country. There were no jobs for any of us.

Unable to find a new job even close to the same salary level, life at home was hard and became an ordeal. What I find is a job that pays less than half of what I was making before. I had to lie and say I had no IT experience other than the most basic shit. To say otherwise would have meant that I was over qualified and I wouldn't have been hired.

We could no longer afford our mortgage and lost our home.

Moving into an economy two bedroom apartment after living in a four bedroom home with a two car garage and swimming pool in the back was hard enough on me, but it sent my wife into a spiral of anger and depression.

I had never seen her as a high maintenance wife, but then I had been providing the high maintenance payments without noticing it, I guess. As our situation deteriorated, her anger and unhappiness grew exponentially.

My drinking each night probably didn't help.

All that lasted only eighteen more months before my wife filed for divorce. Our two kids were out of the home. They were both in college with the help of Pell grants and college loans.

So by the end of 2003, I was out of the marriage, living alone in an efficiency apartment, drinking a bit too much, and pissed off most of the time.

A man in his mid-forties, forty-five to be exact, in 2003, with a salary of fifty grand a year, living in San Jose, California, isn't a prime catch for any sweet young thing.

Except... there are a lot of Filipinos in San Jose. I worked with a few of them.

Each Monday as I would stumble into the office, I would get gentle kidding that I needed the attention of a sweet Filipina in my life from a few of these guys. Each seemed to have a niece or cousin who would be the perfect match for me if I would only go get her from the Philippines.

I pretty much blew them off for a couple of years. But by sometime in 2005, I was just lonely enough that I bit on one of the offers after seeing a pretty girl via Skype on a coworker's screen. It was his grand-niece, if you can believe it! She was just eight years younger than the guy. And the guy was only twenty-nine years old. His oldest half-sister was sixty-nine and this girl was her granddaughter.

The girl's name was Shayla and, damn it all to hell, she was pretty as all get out, sweet as you can believe, and more than ready to be my girl. It made no sense to me, but the guy told me to believe it. Other Filipinos at work also vouched for the reality of it all.

It isn't too expensive to fly to Manila from California, especially when your coworkers have connections with Filipino travel agents. I visited Shayla three times in 2005 and by the end of the year I asked her to marry me. She was more than ready to say, *Yes*.

It was in 2006 that I brought her to the USA and married the girl. That made her grand-uncle and me sort of relatives. It was weird to me but not to the Filipinos.

What happened next ... well that connection resulted in the most fucking amazing thing happening.

In 2007, three guys, including my new relative, started a software venture of which I was asked to lend a hand for a share of the company. It was a flier. During the startup, there would be next to no income, and Shayla went to work as a cashier to bring home a few bucks just to keep food on the table. She was all for it, but I figured that we would probably go down in flames. We didn't.

Within three years we not only did OK but Google bought us out for a very nice figure.

I was fucking rich. When the first wife heard about it, I hear that she was more than pissed that she would get none of it. I did pay off my kids' college loans, so there were no hard feelings with the kids and it did make number one a little less manic from what the kids have told me.

Still, if she had thought about it, I never would have ended up rich like this if we had stayed married, so why pitch a fit?

Anyway, Shayla and I had cash but I was once again unemployed, albeit wealthy. Shayla was just about to get her US Citizenship and we started talking about what we wanted to do next.

I was not one of the whiz-kids with the great idea. I had been just lucky to go along for the ride.

Going back to a job like I had before wasn't an appealing idea. I wasn't really anyone's idea of a prime head-hunter's candidate for another start-up.

Shayla asked me if I was interested in moving to the Philippines. We could live like royalty back there with our cash and not need to ever worry about work again.

I was 52 years old. The idea didn't seem all that great in the beginning, but as the year progressed, the confusion about what I would do in the future became my pressing and confusing concern. We had a big bank account, but I was not wealthy enough to become one of the idle rich in California. I didn't have the brilliance to create a startup, without the sure knowledge that I wouldn't blow the money I had now in the process. I couldn't find a job that made sense any more. The idea of moving to the Philippines started to seem like a good idea.

I mean, there I was, doing nothing and embarrassed about it in a weird way. The other guys were all again in another start-up, but I wasn't. We would socialize with her grand-uncle's family. He is twenty years younger than I am, and it was pretty awkward.

After Shayla got her citizenship we made the move. We got a big send off from the folks in San Jose and a big welcome from Shayla's family in Sierra Bullones, Bohol, when we arrived in 2011.

I guess I could go through the couple of years in detail, because things were pretty much going tits up by 2013. The earthquake, and then typhoon Yolanda, didn't help things. Life had been rocky for a while in the marriage. It started to go bad only a short time after we had made the move. We survived the earthquake pretty well and were inland enough that we didn't get the worst of the typhoon either. But, all through that period the marriage continued to fall apart. So it was not because of acts of God, but rather because Shayla, once we got here, became a royal bitch.

When she had left this place to marry me, she had been a dirt poor kid with no prospects. Now she was lording herself over everyone else and acting like the good Lord's gift to Sierra Bullones. She was pissing me off and making enemies left and right. Maybe in her mind it was well earned payback for how she had been treated before, but it wasn't playing well with anyone.

Sure, her family put up with the shit, but they weren't happy about it either. Many a night her brothers would sit with me on the terrace

and, as we demolished bottles of rhum, they would bitch about her behavior.

One of her brothers, Lolong, and I were particularly close. I had assisted him in purchasing a couple of vans he was using for commercial purposes, transporting folks from town to town. I didn't make any money from this, but Lolong was instrumental, at times, in negotiating with others on details regarding labor issues as I continued to build the house here.

There were times my frustration with the laborers would get to me. Like the fact that most Mondays we would only see maybe 50% of them, as the rest were too fucking hung over to show up.

Lolong had his own frustrations. Petty corruption and graft are part and parcel in what otherwise would be the simple matter of securing the franchises to run his vans for public transport. One time the 'all-in' fee was ₱34,000. The next time, gee whiz, the ₱34,000 wasn't enough. An additional ₱7,000 was needed.

We would sit and commiserate about such shit and note, all the while, how Shayla's behavior wasn't helping either of us.

The events of the earthquake and Yolanda didn't cause the end of our living as man as wife, but they increased the pressure on an already highly volatile relationship.

Shayla was constantly bitching that she wasn't getting the respect she deserved from those around her and was ready to go back to the USA where 'life was better!'

I, on the other hand, was pretty happy here in the Philippines, in spite of my issues with drunk laborers. I had no hankering to return to the USA. As you know, there is no way to end the marriage here in the Philippines and I guess I was pissed off enough to want to rain on her parade.

I told her, *Go back to the USA. Get a divorce from me there! Sure, you'll get half of what's left in our bank in the USA, but don't think you can come back*

here with another husband. That will be bigamy and I will file against you if you try.

[Note by VeryWellAged: As the writer is addressing me, someone who knows a great deal of life in the Philippines, he is assuming knowledge I have, but you may not. The reader is advised that divorce is not available in the Philippines and a Filipino who files for divorce in another country is barred from ever seeking an annulment of the marriage in the Philippines.]

In truth, there was next to nothing in the USA bank account. I had transferred almost everything to a bank here. The courts in the USA couldn't attach or give her access to my bank here so, fuck yes, she could have half of what was there.

Shayla's family was not all that thrilled by my actions or the failure of the marriage. They were pretty unhappy with both of us, but blood is thicker than water so no one, other than Lolong, was coming to my side, though all knew why things were the way they were.

In your story, the couple had already finished building their home and your protagonist worried about ownership issues. In my case, we were still building, though most, maybe 85%, was done. We were living in the house, but there wasn't a room that didn't need things finished.

I got a local attorney to draw up papers that transferred the house into my name, as you needed to do! I had the land title put into a 99 year lease from my wife to me, with a buyout/transfer clause should I ever gain the right to own land here. The attorney was not sure how that would work if I needed to exercise it, but he did it anyway. He pointed out that, as soon as I die, the lease would expire and Shayla would regain full control of the land.

I smiled. I was only 55 and we are a long-lived family. My dad and mom still live. My grandparents only passed away in their nineties. So, sure, when I pass, she can have it, if I don't become a citizen. She's got a long wait.

Our SUV was already in my name, so that was not a problem. I guess if I had needed a loan, it might have been in her name, but as I paid cash, my name is on the title.

By 2014, Shayla had returned to the USA on her US passport and I was still finishing up my Philippine home.

So, in a way, my story has a very different origin from Roland's. However, we both end up in the Visayas without the wife we came with. Both wives were bitches. And finally, I am about to tell you about my life with my maids.

Sierra Bullones is a rural area of fewer than twenty-five thousand souls on the eastern edge of the Chocolate Hills. It's not exactly a tourist destination, though it does get a little of the spill-over from the tourist trade. It doesn't have the amenities of a big city such as Tagbilaran, which is 70 some-odd kilometers away. But it is a beautiful region and my ten hectares of land is a quiet place to spend my time.

The Sierra Bullones was, prior to the earthquake and typhoon, pretty much economically OK. Not going great guns, but not bad in any way. However following both events, the quake and typhoon, things turned far more difficult. The two hundred dead on the island was not good, but the earthquake alone caused structural damage to over seventy thousand buildings on Bohol. The economy started to sputter a bit. Just three weeks later, Yolanda hit. The damage from Yolanda on Bohol wasn't nearly as bad as it was on Leyte, but it sure as hell didn't help. The torrential rain on top of the damaged buildings just made things far worse.

And so, for the average Filipino it was not a good time if you lived in the Province of Bohol.

But, and there is always a 'but,' there are contrarian scenarios and winners in a time of losers. In a perverse way, I was looking like a winner.

I needed maids. Yes, my wife had a legion of maids working here, but as a parting shot, she fired all of them two days before she left. I am not sure what she hoped to accomplish by that act. For me it was a blessing as the ones whom she fired were older and mostly ugly. One

of the maids could eat corn on the cob with a picket fence between her and the corn, her teeth were so bad.

At the time Shayla fired the maids, there were four of them plus four grounds keepers. I figured I could do OK with two and two grounds keepers. She needed eight workers because of all the parties she gave, both inside the house and on the grounds. I am not a social creature, so the parties were not going to continue.

Going forward, my total spend on all four, maids and grounds keepers, would be under twelve thousand pesos plus room and board.

After Shayla left, I was able to hire back the two most able grounds keepers who had worked here previously. They were related to each other. The two guys would live in a nippa hut on the other side of the property. I paid them ₱4,000 a month and made sure they had rice, Nescafé coffee packets, sugar, vinegar, salt, soy sauce, bulad¹, and a few other essentials. They had chickens and a garden which they kept. What they didn't grow, they could trade for.

The issue of the maids was a little touchy. I didn't want any moralistic, self-righteous biddies in my house. I also needed maids who would be loyal to me.

I wasn't sure how to go about it and decided to ask the guys, my grounds keepers. I wanted to know how to find a couple of good maids without children or husbands that they needed to return to all the time. Those two things had been an issue we had under my wife's administration. Of the four maids we had here previously, we were often reduced to two anyway for those reasons.

The guys didn't have anything to offer other than to say that they would spread the word as to what I needed but that the gals would probably be pretty young, if I didn't want the entanglements. They would share my cellphone number to some folks they knew in town. Hopefully I would hear from some interested parties.

¹ Dried fish.

Such a plan was not without logic. In communities such as this, word of mouth gossip is the primary way all manner of news is circulated.

Like I said before, the economy was in pretty bad shape at this time. Families were having problems making ends meet. Many women were attempting to get work overseas as domestic helpers, but that was not an option for all. For the young ones, not at all.

It took only two days before I had girls literally texting me, asking for employment. Not all those texting were winners.

One of those who texted was a mother with three kids. The youngest of those kids was only three years of age and she wanted the boy to be with her if she got the job. She didn't.

Another had one kid who was being cared for by the grand-mother. That one might have worked out, but I decided to not pursue her.

Another was just too damned fat. I didn't figure she could even climb the ladders to wash the windows. A fourth one was pregnant. She wouldn't have lasted four months

I did find two gals. One was twenty-three and the other seventeen. The twenty-three-year-old one's name was Lena. Miss seventeen was Vivian.

Even though all this is now in the past, I will try to tell it to you as if it is all in present tense. I think it's easier to explain it that way.



I hire both Lena and Vivian and give them the cook's tour of the place.

At present, Shayla just left three days ago. The house, though not finished, is livable. Cleanliness-wise it is still in good shape as it hasn't been too long since the other maids left.

Both of these gals are pretty. Both are single. Neither has children. Both are the youngest of their respective families. Let's hope that one

of them can cook, that both can clean, that they can get along, and that neither has a bad attitude.

I've gotta say one thing. The absence of Shayla is not weighing on me. It feels liberating, like a heavy load has been lifted off my shoulders. I am walking around my home and property feeling something close to ebullient.

I have left the two gals to do some cleaning and get a supper on the table for us. They asked what I wanted. I asked if either could make pork afritada and both claim to be able. So I asked them to cooperate in that as well.

In the meantime I have walked over to the nippa hut where my two grounds keepers seem to be killing off a few large bottles of Red Horse beer. I don't think they are completely drunk, though they may be well on their way.

Oh shit, I guess I don't care so long as they are back at it in the morning.

Walking back to the house I hear singing and laughter. It's the gals and they seem to be in very good spirits. I hope that's a good sign.

The afritada is good, the rice is just fine, the beer is cold, and all is as it should be, except the gals keep giggling and looking at each other, furtively glancing at me, and giggling some more.

What is the laughter about? What's so funny?

Lena seems to be trying to get the giggling under control a little better than is Vivian. Finally she asks, *Which one Sir? Who you want? I to be your girl?*

Excuse me?

It me or Vi?

Hub? What?

Your wife gone. We here. We told you want us young. We both here. Which one the girl? Which one the real maid?

Ab!

Of all things... that was the last thing on my mind. I needed two maids. It was really that simple. Still it makes sense that they should wonder. I really don't want a 'Girl.' I am done with saddling up to one female. I have been taken for a ride one too many times. One who pissed and moaned because the good times came to an end. One who, when the good times did come, became a royal pain in the ass to everyone else.

I am expecting to enjoy my life without that sort of commitment ever again.

Oh, the idea of fucking them isn't objectionable, other than I don't want to commit to either.

Are both of you wanting to be my girl?

I think, yes, Sir. So says Lena.

Yeh, sure. Why not? Why not jump to the front of the line and get promoted from maid to mistress in one day? Nope, that's not going to happen.

Neither, not now. You are the maids. I don't know either of you. Your job is this house and my comfort. If you are smart, the two of you will get along with each other. You will not argue or have a bad attitude. You will not fight.

Sir?

Yes?

Maybe later?

Lena, if I take you, I will also take Vivian. If I take Vivian, I will also take you. No one will be over another. Do you understand?

I not a prostitute!

I didn't say you were. I said I will not have just one girl. If I have you and Vivian, it will be real, not prostitution. Just not one alone. But I am not saying that will happen. I am only saying I will not select just one.

What you want, it a sin! It against God!

Ah, well, ... maybe it is against your God. It isn't against my God. But, as you are not in my bed, you do not need to concern yourself with it or with what your God would say. You are the maid, and not in my bed.

She's not happy. Will she leave? I thought she wanted the job as a maid. Maybe she still does and will be OK with it. Vivian hasn't said a word. She heard all of it, but has signaled nothing.

After dinner, I pour myself a glass of Tanduay Light Rhum over ice and relax on the terrace overlooking a grove of coconut trees and beyond that the terraces of rice that are being grown. I lease out the land on the terraces to a couple of local farmers. I get some rice, some cash, and a great view.

This life is similar to the upper crust British in colonial India... or to the upper crust French on rubber plantations in colonial Indochina. Do I feel part of these people around whom I live? No. Absolutely not.

I am the wealthy foreigner who lives in the mansion. Is it something that will last forever? Surely not. Will it last until I die of natural causes? I hope so. Only time will tell.

At some point it is likely all to come crashing down. A change in the political environment, an incident that causes popular unrest... who the fuck knows. But as this is already 'their' country and not a colony, as I don't 'own' the land, I suspect I will be OK for as long as I live. That is... so long as I don't piss off the locals by my personal choices. The 'against God' comment struck me as a little troubling. Lena may not be a good long term bet even as employee.

paint job. Landscaping the grounds immediately surrounding the house is not even started.

This place is a work in progress. I busy myself moving from work area to work area, in an effort to make sure all the work is done the way I want it.

After they get done with the morning cleaning, the gals are going shopping in town. It is threatening to rain and the sky is completely overcast.

I get a text from another girl, named Neca, who is looking for a job as a maid. If I had gotten it yesterday, I might have told her the positions were filled. Now I am not so sure. Neca is eighteen, unmarried, and lives close by here. I tell her I might have an opening in a couple of days. I will let her know.

Sounds of hammering makes the day anything but tranquil. That, plus the voices of the workmen fill all the corners of my world here in the house this morning. I go for a walk to get away from it for a bit. There is a dirt road of sorts from my gate that connects to another road that takes you into the center of town.

Town is far enough that I would drive in if I was going that far. As it is, I am just stretching my legs and getting a bit of exercise.

The road is dotted with modest dwellings, some with little storefronts. These are little windows with grilles whereby you can walk up, still on the road, and buy items needed; things such as: cigarettes by the stick, bottles of Coke, beer and rum, sachets of candies, snacks, soaps, shampoos, juices, and other small items.

I walk along as I have many a day. These people mostly know who I am and where I live. I am greeted by some in a friendly way. Some are busy and ignore me.

The sun, not being out strongly on this overcast day, makes the walk a bit more pleasant for me as I amble down the road.

The reality of how these people live is in stark contrast with my living arrangements. I suspect that the relative opulence of my residence, in a way, suggests the presence of resident danger and evil to some who see the accumulation of great wealth to be connected with a pact with the devil.

So, while some might wish it for themselves, some are wary. I am an unknown, a cypher to these folks. They most assuredly don't know my history. But I also represent potential income as I spend money on labor and materials to build my home and outbuildings.

Opportunity and fear. Desire and concern. Get close or stay away? What are they to choose? They must do their own calculus of the matter, but even then, do the realities of the day allow them to fulfill their plans? For many it will just be a hope or a fear for as long as I remain.

Returning to the house, two workmen hand me lists of items that are needed. Finishing nails, Stikwell wood glue, Non-Sag epoxy, half and full closure concealed cabinet hinges, drawer handles, lacquer thinner, paint, Crocodile masking tape, full extension soft close drawer guides, all need purchase today for the men to continue their activities.

Some can be purchased close by and I can settle up the bill later after a delivery. Some must be purchased in town. I dispatch a worker to get that which can be retrieved via the first batch, and then get into my Isuzu Crosswind to get items of the second type.

Driving here is very different from driving in the States. It may be just a few kilometers from town, but the trip takes time over these narrow dirt roads and decidedly slow moving vehicles and animals around which I must navigate.

Eventually I get back, only to be handed another list from another workman. Such is my day, and so back to town I go.

I do not really see the gals until close to supper time. They are quiet tonight. There is no mirth. Supper is served, and there is nothing wrong with it.

She agrees and says she will be here in an hour.

After cleaning up my mess in the kitchen I go upstairs to tell Vivian that a new girl is coming to interview and that she should be with me when that happens. I think the concept that she is to participate surprises her.

It only makes sense to me for a number of reasons. But there is no way I am going to try to explain it to Vivian.

Neca shows up two hours later. She looks fine to me and I am about to welcome her to her position as the downstairs maid when Vivian says, clear as a bell, *Thank you for coming, but this is not for you.*

I am not going to argue with my upstairs maid and wait until Neca is escorted off the property before asking Vivian for her reasons.

She will steal from you. I see it in her eyes. I hear it in questions she asks me. I not allow this. When we walk out, she ask me, 'Why you do this to me?' I tell her why. She know I am right. She say, 'Why it matter? Sir not need all this! He is rich. Why not?' I tell her she is bad. I not agree with her.

OK, so I learned something this morning more valuable than the value of just about anything Neca might have stolen. I learned how valuable Vivian is.

I wonder how many more gals I need to meet before I will find a good second maid. Vivian tells me that it is not easy to find a good one.

Sir I have a friend. I think she will work here if you allow it.

Tell me about her.

She my age, seventeen. Prettier than me I think. She has good heart. She honest and sweet. This I know is very true.

Can she cook?

Yes! She is good cook.

Check with her and see if she is interested.

OK, I do it. I sure Elarny will say, Yes!

Her name is Elarny? Is that a name?

Yes, that her name. It OK if she come now?

Really? Go figure. I wonder how long she has been waiting to ask me to hire her friend. OK, sure.

Elarny arrives mid-afternoon with a backpack. Vivian must have told her she was hired if she showed up. I guess I don't see a reason to argue. She is a good age. She is cute as you please. Vivian is vouching for her. So I guess she is here until such time as something isn't working.

Both Vivian and Elarny are about five feet tall. Both have long black hair and black eyes, but that describes most Filipinas. Both are pretty, trim creatures, and most assuredly not hard to look at.

Vivian's English is a little better than is Elarny's, but not by much. Vivian announces that Elarny will make my supper today so the question of her culinary skills can be put to the test first off.

Supper turns out fine. It is basic Filipino comfort food, rice and Pinakbet in coconut milk, but the taste is perfect. Once again, there is no talk at the table, though both gals are here. Elarny is fidgety and Vivian seems a bit on the pissed side of the ledger.

Finally, in English, evidently so I can know what is going on she says to her compatriot, *If you not believe me, ask him!*

Elarny is frightened to the core of her being. Her eyes go big and she is shaking her head, mouthing something to Vivian which I guess is like begging her to stop it.

Vivian turns to me. *I tell her that I am not your girl. She cannot be your girl, unless we both your girls. Tell her that true! Tell her I right!*

You know there is more to it than that.

You know I be good. I know Elarny be good too. So there no problem. It just that I not to be only one. It must be both! You say that.

*Yes I said that was required **if** I agreed to take you. You are right in that part. I will not take you to my bed unless I take the other too. But both must want that. Both must be good. And I never said I would. I only said, if I did, that would have to be the way it worked.*

Vivian turns her body square towards her friend before saying, *See? Why you not believe me? This why I want you here. I must share him. Better with you. Yes, better we share him and not someone else here. Yes he says not yet, but that because he not know us yet. He will. I sure!*

Elarny starts bawling and runs away from the table and up towards their bedroom. I suspect Elarny will be gone by the morning.

I pour a goodly amount of rum over some ice in a glass and escape to the terrace. Jesus, all they need to be are maids. Why does each one think that my bed is either their end point or their greatest fear? I need maids. OK, so maybe I will want female companionship, but I never said it had to be with a maid.



Most of the rum has found its way down my gullet when I see headlights coming up the road. From the looks of it, it's a van. That makes a little sense, as no one but Lolong would be visiting me at this time of night.

I haven't seen him since Shayla left. That's not saying much, as she has been gone for less than a week. My technical connection to him is one of family. My real connection is more one of friendship and mutual respect.

I get up and get the gate opened. He parks the van between the gate and the carport.

Climbing out of the van and looking over at my rocks glass on the terrace, he asks, *Maybe you have some rum for me?*

As a matter of fact, I do. Take a seat and I will get a glass for you.

Once inside, I grab a bowl of ice, the bottle of rum, and a clean glass.

As I walk back out to the terrace, I get a smile and a friendly comment. *You are learning our ways, Herb.*

I hand him the glass. He will fill it with the ice and rum to suit his needs.

He takes his time, seemingly enjoying the view of the rum as it splashes over the ice cubes.

Now, with a sufficient amount of the golden distillation in his glass, he lifts it to his lips, takes a goodly taste, smiles, and tilts his head back just a bit as it slides down his throat.

His head is still tilted back, eyes toward the stars, a smile remaining, as he comments, *There is talk. Maybe you know this?*

Oh, I can guess. I had the guys put out word that I was looking for maids.

Yes, young ones. True?

I guess. I told the guys that the maids must not be married or have children. The ones Shayla hired were gone half the time, or would quit because a husband said come home, or a child got sick. Shayla had four maids, so if two were gone, it was almost OK, but it did cause problems. I don't need four maids and losing even one of two for family emergencies will be a real disruption if it happens a lot. There is no wife to pick up the slack. So, yes, I guess they need to be young.

Ah, the people not understand that. They think you get them for sex. They say that the reason Shayla is mean.

Really? Who says that outside your family?

Lolong smiles. *Just my family, I think. The others say, let him have what he wants. Shayla a bruba², and the girls you get lucky.*

² Witch

Sir? Maybe yes. She looks down at the tile floor averting her gaze from me. Why you want me?

Elarny, there is nothing wrong with you, but I don't remember saying I did want you for anything other than a maid.

Vi say you want us both or not at all.

Look, sit down here and we can talk about this. I don't want to be looking up to her. Her standing there isn't conducive to a prolonged discussion. I figure that 'prolonged' is what the discussion will take.

She isn't really wanting to sit, but sit she does.

Elarny, this thing has gotten very misunderstood. Before you came, another maid asked me who I was going to choose; which maid I would take to my bed. I told her I was taking no one. And then I said... But, if I was to do something like that, it would be both. I will not choose one over the other. It would be both or neither. I have never said I was ever going to take anyone.

You know Vi wants this?

I guess I do now. Yes.

But you not want?

I haven't really given it any thought. It is not why you or Vivian were hired. But even if I did want to consider it, you have not been here even twenty-four hours and Vivian has not been here even three full days. How do I know you enough to know I want you? How do I know Vivian well enough? And how do you know me well enough to be sure that this is what you want? I hired Vivian and you as maids. I need two maids. You know this house is too big for one person. I need two maids who will stay. If I bed either of you now it just makes things more complicated. I want to make sure you two are staying, that you can do the work, and that we like each other. Having sex with either of you is not my concern.

If we stay, we good, then you do us?

Maybe. Look, I may never bed you and Vivian. I have never said I would. Why is this so important?

I think Vi want this.

Yes, you already said that. I think you do not. Is that right?

Why it be both?

I never want anyone in my bed who thinks they are more important than any other female I am with. I am already married and that will always be my status. There cannot be a second wife.

But you want these women who come to your bed, to be with you, to stay?

Yes, if I take women, I want to know that they are staying.

Will you love us?

I didn't say I was bedding you. Why do you ask that?

If you do, will you love us?

OK, yes, if I bed you, I want to know you love me and I love you.

That why this is too soon then! OK, I see.

Well I don't. Please explain.

It too soon. We must show you love. We must show you we stay and be good. Then your heart will open to us. Vi too silly. She not wanting to wait. She think you should know now. But how that? We must show your heart it OK to love us! I know now why you say it must be both and not one. You not tell all!

Oh, what did I not say?

Two maids! If it just one in your bed, the other is hurt and then there is trouble here. You really need two to run this house. Better the two be equal. Sir, if we love you and you love us, will you be kind?

Jesus, we are running down a rabbit hole. I told her it may never happen and she now seems to think it is ordained. As to her question, 'Am I kind?' In what sense? I have no idea how to answer, nor do I want to add fuel to her assumptions that I will ever bed her at all.

I have no idea if you will think I am kind... and I never said it I will bring you to my bed. I take a bite of my, now cooler than I prefer, eggs, and in that way let the girl know the conversation has ended.

She gets the point but has a parting shot to offer. *It OK, Sir. I know, it will take time.*

Shayla has been gone less than a week. I am in no mood to be with any female at the moment. I am still enjoying the weightlessness I feel now that Shayla has left. I don't want to be saddled with anyone at this moment. Certainly not two teenagers who have just climbed aboard a gravy train.

Do I enjoy female companionship? Certainly. Do I more than enjoy sex? Damn straight I do. But I have also just climbed out of a torture chamber of a life with Shayla. The balance between the momentary enjoyment and the long term pain doesn't exist at the moment. There is no balance. I need time to regain that and when I do, what I will want is unknown to me now.

These two girls might be the very best any man might find. But at this moment, it isn't even worth considering.

For now I will concentrate on finishing the house and resolving some issues on the property.

One of those property issues has to do with drainage. I have a low spot that gets sort of marshy, just plain nasty, on a regular basis. It has been suggested I build a catch basin there.

I like the idea, but am not sure how deep to dig and how much surface area I need to include. I have seen plans but they all seem to include an outlet to a municipal drain system. Mine will have no outlet. The land is dirt over clay over sand. The dirt is maybe a meter thick. There is a little less than a meter of clay. If I can get to the sand I should be able to drain off a significant amount of water. But I am not sure how much water I will accumulate, or how fast the sand can absorb it.

So, how large a basin do I need to accept all the water from a really big rain and then, how fast can that basin absorb the water through the soil below? That is a question without an answer prior to building the basin.

Clearly, I need it large enough to accept what comes in. I will have to guess by simply digging a hole and after that filling it with rocks and large gravel. If it isn't big enough, I will make it bigger.

But how can I measure how long before it is dry? I need to know how fast the absorption is going.

My idea is to put a gated pipe down in the hole I create with a large dip stick. That will give me an idea of how much larger I need to make it if the water is standing in it too long. The basin needs to always be ready for the next rain. So, if the current size isn't keeping up, I will, with the gauge, have an idea of how much larger to make it. Plus, standing water is a breeding ground for mosquitoes. I prefer to do without those, too.

I will ask one of my grounds keepers to hire four laborers to dig a 2 meter by 8 meter hole, 2.5 meters deep at the lowest spot I have. We will see how it behaves. I also want to build up the roadbed coming onto the property a bit. That may allow me to reduce the number of potholes and water hazards I have to drive through on a regular basis but will push more water into the basin.

If all this keeps my mind off the two teen maids, so much the better.

I am done with my breakfast and coffee. It is time to get to work, except that Elarny is squatting down at my feet. She has brought out a plastic tray which contains manicure and pedicure equipment. I guess my next activity is going to be delayed. She is removing my sandals and socks.

She didn't ask. She didn't say a word. She just started this as if it were the most needed activity and there was no need for a consult.

I don't mind and will not complain, but if she is thinking this changes anything in my head, she is misguided.

In truth, it is the very first laying on of hands that has occurred in a while, as Shayla and I were not exactly getting along that well for a prolonged period of time.

The simple feeling of Elarny's hands on my feet transmits a pleasure that conveys more than it ought to. I am actually enjoying this. She probably is unaware of my response, as her eyes are completely focused on my toenails and not my countenance.

Finishing the first foot, she moves over to the next without looking up at all. I wonder if she is fearful that she will find a scowl. And so in silence she plugs along, not aware that I am reveling in the sensations.

Both feet are done and she puts my socks on, followed by the sandals, never looking up once. And then, by God, she grabs my left hand to give me a manicure, still without looking up. She is taking her time. She is working the cuticles back. This is taking a ridiculously long time.

But finally she is completing the task. I am ready to get up and leave when she asks, without looking up, *I cut your hair now?*

I could say, 'no,' but what's the point. I probably am due for a trim and why make a fuss about it? I can deal with the drainage in a bit. *OK, sure, if you have what you need.*

Yes, I have it. It in the house. Wait, I go get it.

Three minutes later she is back out on the terrace with the requisite clippers, shears, comb, and a sheet to put around me.

The haircut takes only fifteen minutes but it concludes with a scalp massage which has lasted maybe ten minutes already. Scalp massages in the Philippines are not unusual, even at barbershops. But they normally don't last ten minutes. The norm might be about fifteen seconds.

Elarny is trying to work me, to work my emotions, through touch. It's a good plan and it is working. It is having an effect. My eyes are closed and I am drifting when I feel my sandals are being removed again.

Elarny is still massaging my scalp, but Vivian is now squatting below me. Quickly enough, Vivian has my socks off and is massaging my feet as Elarny's fingers are still in my hair.

They are working both ends of me and I am feeling it in the middle. Damn, this is good. A fella could get addicted to this sort of thing.

I am still drifting in and out of sleep with closed eyes. I think I feel the zipper on my slacks being lowered. And then a hand finds my cock. I am no longer drifting now. My eyes open to see the top of Vivian's head as she begins to take me into her mouth. Warm lips surround my member and warm lips anoint my brow as Elarny bends over my head to reach her goal.

I reach around and bring Elarny's lips to my lips. My dick is rampant, and heated by a deliciously wet mouth. My lips are treated to an eager mouth and tongue. Hands on my head. Hands on my hips. A warm sun and a gentle breeze.

The seconds extend to minutes. Minutes roll on in unending pleasure, flowing but not ebbing. My hands are on Vivian's head, my fingers entwined in her hair, moving with her as she moves on my member. Elarny is nipping on my lips. Now biting and tugging my lips around with her teeth.

Vivian's mouth is assisted by her hands now as she strokes me at the same time that she is sucking on me. She is becoming more insistent in her actions.

I feel the tightening of my nuts and impending release of my cum, but do not warn Vivian. I cum hard, holding her head on my cock as the cum enters her mouth. I say only one word, *swallow*.

She does and then licks me clean before returning my equipment to its proper place, secured and protected. Without another word both gals withdraw into the house.

I can hardly be angry. I cannot claim it was not enjoyable. That I neither proffered any 'profit' for such acts nor sought the acts from them is not an issue. How I make sense of this sexual contact moving forward is manifestly unclear to me.

Did they think they were staking a claim? Were they trying to teach me a lesson? Did they hope to modify their position with me by the act? They didn't. They did. They didn't.

They have no claim on me. I did learn that, regardless of my internal assumption that it was too soon, it wasn't. It was just too soon for me to seek out the solace by my own initiative. They did not modify their position here.

If I were to get up, walk into the house, grab one of them, pull her onto a bed and fuck her hard, then yes, that one's position here would be modified. As it is, I am neither currently in condition nor do I have inclination to do any such thing.

I am hardly in condition to get up and check out the drainage issues. I am not sure what my 'condition' is right now. I sit here a bit confused and unsure, staring off into the distance.

It is still morning. Nothing has changed and a great deal has changed. Just as there was a shift in my universe when Shayla physically left the property that last time, I sense a shift again. I do not know what it portends, but I know somewhere deep down that I must throw up a barrier, a roadblock, or risk a great disaster. These gals didn't take 'no' as the answer. They ran right through it. That really can't be allowed to stand.

There is a truly sophomoric saying that as one door closes another opens. It's a dumb saying and not even close to a truism. Yet there are times when the dumbest things will surprise you ...

I hear a motorcycle approaching at a distance. There is no one I am expecting, but this is pretty much the end of the road. If I hear a vehicle, this is its destination.

How long have I been sitting here? It must have been a while. As the motorcycle approaches the house, I look at my watch. It is already 10:30. I have been out here for three hours.

It's a she who gets off the bike, and removes the ball cap. There is a helmet, but it was hanging on her arm at the elbow. A lot of good it does down there. She's wearing a knit green polo shirt with the logo on it of a local firm that sells building supplies.

I have not seen her before. But every once in a while a salesperson such as this one shows up looking for business. I guess the stores assume the appearance of sales staff at the property will affect my decisions of from whom I will buy my construction materials. It doesn't.

These stores would be far better off if I could just phone in an order, but they can't take an order without cash in hand so the phone doesn't work for them.

Vivian's head pops out of the front door. Is there something I need her to handle? I tell her that there isn't and she disappears within the house once again.

The woman approaches the terrace and I indicate that she should come and sit near me.

Good morning, Sir Herbert. I am sure she got my name and particulars from her employer.

Good morning to you. Your name please?

I am Nicole Santos, Sir. She flashes a lanyard with a company picture ID attached toward me. *I come to inquire if you need further materials and if I can be of some assistance.*

Is it Ma'am or Miss?

Miss, Sir Herbert. Sir, may I inquire as to the whereabouts of your wife? I was told that she is often the one we deal with for some items.

Really? I hardly believe that! She always left such things to me. Someone has misinformed you. ... Well Miss Nicole, at present, I have no purchase requirements, though I am sure I will soon, maybe even before the end of the day. As to the whereabouts of Ma'am Shayla, I must inform you that she no longer lives here. Maybe the person who sent you out knew that and sought to embarrass you. In any case, Ma'am Shayla and I have decided that separation is better and she has returned to the USA. ... And as to the matter of you being of some assistance, huh, ... that is an interesting question, but any assistance you could offer, that I might need, would have nothing to do with your employment. Does your inquiry extend that far?

Sir? I not understand. How may I be of service to you?

This is a delicate and personal matter. It may not be something you wish to entertain. Shall I proceed?

Yes, please do.

You must understand that this will have nothing to do with your employment and will bring you no profit whatsoever.

Is it legal?

Yes.

Safe?

I think so, yes. But you may disagree.

Then let us proceed.

Can I trust on your discretion, Miss Nicole?

Yes, Sir!

No gossip? You promise?

Yes, Sir. Gossip hurts the one who does it, I think.

Do you have a few minutes? It will take me a while to explain.

Yes. Please take the time you need.

Do you not have another customer to see now?

No, Sir. None today. I just go back to the store when I am done here. I have time.

Very well. ... My wife and I both decided that we should part. That happened just a few days ago. The maids we had, left our employ when she left. I have hired two maids. They seem to be good girls, and I am happy with their work here. But they have it in their minds that they should be my mistresses. ... There is nothing wrong with them as far as beauty or personality is concerned, but I need a way to show them that I can be, and may be, interested in other women. I think I need to show them this in front of them. Telling them does not seem to have worked. I find you very attractive. I am not proposing any serious relationship with you, but are you able and willing to help me show these two gals that I have another woman I am interested in?

If I do this, be your girl in front of them, is there a chance that you might have a real interest in me if we like this?

Yes, there is that. But I do not know you and a statement of serious interest would be foolish on my part or on your part. You and I do not know each other at all. The point is that they do not know that we do not know each other.

But if we do get to know each other, it is possible?

If I were telling this to someone else, they would think this is nuts.
But you, Sir, know how real such things are.

[VeryWellAged: Once again, I seem to be the audience to this document and the man is right. This couldn't be more common, and yes, those who don't live in this world will think it is simply not possible.]

Yes, ... it is possible. But what they need to see is a relationship that looks like it already exists. Not a first meeting.

So there needs to be intimacy now and learning later?

Yes, I guess you could put it that way.

You want to make them jealous?

I want to make them understand that they can't claim me by offering sex.

Oh! They do that?

Yes.

I see. So we will have sex?

That is completely up to you, Miss Nicole, but yes, that would be best.

You understand that if we do this, I will want you to try to be mine?

Miss Nicole, I can never be anyone's completely. I am married and will always be married. But if you want to be in my life long term, if you and I can build a relationship, then yes I am very open to a long term, but not exclusive, relationship. I will never be yours only.

You have sex with your maids?

I have not fucked either of them. I have not pursued either of them. One, when I was resting, opened my slacks and sucked me. But I had not asked that she do that and I need to make her know that her act does not confer on her any special status.

But you allowed it. Yes?

Yes.

You will allow it again?

Yes, probably, but it does cause a problem if she or the other thinks it changes their position here. If they see that it doesn't and that there is another with whom I have intimate relations, they might well stop any such attempts in the future.

Why don't you just fire them?

Because I have already lost two. One of whom found that she couldn't have me alone for herself. I need to try something different, or at least that is the way it seems to me.

Why me?

Because I have no power over you. Because if you do this, it will be because you want to do so for your own reasons, not because you feel you must. Because it does not confer a salary onto you or grant you a sale. It does not elevate you in your

employment. And because I find you attractive and so your hope that something might come from it might be true.

Sir Herbert, you are attractive, wealthy, macho, I think stable, and why a girl such as me would not want this, I not know. If you want me, I want you.

Then shall we go up to my bedroom and make this official?

Yes. They not had sex with you. I will. With a wicked smile she says, *That is good.*

She ditches her shoes at the front door. As we enter the house both Vivian and Elarny are there in the room. I introduce them to my dear friend Nicole before escorting Nicole upstairs to my third floor bedroom.

Nicole is playing her part and reserving any comments about her first impressions of the house until we are safely behind closed doors.

She is a good looking gal, probably in her early 20s. She is not skinny, but there doesn't appear to be any excess on her. Her hair is probably dyed the color brown I am seeing, but her eyes are brown, so who knows. There might well be a lot of Spanish blood in her veins. It is entirely possible. Her features are certainly suggestive of a mixed heritage.

I expect to get questions or comments once the bedroom door is closed. What I didn't expect is her embracing me and seeking out my lips. But that is what is happening. Her body, fully clothed as it is, is plastered against me as we stand just inside the bedroom door.

She is on tiptoes and pulling me down for our lips to reach each other. Meet they do.

This gal seems hungry for the next course. But I want to take my time. This, for me, is not a race. If my world was altered this morning, and it was, this might be seen as weird medicine, but it very well may be exactly the right thing.

Nicole, come to the bed with me and just allow me to appreciate you.

She looks at me with confusion in her eyes but allows me to guide her over to the bed, where I encourage her to sit.

If I was in the States this would not be happening for any number of reasons. If I was in the States, no gal in her right mind would simply want to jump into bed with me, without a damned good reason... well maybe the same is true here. The difference here is that I am, quite simply for her, the very good reason as I live and breathe. So no, this I am sure sounds nuts to those back in the USA, but brother, we ain't in the good old USA.

And that is at least one reason why I was not so eager to go to the USA with a royal pain of a wife. There really wasn't anything there that can match what is here for the taking, all the financial reasons notwithstanding.

Sitting next to her I am more than aware how implausible this would seem to others, and yet it's as real as it gets. I am enjoying the view of her as I ask her to, *Tell me a little bit about yourself. Do you have a steady boyfriend?*

Maybe...

Oh, Nicole, come on, tell me the truth.

Yes, Sir, I have but it not important. I will leave him.

Have you had sex with him?

She looks down and doesn't say a word.

It's OK if you have, but then I will wear a condom and do so every time, if there is another time, unless you stop and get tested for STD's. You should ask me to get tested too before you allow me inside you without protection.

I see. I not understand why you ask. You are right. But Sir, I always make my boyfriend use a condom. I do not want to marry him and do not want to have a child with him.

So, we should always use a condom too! See?

Oh, no, Sir! If you want me to have a child, I do it. That OK.

Yeh, OK, I got that loud and clear. Hey why not, as she sees it. It's the same reason she's up here in my bedroom right now.

Exactly how old are you?

Twenty-three.

When is your birthday?

On the 14th last month.

Who do you live with?

My parents, two sisters and my younger brother.

Do they own the business you work for?

Oh! No, Sir. My mother, she has a sari-sari. My father be a panday³.

How far did you get in school?

I graduate High School and finish three years of college in business accounting.

But you didn't graduate?

No, Sir. My sister, she help me for a while, but lost her job. So I have nothing for tuition.

Do you like sex?

She giggles. *Of course, yes! Who not?*

How many lovers have you had?

Sir?

How many people have you had some type of sex with?

My boyfriend. No one else.

Any playful touching with girlfriends?

³ Carpenter

We hold and kiss that all.

May I take your clothing off?

Yes. That would be nice, I think.

I stand her back up and proceed, with her assistance to do just that. She is a bit shy and giggles a little, but there are no problems. She really is good looking. Maybe five foot two inches tall, her breasts look like B cups and stand out nicely. Her skin is lighter than many Filipinas. There is no pubic hair but that is no big surprise. Her smile is big and as soon as the last article comes off, her panties, she throws herself against me again and starts the kissing.

I, however, am fully clothed. *Don't you want my clothing off?*

More giggles and a, *Yes, Sir!*

How about, Yes, Herb!

You want I call you Herb?

Are we going to make love?

I hope!

Well then, don't you think you should call me something other than, Sir?

OK, Herb!

I am about to unbutton my shirt, but she takes over the task of getting me naked. I don't have any reason to stop her.

Once the job is complete, she drags me back onto the bed. I reach out to the night stand for a condom. Once she sees what I have retrieved, she makes a sound of disappointment and tells me again it isn't needed.

It may not be needed in the future, but for now, it is.

Herb, I just finish my period yesterday. I not get pregnant now. Please, I want to feel this with you. This is special for me. You special for me. Please.

I am of two minds, but I don't think she's lying. I put the condom back in the door and get a '*whoop!*' from her.

Back on the bed, I draw her into my arms and she is more than ready to comply. Her lips, her hands, and her legs all go into motion to become as connected to me as she can manage. Her cunt is awash as it presses onto my thigh which she is humping.

I roll her onto her back and simply slide in. She is not sloppy loose, but I have no obstructions. I feel her surrounding my cock on all sides as we hump away, breathing hard, kissing passionately, grunting, and pushing toward a wet and sweaty completion.

I pull back, grab her legs in my arms as I pound her some more. She continues panting, sweating, breathing hard, grunting, and not saying a damned thing. She is staring at me.

I turn her over on her knees and take her cunt from the back, while I pinch her tits.

Finally I put her back on her back, legs again in the air. She is staring at me again. No words are uttered as I pound her cunt until I cum deep inside her.

We lie back, a wet sweaty mess and rest for a bit before getting up and showering. Nicole really needs to get going as she is supposed to be working. We have each other's cellphone numbers on our respective phones. I am sure I will see her soon and I think she wants it to be sooner rather than later.

Herb, I will tell my boyfriend we are over. Only you now.

You understand that the maids here will still try to have sex with me?

Ha! You tell them that they can't unless I give them permission! And she giggles.

No I won't, but I will tell them that you have to be present. What do you think about that?

Yes, they will not want that.

Oh, they may and it will be what happens. It will either be them or another gal. You cannot have me alone.

We will see. ... she gives me a wicked smile before, Maybe I will like that! We kiss once more before she exits the door, quite unescorted and exits the house. I hear her motorcycle start up and leave.

Walking down the stairs, I meet both my maids on the second floor landing. Elarny has been crying. That much is clear. Vivian may be pissed, but crying isn't her thing. She does have a question.

You trying to teach us a lesson? We not important to you?

No, I am not saying that you are not important. I am telling you, just like I did the other day, that for you it is too soon. I told that to Nicole. She said that so long as she is with me, if either of you wants me sexually, more than what happened this morning, then that's OK with her. But only when she is here.

You lie!

She's probably still on her bike, but here is her number. Text her and ask.

Ha! I tell her to come back tonight so I can get fucked by you! We see what she say. She will leave you for sure!

I smile. Why not. If I don't see Nicole again, I won't die and if she agrees, that makes my world far more interesting and has the added benefit that all will agree that I am not theirs alone.

Vivian texts and tells me she has written in Basaya that both of them want me in them tonight, so Nicole needs to return for dinner at 6PM.

She is about to give me the phone back, but I tell her to keep it until the message is returned. She has it in her hand and is about to walk away, pretty pissed off, when a text arrives.

Initially I have no idea what the message says, but gather that it is a bit stunning to Vivian, because she is just staring at it and then shows it to Elarny who starts crying again, hugs Vivian and then looks at me with a question on her face.

Elarny is sweeping up here on the first floor. My luncheon plate has been cleared. I ask her to put her current task aside and come upstairs with me. She doesn't know why, but she does come, following me up the two flights and then into the bedroom.

You want me to clean up now from you with that woman?

No, Elarny. I want to see what you look like without your clothing. Will you do that for me?

You comparing?

No, I just want to really see who I am with, as I suck on your pussy. You want me to eat your pussy, don't you?

Why you want to do that?

Elarny, what I want to do with you isn't the question. The only question is, do you want me to do it? I thought you did. If you don't, you can go back to work now.

That catches her up short. It's a binary choice. She either wants to play ball with me, or she wants to be the maid. She needs to choose. She wants to hold on to the hurt. But this option, the one I am offering at this moment, is denying her the option of staying angry without losing out on that which she seemingly wants the most.

She seems to get the point. Rather than immediately acquiescing or rejecting, she is mulling things a bit. The hurt and anger she has felt is real. Letting go of it at the moment is proving harder than she thought.

I am patient. I sit on the bed and wait on her to choose. A couple of times it looks like she will speak, only to shut down each time. This girl has been on an emotional roller coaster ever since she got here. Either I need to get her off it or she probably needs to go.

She is giving me an intense look. Is she trying to read my mind? It seems like she might be doing just that, because immediately after that, she stands up and begins to disrobe, as I had requested.

The clothing does not come off quickly. It does not come off in a sexy fashion. Meticulously is probably the only way to describe the process. Each article is either hung or folded. Each article gets her unwavering attention, as if, at that moment, nothing else matters. Maybe it doesn't. Maybe it's a way to hold on to the anger a bit longer, a way to say, OK I do it, but I am still pissed off.

Once she has completed the task, she comes to me and, unbidden, bids me stand and repeats the performance with me and my clothing. Her hands are workmanlike, but she does touch me, frequently and without censoring any act. In a way she is saying, *'and just so we are clear, I still have my dignity.'*

The act of being disrobed now complete, I pull her to me and seek a kiss.

Elarny is trembling. She hadn't trembled earlier this morning on the terrace, but then it was her actions and my passivity. Things are different now. She seems very aware of that. This is me seeking her and her body, the very thing she was seeking and I was chary, seeking to withhold.

She will get the prize now, but at what cost? By getting it, does she get anything at all? Or is she simply losing something. Has she made a bad play? Is it that men are so infuriating? She will get the physical gratification but not the ownership of the man who gives it. Are we men so unable or unwilling to provide what she needs and wants, without losing her 'self'?

The kiss starts out hesitantly, without commitment. My arms insist, my lips seek her. My hands cradle her head, demanding her attention to this simple act. She surrenders and the kiss deepens. Her arms encircle me. She flattens her body against me. Skin against skin. I feel her pulse, the rise and fall of her breasts as she breathes. Her tongue invades my mouth. She moans. I feel it as well as hear it.

Yes, but no more weird than you agreeing and then actually accepting to be here tonight.

You not want them to think you theirs. Correct?

Yes.

So I think this the way. But I not think they will agree.

Oh, I thought they might. That is why I suggested it. My question is right now more about you than it is about them. Are you going to do this?

I get to be with you if I do, right?

It looks that way to me. But I want no problems between you and the girls. This morning you said you kissed a girl before. Have you really?

Why you ask that?

If Elarny can kiss you and feel safe, then maybe we won't have problems.

What about the other?

That one's a fighter. If she sees Elarny kiss you and be OK, she will do it too. It's Elarny I am most worried about.

But you worried about me too. Correct?

Truth?

Yes.

I am very worried about you. I don't really know you. I am not sure you are up to it. But if you can kiss and get along with Elarny, then I think we might all be OK. ... I am going to fuck both girls with you right there. How you behave may make this work or maybe it will fall apart. Maybe you will leave. Maybe they will leave. You don't stay unless this works with the girls. They may go too but if they stay they need to know they will never be the only ones in my life. You don't get to stay unless there are no problems. You can't be the only one in my life either.

So this a test for all?

Nicole is truly pissed off. First because she knows that she is gone too with that pronouncement and second because of the unwarranted accusation.

You stupid bitch! You think I will get him? You are a fool. Because of you, I lose him too. He tell me that before. He say he not know me well. He accept me only because you are causing him worry. He like you, but you push too hard. If you go, then I go. He say that.

Elarny is crying again and leaves the table. Vivian is about to get up to follow her, but Nicole tells her she has done quite enough damage and gets up herself to find Elarny.

I am more than mildly pissed off. Vivian is sitting right here and I suspect that the expression on my face isn't displaying anything she is happy to see.

Sir, I make mistake.

No, I do not think you did. You only showed me who you really are. That is not a mistake. It may be something that causes you a problem, but it is better I know now rather than later.

Sir, this is not normal and I not understand maybe. But it is mistake. It your right to have it your way. If I want, and you say 'no unless you agree to do this way,' Sir, that is my choice. I choose to do this with you or I choose I not do this. But I wrong to talk bad. I am sorry. Really, Sir, I sorry.

I hear thunder outside. Rain starts beating down, sheets of water obscuring all beyond the terrace as I look out the window. The roar of the downfall fills the room with the fury of the deluge.

Now with this storm, Nicole will be stuck here a while. I don't need to be sitting, stuck, in this place surrounded by upset and emotionally wounded women. And... maybe I overreacted.

Go find the other two and tell them I have accepted your apology. If they still want, we will resume the activities after dinner.

Reader. The clock on the nightstand says it's 9:30PM. The bedroom door is locked. I get up and walk, in my boxers, to unlock and open it.

Opening the door, I am greeted by all three of the gals. All are barefooted. There is no makeup on them, and their hair is put up in knots of the type they typically sleep with. Each is in PJs. Sexy they ain't. Sure, they're still cute, but in a sort of wholesome way. One set of PJs has a Hello Kitty theme. Another has little panda bears all over it. The third is covered with cartoon super heroes. These are not silky PJs. They are formless flannel affairs.

Still, I suspect that there is nothing wholesome on their minds as they walk right by me and into the bedroom.

I am still standing by the door and the three are now between me and my bed. The aircon is running and I guess I might as well close the door. No sense in losing the value of the aircon. The gals don't look like they are about to leave any time soon.

Elarny grabs my arm and leads me back to my bed.

Sir, we know, no sex. But we stay here tonight. We be yours. Come sleep, now.

I guess I might want to tell a lie here, but there are things in your stories that get to me. I know you say you don't write 'stroke stories,' and I'll concede that point, but, well, I am pretty worked up at the moment. I might not have been feeling like I wanted any sex when I entered the room, but at the moment, my thoughts are very much in the vein of wondering... is it really possible to fuck the three of them before I cum?

My face must be giving something away as each of them suddenly seems to be looking at my 'tent' below. Vivian and Nicole start to giggle. Elarny is just staring at the protuberance. It is Nicole who finally speaks up and asks, *Which one you want?*

All of you. Get those damned pajamas off and get on the bed.

Me too? Really? Not just the two of them?

That was the deal, right? I will not to be with them, without you here too. Right?

Yes. This is true. But you do me too?

Nicole... that I can decide later. But why haven't a one of you moved? Get with it! Clothing off!

Sexy, romantic, it isn't. I guess if I wasn't so horny it might be funny. But right now I want my dick in a cunt. Which of them it is in is less important than that we get with the program. They want to be my girls? Well, damn it, it's time to act like that in a meaningful way.

I ditch my boxers as they jump out of their PJs. Vivian has been the most difficult today, but she is the one who probably needs the most attention at the moment. I have fucked Nicole and eaten out Elarny.

I am not going to claim that all Filipina are small. No, there are some tall ones. There are some fat ones. But the fat ones are usually from more affluent families. Same with the really tall ones. Maybe they received better nutrition. Maybe it's because the tall ones have Chinese genes, which parenthetically means they also come from more affluent families... just saying... But these gals don't fall into those categories and they are neither really tall nor do they weigh much. I probably weigh twice as much as any one of them. As I pull Vivian under me, I am careful to keep my weight off her. I did as much with my wife and with Nicole earlier today. I will do the same with each of them.

Cock in cunt is not a problem, no matter how small these gals are. I fit in nicely as I slide down deep into Vivian's juicy hairless cunt.

I am rock hard. Vivian is taking all of me, grunting and urging me on. This is hard to explain. Yes she is pretty. Yes I am enjoying fucking her. Yes I am going to fuck her many times in the future. And yes I am staying hard. But I do not feel love for her, I am not getting 'off' on being in her. I am not getting 'off' on getting her 'off' even though it appears that I am doing just that... getting her 'off,' I mean. She is looking up at me with a look I cannot adequately describe. It is sort of like idol worship. I am just smiling and I ram my cock into her cunt.

I feel her tense and maybe cum. I am not really sure, but I sense that she is coming down off wherever she has been. I pull out and get a little bit of a complaint from her. I ignore it and move over a little to get Elarny under me. I ate her out pretty well before. I am not sure if she really wants to go for a ride now. Her cunt is dry as I try to push in. There has been no foreplay. I haven't given it any thought. All I want to do is fuck these gals, not make love to them.

Elarny's dry cunt makes it necessary to short stroke her a bit. Thankfully, that is working and I am getting farther in each stroke. At first Elarny takes short breaths. She may be hiding a bit of discomfort. I get fully in as the short strokes bring forth her own juices. Now she is wet, swearing, and sighing with each stroke.

Her arms reach up to my neck, pulling me down, pulling my weight more on to her, as she pulls my head down for kiss. It means a lot to her. I can tell. There is a fervency in it, a need, almost a desperation transmitting from her being to mine. If I felt little when I was inside Vivian other than the heat of her cunt on my cock, now I feel urgent need. Now I sense something I can't quite fathom and yet seem to inherently understand.

Her body is alive with that need for me. Not just the need for sexual fulfillment, but for me. I had hoped to fuck all three, but at this very moment, I know that it will not happen. I know with a certainty that Elarny is about to receive my seed. She knows it too. She pulls her head back and looks at me with a knowledge in her eyes that defies explanation that she and I are about to consummate this coupling. She nods her head and in a whisper says, *Now!*

Now it is. My cum shoots into the gal.

Is it a vast amount of cum? Probably not, but she feels it and I am depleted, falling back onto the mattress.

Sleep comes quickly as I lie between Vivian and Elarny. Four of us on the mattress.

I sleep for only four hours before the need to take a leak gets me up and out of bed. I climb over Vivian to do so, and in the process awaken her. As I return to the bed, Vivian seeks the bathroom before rejoining us. As she returns to the bed, the beginnings of a hard-on I am sporting are obvious to Vivian. She snuggles in, spooning against me.

I reach out around her, my hand encompassing an entire breast. It is small, but it is mine for the taking. She offers up no resistance as my fingers play with her nipple. No, there is no resistance, instead she pushes her bottom harder against my member and places a hand over my hand, urging me to squeeze her tit harder.

I pinch her nipple. She wiggles her butt against me. I slide my hand down to her cunt. She welcomes the visit, spreading her legs a bit to allow me better access. She is wet.

My index finger finds the hood over her clit and presses down. She bucks her groin up towards me. I slide one finger inside her while playing with her clit at the same time. She sighs.

We continue this way for a good few minutes. Vivian's need is clear. I am hard and in need too. To get her on her back, I pull back from her and climb over the gal. Pushing the covers off us, I grab her legs, one in each arm. Her ass is slightly off the mattress as my dick enters her and drives in hard and sure of its path.

If I felt little the last time I was in her, now I feel a great deal. She arches her back, trying to get me as deep as she can. I am right there with her, pushing hard. There is a heat I feel from inside her. Her need, her desire, is real. She is breathing hard. Her hands grab my arms. Her legs push her ass higher into the air as we rut away minute after minute. I have no idea of how long we have been at it. Time is meaningless. I feel the rush of her womanly juices time after time. And then, her nails dig in to my arms. It is not a gentle thing. I suspect she is breaking my skin and drawing blood. But as intense as the pain is, it also triggers something inside me and Vivian gets cum in her cunt.

I have my eggs and toast. The gals are having a soup containing noodles and canned sardines along with the tomato sauce from the sardines coloring the soup. It isn't something that interests me in the least, but they seem to like it.

There is some conversation between the three but I don't have a clue as to what is being said. Whatever it is does not seem to be a problem.

I finish my plate and am rising to take it to the sink, but Vivian jumps up to take it from me. She looks at my coffee cup, grabs it and refills it before returning to the table. Not a word has passed between us.

One of the workmen knocks on the front door. Before I can get up to respond, Elarny moves to allow entrance. The man has a list on a piece of paper. He needs more items purchased. This is par for the course. The guys work as laborers. They provide no materials. That is my obligation. I look at the list. I will need to make a trip to three stores to collect the items.

Nicole reaches out and asks to see the list. Sure I will get a few of the items from her store, but there is much I cannot get from her. Either her store doesn't carry the item, or she doesn't have the brand I am using. The workman is still standing here and she asks him a question. I gather she is asking if a brand matters in a couple of cases. The answer is yes it does in one case, but not in another. I tell the guy he will have it all by the time his lunch is over. That seems to work for him and he leaves just in time for my painter to come in with a second list. Nicole's company does not carry the brand of paint I am using. Still she looks at the list.

Once the painter leaves the room she seems to gather something up from inside herself. *Sir, allow me to get this. I know it not all come from our company, but I can get it all on one truck. You give me the money and I will get all at a good price. Better price for you.*

Her request begs the question of trust. The paint alone will be a little over fifteen thousand pesos. There are eight bags of Island white skim coat that will be just over three thousand pesos. Twenty sheets of 3/4

inch ordinary plywood at about 900 pesos each, plus some finishing nails, all totaled will cost more than eighteen thousand pesos. I need more concealed hinges and cabinet handles. I need some sandpaper. The Non-Sag epoxy isn't inexpensive and while the masking tape is, I need twenty rolls. I need a few new brushes and paint rollers. Today's purchases will require about fifty thousand pesos. That's over a thousand dollars. I suspect Nicole's monthly earnings do not amount to seven thousand pesos. So do I trust her?

I guess the answer is that I do. Just in case I haven't figured it correctly, I hand her sixty thousand pesos and she leaves.

She doesn't carry Davies brand paint, or the brand of rollers and brushes the painter wants. She can supply the poly-fill, there the brand doesn't matter. Her company does not carry the ordinary plywood. They only carry marine plywood, but she knows where to get the ordinary type and she knows twenty sheets requires a truck to deliver it. She will work with that other company and get it all, including the paint which comes from yet another store, on the same truck along with the Non-Sag, skim coat, hinges and cabinet handles that come from her company. Both lists in her pocket, she leaves on her motorcycle at a good clip if not exactly burning rubber.

Vivian is done with her food, but she hasn't left the table. She is still for maybe two minutes. She picks up her cell phone and seems to be looking at Facebook or something like that. Hell, I don't know... maybe it's Instagram. Anyway she seems distracted. And then as if from nowhere in particular... *We need many things from the market. Give me five thousand pesos. I will go now.*

I get it. This is a test. She has gone alone once before, and she has gone once with Lena, but the purchases were small. This time she is pushing a point of pride. If I tell her I will go with her later, which is what I want to do, to make sure I get the things I prefer at the market, I will have failed the test. She wants to know if I will trust her with money and the task to get what I need, like just what has happened with Nicole.

I can go with her another time. This time I need to give her the cash without comment. I don't think suggesting Elarny should go too works either. This is a test of how I see her, on her own.

So I will see her bet and raise it a bit. I pull my wallet back out once more and give her eight thousand pesos, saying, *Please get some more rhum and beer. And maybe you can get some nice pork ribs. OK?*

OK. I get it.

Ten minutes later she is gone.

Elarny is cleaning the bedrooms and CRs. I go out to see my grounds keepers. The issue of a catch basin has yet to be resolved. I have been, if you will pardon the pun, waylaid for the last twenty-four hours. I never made it off the terrace yesterday. Today I intend to accomplish the task.

That is the plan, but I only get half way out to my men when they come running up to me. They need to get to town. They just found out their cousin was killed last night. There are four orphans that need protection and they must leave.

Getting the details isn't easy and they want to get going, so I am not sure I got all of it, but here's what I do get.

Their cousin was a messenger for a local bank. He got the job eleven years ago when his father, the uncle to my guys, who had been a messenger for the same bank, was killed in a traffic accident while driving for the company. The bank offered him his father's job to allow the family to regain the lost income. There is some point they are making related to the fact that their cousin was single then.

I am not sure if that was a requirement for the job, but they seem to be making it sound as if it was. Anyway, it seems their cousin got married within months of getting the job.

During the next four years, he and his wife had four kids. And then, the guys tell me, the wife got a job as an OFW⁵ in Saudi Arabia. I can surmise that she might have had enough of getting pregnant, but I hold my tongue. Anyway when their youngest is only three months old, the gal leaves. That was seven years ago.

So now this guy, whose mother and father are both dead, is caring for four kids all on his own, all the while trying to hold down the messenger job.

The shit gets worse when, two years into this separation the wife stops sending any money home to help with the finances. For the next five years the guy plugs on as best he can. And then yesterday, he was making a messenger run at night.

On a blind curve, a semi was jackknifed across the entire road. There were no warning triangles, no illumination of any type. The guy ran headlong into the side of the trailer and it decapitated him. The wife is still in Saudi Arabia and the kids are now functionally orphans, if not legally so.

Anyway, my guys need to go. I get it, and tell them to do what they must.

I am not going to get anything done with the catch basin today.

Walking back to the house, I look over at my vehicle sitting there unused. As the errands are being done by others, it will sit there for the entire day most likely. It's an interesting turn of events.

While I was with my wife, she hated to run the errands and she sure as hell wasn't going to buy construction materials. That was what I found so odd about when Nicole first arrived and asked about Shayla.

Shayla's maids bought the groceries, though her lists were highly specific and variation on the part of the maids, when shopping, was

⁵ Overseas Foreign Worker.

not permitted. Anything that could not be purchased as per the list required a call back to the house for further instructions.

The building of the house often required two or three trips to town each day, and so I was not normally just hanging out here other than on Sundays.

Sundays were often social gatherings here and that meant that I wasn't just hanging out then either.

I feel confused. My entire life feels like it has been put into a blender and whizzed around. I know I have done this to myself. I know I was the one who recognized the likelihood of it all being possible. But the knowing and the doing was an exercise in... what? Spite? Anger?

Doing what I have been able to do with these gals, without considering the logical implications of it all, has produced unexpected consequences. One of these is that I am no longer doing things I used to enjoy doing.

I knew I could have maids and could have women to fuck. Did I consider what was going to happen when I did? I did not. The emotions, the tests, the fits of pique, the desire, and the need, are a bouillabaisse so rich in ingredients that no one thing can be pulled out from the rest.

These gals are not stick figures. They may hold basic and overwhelming needs which allows for what I can get, but they are simply all too human. 'Objectification' may be way more crude than what I was doing or how I was seeing them, but there is a tinge of truth in it here.

I get no further than the terrace before I decide to walk around the house, primarily the second floor where most of the work is being done, and look at what all the workmen are doing. I have done this often enough, so there is nothing unusual in it. Doing so gets smiles from the guys but it also makes them a bit nervous. I spend time telling each that he is doing a good job.

Well I can do that for just so long before I run out of things to look at, and decide to walk the property line and make sure everything is OK. My grounds keepers do this each day and so I have no reason to suspect anything is wrong. But I do it anyway, if only to ascertain that all is just fine as well as to just kill some time.

In the process, I meet with two of the farmers to whom we rent out some of the farmland. They don't have much English, and the conversation is severely limited. Still we smile and exchange pleasantries.

I get back to the house in time for lunch, which Elarny has concocted for me in my absence. Once again I offer praise. I might as well. There is nothing wrong with it and the absence of praise may be taken as disapproval.

This afternoon I decide I should draw up plans to extend the carport. There were more individuals in the house when my wife was here, but the maids were... 'just maids.' These gals here now are more than maids. One already has a bike and I suspect I need to get a second bike with some side bags for shopping, or maybe a tricycle. The current carport is technically big enough, but it probably could stand a little enlargement.

Truth be known, I enjoy designing and building things. The fun thing is that all I have to do is come up with an idea and these workmen are more than ready and able to bring it to life. They may be using crude and simple tools, but their imagination is great. Oh, there are times I do suggest that there is a 'better way' but, overall, they are great, inventive, and highly skilled.

The task keeps me busy long enough that Vivian has returned with the shopping. A truck carrying everything needed for the ongoing construction and painting also has arrived and the items delivered. Nicole has not returned, but she does have a job and I bet I will not see her until evening.

As I continue to work on the carport plan, Vivian brings me a tall glass of buko juice⁶ and a sticky rice⁷ treat she picked up in town, along with the receipts and the balance left from the pesos I gave her.

I leave the receipts and the pesos sitting where she put them. There is no need to count or check. I suspect that to do so would be a slight. Maybe I am wrong in that assessment, but that's the way I play it.

I do take a sip of the buko and thank her for the merienda⁸. In response I get a smile and a question. *You like?*

Yes. I like both.

And then comes the second smile, followed by, *Good*, before she walks off, swinging her hips just a bit.

Yesterday she was pissed. Now? Now she has tested me, and seems to be happy with the arrangement, ill-defined as it may be.

I am finishing up my design, over-built that it may well be, just in time to be called to a supper of grilled tuna belly, and some vegetables cooked up with a massive amount of garlic and just enough small chopped up sautéed pork to add a bit of savory flavor to the dish. There are small dishes of a calamansi and soy sauce mixture in which to dip the tuna. Rice is, of course, on the table as well. A beer completes what I have been offered.

As is normal here, the tuna is over-cooked, but that is the way they like it. I have learned that there is no way to win and get tuna less incinerated. So I eat it and do my best to enjoy it. I have better luck enjoying the vegetable dish.

About an hour after my meal, Nicole arrives. She looks tired and disappears to shower and change before reappearing to eat a bit. She

⁶ Liquid from a fresh coconut.

⁷ In this case a sweetened glutinous rice bar with a sugar encrusted chewy top.

⁸ Snack.

dropped off the receipts and the balance of unused pesos on the dining table as she came in.

I wonder, is this going to be the new normal? My mind is wandering when the arrival of my grounds keepers interrupts all that.

Sir, we come back from the home of our cousin.

Is all OK?

No, Sir. It not. There a problem.

I see. What is it?

The children, Sir. They not have a place to go. What they do? Their Lola⁹ is patay¹⁰. Their Lolo¹¹ is patay. Their Tatay¹² patay na¹³. Their Nanay¹⁴ she is OFW.

There are no uncles or aunts?

None here, Sir. DSWD¹⁵ maybe will decide. We not know. But they say wait for their Nanay to come from Saudi Arabia. We not know when this is. Sir, it OK if we ask something?

What is it?

It OK if the children stay with us until their Nanay come?

Where?

With us, Sir.

⁹ Grandmother.

¹⁰ Dead.

¹¹ Grandfather.

¹² Father.

¹³ Now.

¹⁴ Mother.

¹⁵ The Philippines' Department of Social Welfare and Development

quickly decide that it isn't a particularly good idea. Instead I decide to ask a simple and straightforward question.

OK, so how do you three see this as working tonight... and what about tomorrow and all the days that follow?

What I get back are blank stares.

I wait, but waiting isn't producing any more information. I try a different question.

Why are all three of you here?

This time it appears that I am going to get an answer. The only question is who will provide it. There seems to be a quiet negotiation occurring between the three of them. Vivian either wins or loses, depending on how you want to see it, as she is the one who finally answers.

Sir, you say it cannot be me alone, or Elarny alone. It must be both or not at all. True?

Yes...

And, Sir, you say, that Nicole must be with you if you are with us? True?

Yes...

So how we not all here if you with me or Elarny?

I'll be damned. She has taken what I meant and turned it into a literal arrangement. I only meant that I would not choose one over another. But they have taken it to mean that they cannot be alone with me. I further only meant that Nicole must be with me the first time I am with either one, but I didn't make that clear and so that is why they assume she must be here too.

Vivian, please bring me a piece of paper and a pen.

Now?

Yes, right now.

We are on the third floor. Vivian needs to go down to the first to get the items. While we wait, I tell Elarny and Nicole about the four kids who will be here on the property for a week.

We are still discussing the matter when Vivian returns and that requires I start over and explain much of it a second time. These gals sense that this matter of the four kids isn't going to end well. They suspect the mother will not want to stay with the kids and she will be unable to take them with her. Without family to take the kids in, the kids will end up in an orphanage.

While the conversation continues I tear the paper into three pieces and write a number on each before folding each into a small square. The gals have not been paying any attention to my activities. I mix up the pieces of paper and toss them on the bed.

Take one piece and open it.

Each of them takes their square of paper totally confused about the meaning of this.

Who has number one?

Vivian does.

Who has two?

That is Nicole.

Elarny, you have the one marked three?

She acknowledges it.

OK, tonight Vivian is with me. Tomorrow Nicole is here. Elarny you are here after that. Each of you gets one night alone with me. We will see how that works and discuss any changes after that. So two of you scoot!

They are surprised but seem to be OK with it. Vivian is more than OK with it and that is no surprise. No surprise at all.

I, sure as hell, don't want to enfranchise one gal to think she is 'the one.' But I really don't need more than one gal at a time. It was a bit

weird last night. Once was quite enough for that. So long as none think they are the only one, one at a time works for me.

Vivian is cute, sexy, and more than willing. That part is what I like. The emotional crap I have been dealing with these past few days, I can do without. The question is, is the emotional crap over, or is this just a respite?

For now, tonight is not a normal night. I need a shower, but I am not getting one yet. What I have are lips on me, a groin grinding on my groin. Arms encircling me. Eyes, all the while, staring at me and into my eyes.

We almost fall onto the bed, still fully dressed. That there is little she has on that can't be pushed aside is a technicality. She has PJ's on. Soft flannel PJ's with an elastic band around her waist. There is no bra under the tops of her PJs. My hand finds her breast without encumbrance. Her breasts are small as is the nipple I am playing with between my fingers. My other hand encompasses a globe of an ass cheek. Everything about her is small and her ass cheek is amazingly so, almost childlike in size. It surprises me as I grip it firmly and push her groin even more firmly into me.

The lights in the bedroom are still on and the sight of her brown breast below my hand seems to be amping up my desire. I want her.

I reach down and pull her PJ top off. She just smiles and pulls me in for another kiss.

I pull back to look at her. This seventeen-year-old small-breasted brown-skinned girl, barefooted, wearing just her PJ bottoms isn't sexy in a centerfold sort of way. It is more primal and more basic. There is no makeup, no artifice. There is no barrier. There is only willing supplication of this young woman as I put one hand on either side of the elastic and pull her PJ bottoms down and off, tossing them across the room.

Her hairless cunt glistens, unprotected, and willing to be taken. Her heart willing to give me her love and her hope for a future far better than her very recent past.

I am still dressed as I pull her naked body to me. We kiss. We exchange caresses.

I stroke her bare back, and the inside of her thighs. I kiss her neck. I suck her small breasts and her oh so tiny nipples.

She denies me nothing. She will accept anything. I know it. She knows it. There is nothing complicated about it. Is this evil as Lena thinks? Vivian doesn't think so. I can't conceive how such willing acts could ever be evil.

This has to do with shelter, clothing, rice, and safety. I know it. She knows it. Why does anyone need to make it about anything else?

I pull back again and remove my clothing as Vivian watches approvingly. She knows what comes next. It is not something to be feared. It is the goal of the night. It is a goal we both share in, if for very different reasons.

I get my appetite for a lovely young sexy and stable sex companion sated without the downside of anointing her as the one and only.

She won't be a gold digger as she can't afford to be seen as greedy and ungrateful. Still, I will make sure her life is easier than it would have ever been had she not entered my bed.

It is skin against skin now. I take Vivian in my arms again. Her kisses betray the passion she is feeling. I push her on to her back, get between her legs and with her hand guiding my dick, I push in. She assists as her hips make the needed adjustments to get me in as deep as possible.

Her cunt is hot, damned hot. She is well lubricated and while she is tight, the liquid makes the going effortless.

I don't want to crush her and so I use my arms to keep my body up, off her torso. The benefit being that I am watching her as I fuck her, this young pretty girl with her small hips, tiny waist, and small breasts.

Maybe that's not a turn on for some men, but it is for me. I pound her pussy as I enjoy the view. Vivian is biting her lower lip, moaning and staring at me with eyes as big as they can get. She is nodding her head as if to say, *Yes, more!*

I give her more. Her legs wrap around me. Her body tenses and goes stiff as her back arches up. She moans loudly. I slam in again and again, only to cum deep and convincingly before rolling off and quietly swearing that Vivian is one fine example of the opposite sex.

We are just lying on the bed, not touching but not distant either. Both of us just taking in the after effects of the coupling.

Sir?

Umm?

Sir, you know what DSWD, they going to do?

What?

DSWD, Sir. The children.

What about it?

They will recommend the children stay here.

Why do you think that?

They will. That why.

They are not here now and they will be staying in the but. I fail to see why the DSWD will think that the but is a good place for the kids.

They will.

Hub... I doubt it.

I hear Vivian say under her breath, *You will see.*

As we walk out to the location I am considering, I ask them if they have any word on when the kids' mom will arrive. They have no idea.

We spend a good hour on the exact location, the size and the depth of this thing. In the end we decide to make it a good three meters wide by eight meters long and three meters deep. At that depth we are below any clay. It's pretty sandy at that depth. The sides of the hole will be lined with concrete hollow block and 9mm deformed rebar. Inside we will fill it with a combination of rock and gravel. The top will carry a set of steel grates. We will install the grates, with the pipe and 'dip stick' in the middle of the affair. The ground around it will be covered with carabao grass¹⁶ to prevent the hole filling up with dirt.

I tell them to hire four young local men to dig the hole. We will pay them maybe one hundred and eighty pesos a day. It will take a couple of weeks to get the thing dug.

By the time I get back to the house, Elarny has the two younger kids cleaning up the grounds around the house. The two oldest girls have been sent inside to help clean the mess the workers are creating on the second floor.

I might not like the fact that this constitutes child labor, but the fact that we are keeping them busy and allowing them to think about something other than the loss of their dad, makes it far more acceptable.

I am just standing on the terrace watching the kids take on this relatively mindless task when I hear screaming coming from inside the house.

OK so, yeh, it was too much to expect that these kids wouldn't cause some problems. In one way, it isn't a big problem. The nine year old, Marjune, seems to have freaked out, or gotten pissed or, or, hell I

¹⁶ The carabao grass is a kind of grass that is very common in the American tropics and tropical countries especially in Southeast Asia. It can be found in abundance in countries like the Philippines, Indonesia and the Pacific islands. It's a stoloniferous grass. It vigorously creeps on the ground with long stolons. As it spreads through the ground, roots will form at the nodes. This allows the grass to branch out quickly. The leaves are flat, thin and narrow.

don't know, but she broke a cheap glass candy dish. It was probably a twenty-five cent garage sale item we picked up in the USA some years ago. I guess Shayla liked it, but I never thought the thing was anything but ugly. So I am not upset it is broken.

However, according to her older sister, Sheila, it was a purposeful act. At least that is what Vivian is telling me as the screaming is not exactly in English.

I get to hear little more than that snippet from Vivian, but I gather the older one is telling her sister that they are damned lucky to be here. Marjune can get as angry as she wants, but she damned well is to keep her hands off my things when she does.

In the middle of all this crap, Marjune runs off, down the stairs and out of the house.

I try to explain that the broken item is not important and Sheila can relax a bit. The immediate damage is no big deal. The conversation is mediated by Vivian as the kid has no English at all. So this is not going fast.

But as it becomes clear that I am not angry, Sheila begins to cry. She is carrying the weight of the entire family on her shoulders and it is too damn much for the kid. As there is no way I am verbally able to comfort her and I sure don't think touching is appropriate at the moment, I leave this in Vivian's hands and just stand there, frozen, not wanting to appear disinterested by walking off at the moment either.

But now there is more screaming. Marjune has run out and down the road. The two younger ones outside are crying, and, finally, my grounds keepers, hearing the yells and calls for them to retrieve Marjune are also running down the road.

Sheila goes outside to deal with her younger siblings. I am wondering just what the fuck I have gotten into.

the house on the second floor in one of the finished rooms. Abner is bunking with the guys.

The nightly schedule with my gals has held, except that Nicole has her period and so she has not been with me after her first night following Vivian. So much for her claim of just a few days ago that her period had just ended! Still, the gals seem to have formed a stable arrangement. As Nicole is in town each day, she has been assigned a role of picking the odd thing up lessening the number of shopping trips the other two need to make.

I am not at all sure if any of the three little girls have picked up on the nighttime arrangements I have with Vivian, Elarny and Nicole. They go to bed early and on the second floor, but Vivian has them helping her clean up the rooms in the morning, so I just don't know.

Word has come that the kids' mom will get here tomorrow. No plans for the burial have been finalized as that is the wife's responsibility, though the bank where the man worked has indicated that it will pay for the funeral.

There is an ongoing vigil¹⁷. I am told it is attended mostly by the guy's coworkers. The kids have not been attending but will need to be there when their mother arrives. When she arrives, my time hosting the kids comes to an end. While these last days have not been hard in any way, I am glad that it is coming to an end both for me and for the kids. They deserve to find a new, stable place. They have been marking time here. While they needed the time and space to grieve, I am not sure that it was well accomplished while they hung out here.

The tongue lashing the DSWD gal gave them may have curtailed the need in that regard. Yeh, telling the kids to 'suck it up' while here made my life easier but I suspect it was exactly what the kids didn't need.

¹⁷ A Wake.

I have very little interaction with the kids. Abner even eats with the guys out by the hut. The other kids are eating separately from me. They have no English and so there is no conversation.

Elarny and Vivian seem to like Sheila and tell me that Marjune has pulled it together. Shucily is not mentioned. I suspect that, as the youngest, she would just as soon be the silent shadow to her older sisters.

As to the catch basin, the hole is still being dug. It will need many loads of rock and gravel after we finish the filing of the walls with the concrete block next week.

Work on the inside of the house continues. I have hopes that it can be complete in a month or so with the exception of painting. The extension of the carport will commence next week.



Vivian thinks Elarny is prettier than she is. Elarny is a little lighter skinned than is Vivian. Her nose is not as flat and her breasts are a little larger. Is she prettier? No, probably not. Both are cute, but can I rank them? No. I get why Vivian does, but those things are meaningless to me.

I am with Elarny tonight. She is an earnest gal. The sharpness that Vivian brings is not there in her. Vivian's sharpness comes out in a myriad of ways. In the way she sent Neca down the road, deciding that she just would not do, in the way she refused to follow Lena's condemnation of my 'evil' ways, and in her attack of me when I added Nicole. Vivian's personality has edges.

Elarny cried quite a bit in the beginning. She was unsure, scared, and needing assurances. But at the same time, she never gave up, never backed away, never challenged. She stayed. She might be unsure, but she is, in her own way, strong and unwilling to quit. I suspect it is foolish to underestimate her. She isn't as flashy as her good friend, but she stays the course possibly even better.

We have made love, just she and me, twice before. So this will not be special in that way. But she is happily showing me a sexy slip she has chosen to wear and asking me if I approve, while at the same time teasing me, telling me that I am undressing far too slowly. In response I decide to undress even more slowly. Elarny tells me to get with the program or I will die of old age before I get ready for bed. She is shaking her ass at me and asking, *Don't you want this?*

Yeh, I sure as hell do. I very much want that ass. I want her cunt, her breasts, her lips... I want all of her. Does she know it? Is the playfulness an attempt to cover insecurity?

Now naked, I pick her up by my right arm and toss her on to the mattress. She giggles. I mount her and she, with a silly grin on her face, asks in mock seriousness, *Sir! What you doing? Oh! Sir! That too big!* She giggles again, at least until I push into her. Then the giggling is no more. Instead she is sighing, and whispering encouragement.

She is a slip of a gal, no larger than Vivian in any meaningful way. Sure her breasts are a bit larger, but not by much. She is dominated by the simple reality of me being over her and fucking her. There's not enough of her to make it an even match.

Her cunt might be a little tighter than Vivian's. I feel her more intensely. Her arms and legs are strong. They bring me in closer. Nothing pushes away. Everything seeks the most intimate contact. She bites my ear. Her nails rake my back. Her juices bathe my cock.

I ram my member into her hard, incessantly, doing my best to deform the coil springs below her. She eggs me on.

Oh, God yes. This feels so right, so good, so necessary. I feel the welling up of desire inside of me. A need to make sure she is mine forever. I need to dominate her senses and bind her to my heart.

It is fantasy, it is delusion, caused by the immediate emotional connection. But it feels as real as it can be as I spill my seed into her cunt. She makes a sound that I cannot categorize other than it seems

like she welcomes the occasion with happiness. Not that it is over, but rather that we have succeeded in some manner.

She is not letting go. She stays tight to me, gripping me, kissing my cheeks, neck, nose, and eyelids.

That I will be with Vivian tomorrow is of no significance to her. She has me and she is happy. And that makes me very happy.



The kids' mother arrived yesterday.

To say that things are not going well is a massive understatement. Where to start....?

The kids were brought to the funeral home where they met the woman. She hasn't been back in the Philippines for seven years. Shucily was a babe in arms when she left. The oldest, Sheila, was only four at the time. This gal went to hug Shucily, but the girl wouldn't have anything to do with her... do you think the gal understood why and was patient? Fat chance of that. She back-handed the kid so hard that Shucily was knocked to the floor. Abner called her a maldita pig¹⁸. Evidently the rest of the room seemed to agree.

There was a service of sorts, it being the last night of the vigil, and folks stood to speak well of the departed. The bank manager talked about what a good and decent man the guy had been. And then the wife stood up and said she had no knowledge that her husband was a good man.

Yeh, it went downhill from there. The DSWD had been at the funeral because of her need to talk to the mom about the kids. She witnessed the backhand Shucily received. I have no idea what happened between the mom and the DSWD worker, but the kids are back here and I am told to expect a visit from that worker later today.

¹⁸ A pig with a bad attitude.

'This man permit you to stay?' They say yes. He ask, 'You not afraid of this man?' They tell him your maids take care of them, not you. They safe. He say, 'You all want to stay with this man?' All say they do.

Even Marjune?

Yes, Sir! She say, she do wrong but you not get angry with her. You not punish her. You only one who not get angry.

Judge ask DSWD, 'You visit this man's home?' She say she do. It a mansion and you are good, polite and respectful. Judge say, 'You agree this the best place for the children?' She say it the best. He say, OK. He will order it.

No one asked me!

It not needed. And because the children are yours, the DSWD not need to make payment each month for the children. You not a foster parent. So there no financial support. You are the guardian and the relatives of the children also live here, so no problem for DSWD.

Didn't the lady from the DSWD want to know what my relationship is with these gals?

Sir, I think she not want to know. Sometime best not to ask!

I am working the tumbler of rum pretty hard. Without a single person asking me, I am now the guardian of four children.

I look down and the document and then back at the guys. Was this your idea?

No Sir! They not ask us. They only say, we not legally able to take the children because we have no home. They not say anything else to us.

So this is all the DSWD lady?

Maybe. Maybe it Sheila. The two talk a while. We not know what they say.

Vivian, do you have anything to do with this?

Sheila ask me if you like them. I say you not say anything bad about them. I think it OK.

That is all?

Yes. That all.

Elarny, do you have anything to say?

Last night Sheila and Marjune ask me if it OK if they stay here. They scared after what happen to Shucily yesterday. I tell them best if they do. Vi and me take care of them.

Why didn't you ask me?

Why that? They good girls. They help Vi and me here. They not cause a problem. There room for them. It OK.

I just about down the remaining rum.

Vivian, remember when Lena called me Evil and acting against God?

Yes.

What do you think will happen if Lena learns these girls are here?

At this point a spirited discussion between all three gals and the guys takes place. I have no idea what is being said. All I know is that it goes on for the better part of five minutes before Nicole tells me that it will be OK. They will take care of it. Exactly how this will be accomplished is a mystery to me.

Lolong has been silent through all of this. He has refilled his glass a couple of times. *Herb, there are times that our Savior enters our lives. Maybe you not see it, but it happens. He does it. It is up to you what you do. I know you not believe in our Lord. If you ask them, everyone here do. Our Lord has given you four children. Do not fight this. Accept what the Lord has given you. I will tell you this. If Shayla was here this never happen. You know this. I know this. The rest of Shayla's family will know this. Now this up to you. Do not care what I think, or what they think in town, or Lena, or anyone think. This between you and God. Only He know what is best for these kids. No one else know this. Only He know the path to take, but it up to you to find the path. He will not tell you. No one can tell you. He has given you something to do. He does not tell you how to do it. It up to you. Maybe it will be right, maybe wrong. Maybe it look right and be wrong.*

house and were good students in school. They were invariably polite and respectful. I think we all assumed that the gravity of the loss of parents had begun to weigh heavier on them.

We were wrong, but there was no ‘tell.’

It stayed that way for a good two years. The only one who was doing really well was Abner. He became very close to his second cousins. That he didn’t know what was going on with his sisters was just as confusing to him as it was to us.

The girls share a room on the second floor. When I designed and built the house, I initially expected a single sister-in-law and her two kids to be on that floor. The idea was sort of like an apartment sans kitchen. It has two large bedrooms, a CR with shower, a large sala, plus a large balcony. They would live here with us, without being always ‘with us.’

As the unpleasantness between Shayla and me grew, along with Shayla’s bad attitude toward everyone else, it became painfully clear to her sister that this was not where she wanted to be and she decided to stay away.

So that left an empty floor. Putting the three girls there made sense, I guess. No one else was using it. My gals are on the third floor, my floor, a floor with three bedrooms.

There was no special hidden agenda in the girls being placed on the second floor. It just made sense. We did want to give them some space to be their own family. They really weren’t my family. I don’t think that was ‘hidden.’ It just made sense.

Sure my gals weren’t my family either, but that was different in my mind.

These kids were raised on simple Filipino foods, not the type of food I eat. And my dinner table is one where I interact with my gals... in English. The kids don’t speak English. And so I guess it was a pretty simple decision to feed them separately. They eat earlier in the evening, before I have my dinner with the gals. We fed them out on

the terrace. I eat at the dining room table. Once again, it just made sense. Some of the food they like is sort of stinky and I don't want those smells inside the house.

I was made a guardian, not a parent. I don't feel like a parent to the kids. There never was a reason to feel otherwise. They have relatives here, my grounds keepers. No one is keeping them from their extended family. I make sure they have clothing, food, shelter, medical care, and safety. I am kind to them, but do not get involved in their lives.

My life does extend to my three gals. Two are putative maids, but they are in reality also mistresses now. Yes they clean the house and do the laundry. But wives do such things too. In the absence of a wife, would not the mistress do these things?

My life as I am living it has gotten a bit more complicated now that Shayla is no longer with me. I have been acquiring land, but can't do it directly, legally. I have had to create shell stock companies that own shell companies. It is a pain in the ass but necessary, as I am buying up all the irrigable farm land I can, hereabouts. We then lease the land out to tenant farmers. I get a modest income from the leases while retaining the land, which I hope will increase in value over time. One benefit to all this is that Shayla's name is not attached to these transactions.

Between the businesses I am involved with, some small commercial construction projects on land I have acquired next to busy roads, and my happy home life with my three gals, I rarely even think about the kids. That is the purview of Vi, Arny, and Nicki.

Last week was Sheila's thirteenth birthday. She turned eleven only a month after the kids came to live with us. So my gals decided that they needed to make a fuss over the kid's thirteenth year.

With permission from me and some extra pesos, they took her shopping for a new dress, shoes, undies... the works. Arny told me

Sheila was pretty squirrely about all that, but that she went along with it nonetheless.

The party we had planned wouldn't have tons of relatives, though many would be there as a bunch of her school friends were invited. That also meant moms and possibly dads of her schoolmates. And so we ordered a lechon baboy¹⁹, and prepared lots of food.

A couple of hours before the guests were to arrive, Vi and Arny pulled Sheila into a bedroom and got to work on her hair and makeup, before getting her into one of three party dresses they had purchased for her.

The more they worked on the kid, the weirder the kid got. When they insisted she put on the absolutely sexiest dress they had purchased for her and demanded that she go show off for me, the kid just about had a meltdown.

Vi was not going to put up with it and I am told reminded the kid what the DSWD gal had said to Marjune two years ago. She, Sheila, was to do as told and knock all the other shit off. I guess that must have done the trick because out of the bedroom Sheila came and when I saw her, my eyes just about couldn't believe what I was seeing. Sheila had turned from a little kid to a real beauty. I told her as much. She looked mortified at my comment (translated by Vi,) but thanked me in any case.

She had picked up a little English in the last two years and asked me, *I OK you now? Happy with me?*

You are beautiful. Yes I am very happy. Happy birthday!

I had no idea. None of us did.

She whispered in Arny's ear and Arny whispered back.

At which point she said in English, *I do what you want, Sir. I be good.*

¹⁹ Roast pig.

I had no idea what the kid meant. I assumed it was her poor command of English and confused translation that produced that statement.

What I want is for you to enjoy your birthday.

Yes Sir. Thank you, Sir.

At which point Army asks, *Herb, see how grown up and sexy Sheila is?*

Yes. It is obvious. We have a real beautiful girl here and in a very sexy dress. But maybe a bit too sexy for her birthday party? Maybe the others will be too jealous?

True! That what Vi and me think. It why we want to show you this before Sheila change for the party.

Well you surely made your point. I have never seen a prettier and sexier girl!

I honestly am thinking that I am complimenting Sheila. But that is not what Sheila is thinking. That much is clear. I have no idea how much English she can understand. Did she even get any of what I said? I think Vi translated some of it, but I can't know exactly what the kid thinks I said.

The party is a big success for all but the birthday girl who is acting a bit distant and distracted. Her friends, many of them cute as you please, try to flirt with me. How do you flirt back with a thirteen year old? It's pretty weird. That their mothers are watching the flirting and still smiling is beyond weird. The mothers, those who have some English, are more than smiling at their daughters' flirting. They attempt to strike up conversations with me. To that extent they are happy when I respond and I find them fun to be around. Most of those ask for a tour of the house and those who can't handle the English tag along too. A few tease me, saying they want to move in. Maybe it's not all teasing but I am not giving them any chance to find out. So whether or not it is really teasing, I ignore the comments.

It is a noisy affair. A massive amount of food is consumed. These little girls are taking a fair share, but the mothers are really packing it away. The videoke machine is in use for hours and the air is filled with

voices, some good and some pitiful. No one seems to care and everyone seems genuinely happy to be here, ... except for Sheila. What's the deal with the girl?

Eventually all the guests are gone and the clean-up has commenced. In the middle of it, Sheila comes up to me and asks in English, *When I to go your room?*

Why are you coming to my room?

She seems confused and calls for Vi. There is a bit of back and forth before Vi asks me what I said. I tell her. More discussion ensues between Vi and Sheila before Sheila says in English, *Why you ask that?*

I look at Vi and ask, *What is this all about?*

A conversation begins once again, of which I am totally in the dark. I gather at the beginning Vi is in the dark. But as it goes on, at first Sheila seems angry and Vi amazed, followed by Sheila looking concerned and Vi frustrated, followed by Sheila being totally confused, and ending in mortified and running off to her bedroom. Leaving me with Vi, who is trying hard not to laugh.

Well, what is so fucking funny?

She think you will make her a mistress. She think that why we make her look sexy. I ask her, why that? She say she know, Army, Nikki, and me, your mistresses. She know we all in your bed. She think she is next and next year Marjune. She say Marjune willing but Sheila not so much. She say she will do this, but she not really want it. Still she know to do what you tell her. So she think, OK she do it.

Please tell me that you told her she is not to come to my bed. Please tell me that no one here ever said she was supposed to be my mistress!

I not do that.

What?

I tell her you only want her in your bed if she really want that to happen. If she not want it, you not want her.

Why did you tell her that? For Christ's sake. Why tell her that?

It true!

Since when have I ever said I wanted to fuck a thirteen year old?

Why not? I seventeen when we first fuck. I tell her it up to her. That best.

I have the three of you. I don't need or want anyone else. And if I did, there were plenty of mothers here who seem to be more than willing. But I don't. I am happy with the three of you. No more.

It OK, she not want.

Is this why the girls have been weird?

Maybe. I will talk to Sheila and Marjune.

So now I am worried on a number of different levels. Not least of them is that Vi has been told by Sheila that the girl expects to be in my bed... and that Sheila seems to have told Vi that Marjune really wants that to happen for herself. I am worried that Sheila, as much as she doesn't want it, seems to be embarrassed by being rejected. I am worried that they may have told someone else about this. Lastly, what does nine year old Shucily know and what does she think about it?

It's nuts. I never, and I do mean never, made any suggestive comment or act in regarding to having sex with these kids. Why the girls have extrapolated my having three mistresses into wanting them as mistresses is beyond me.

Did Sheila look juicy hot this afternoon? Damned straight she did. But that does not mean I was going to jump her bones. And Marjune won't even be twelve for three more months. So in what world does an eleven year old decide to crawl into a man's bed? Why would it ever even enter her head?

It may be a little early in the day but it's time for some rhum.

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I have been sitting out here on the terrace, with my rum, for the better part of four hours. How in the world did Sheila think I was hitting on her? It makes no sense to me.

I am still nursing my drink when Vi and Nicki come out and sit down. They aren't saying a word and that has me worried even more. Why did they come out?

Well?

Nicki reaches over to my glass of rum and takes a drink before, OK. *They think it me and Army who do this.*

Hub?

She takes another good long sip. Me and Army. We tell them to stay with you. We tell you to put them on the second floor and not out in the hut with Abner. They here, but not part of family. Abner, be part of the family of the guys. But the guys, they do not with the girls. Not the Filipino way. The boys stay with the boys. So yes brother and sister, but they not in that family with their cousins. They not in this family. They separate from us. Separate floor. Separate food. Separate everything. They need to be family somewhere. They here but lonely. They learn what you do with us. Then they think... OK. So ... they think this the best plan for them too. See? To join this family they must be like us. Only females in this house plus you. So that must mean why it is to be in this family.

And they think this is what I want?

Maybe. They see you agree to do what we want. Separate food and floor. So... maybe they think this our plan, and you will agree. Maybe they think this is your plan and we do what you ask. They wonder when this will happen for two years. You not make them family in any other way for these two years so it must be they think. They talk but not understand. Yes, you not do anything with them and there is no change for two years so they confused. Then we make another big thing with Sheila. We dress her sexy and show you how sexy she is. You tell her she is very grown up sexy. She think, OK this it. When the party is over, this when it will happen. See?

So tell me, why did you dress her all sexy? I was confused about that.

Herb, we think she depressed. Maybe she think that no one think she pretty! We think, yes, this is why girls are depressed. It always the same thing. We do it to show her she is really pretty and all men will see this! A girl need to know she is not ugly. We all see she is sad. We think, OK, we know how to fix this. We good at this! She need to know men will find her pretty. I think, you will tell her the truth and she will feel good about herself.

You were trying to build her self-confidence?

Yes. I think maybe she unhappy because she feel she not good enough. So I try to show her she is pretty.

Does she understand now what you were trying to do?

No. She think I not telling the truth. She think you not think she is good enough to join. She think, see, even if it is wrong, she still not good enough.

Did you talk with Marjune?

She there with Sheila when we talk.

What does she say?

She want to know if she is good enough.

Oh Jesus. So eleven year old Marjune wants to have sex with me? Sheila is willing to have sex with me, and thinks you set her up to do this? She thinks I agreed to this plan but even though I said she is sexy, I am rejecting her now? She wants to know what's wrong with her? ... Do I have that about right?

Yes. That it.

So no matter what I do, either way she feels like crap. If I don't, she feels rejected? If I do, she feels she is being made a prostitute?

No.

No?

She is scared to have sex with you but she willing. She want to be part of the family I think. If you do it with her, she not feel like 'crap.' She not think she is prostitute. She think, OK now I part of the family.

You can't know that! You are guessing.

I think I right. You rejecting her, that feels very bad to her.

So you think I should have sex with a 13 year old?

Yes.

You are crazy! Vi, please tell her she's crazy.

Maybe, yes. Maybe she crazy, but she right.

I will be arrested if I do this!

Why?

It's illegal. That's why.

Many things illegal. No one get arrested.

Oh bullshit. People get arrested, or shot, killed!

Yes because they have hurt feeling, or someone steal. You not steal. If you do sex, you not hurt her feeling. No jail, no shoot.

But if I hurt her feeling by not having sex?

Then maybe a problem.

Vi, please bring Sheila here. Do not bring Marjune.

Once Vi has walked into the house, I turn back to Nicki. *Thank you for your honesty. I need to talk to Sheila. I wish it could be alone with her, but I need you to translate. Please, please, tell her what I say exactly. Do not change the meaning.*

OK, I understand.

In just a few minutes Sheila is presented to me. She is standing, trembling, and there are signs that she may have been crying.

Sheila, please sit here next to me.

She just looks, not understanding. Nicki tells her what I said and the girl, very gingerly takes a seat.

Sheila, Nicki is going to translate everything I say. Anything you want to say back can be told to Nicki and she will tell me what you said. OK? I wait while the translation is made.

She say she understands. Go ahead now.

Do you want to join my family and be treated like my daughter? Do you want to have meals with me? Do you want to move to a bedroom on the third floor?

I wait. Maybe I should have not asked three questions, but I wanted to get the concept across. Finally after some back and forth between Nicki and Sheila, Nicki is ready to provide the answer.

I will act like Sheila. OK?

OK Nicki... go ahead.

Sir, I am not your daughter. My father is dead. No choice. This is true. I not want any man to take my father from me. Yes I want to be your family, but not your daughter. I not care where I have a bedroom if I am your family. I not care where I eat if I your family. ... She not say anything else to you, Herb.

How are you to be part of my family, if you are not my daughter, or step-daughter, or adopted daughter?

I have very little wait this time.

Same way Vi, Arny, and Nicki part of your family. They not blood to you. They not married to you. They are your love I think. Same for me. Will you love me?

Sheila, I do love those three, but I also have sex with them. I can love you without sex. That would be like the love of a father to a daughter. There is nothing wrong with that.

This time there is a long wait. Clearly there is more than translation happening here. I say that to Nicki but she asks me to allow this. I guess I must.

Nicki's face is one of frustration. *Hard to explain, Herb!*

Well there was lots of back and forth. Tell me what that was like.

I tell her what you say. She say, how that work when there is not language. How you love her like a daughter when there not words? She say, have sex with her. You not need to talk, but she is part of the family, just like me. I say, but I can talk to you. She say, then you need to give her more sex so she knows you love her. I say, sex not always love. She say she will know if you do the sex. She will know the difference.

Nicki, you are twenty-five now and she is just thirteen. We have been together for a few years. I do love you. I love the sex we have even more, because of that love. It is better now than it was in the beginning because of the love. But part of that is because we can talk. Because I can know a little of what you are thinking. I think you know that. How can I really love a girl I can't even talk to? ... Tell her what I just said to you. Please tell her I want to respect her. I do not want to treat her as a sex partner without also knowing her heart. Ask her how I can know her heart since we can't talk.

Wait a while.

I do. This is not a simple question and there seems to be quite a bit to be said in this prolonged back and forth. There comes a time when Sheila gets teary and Nicki moves in to give her a hug. The discussion continues even longer.

Finally Nicki provides me a simple and yet complex question from the girl.

So, we on the second floor, eat separately, not part of the family, and not in your bed because we can't talk to you?

Nicki tell her, it's hard to love, with or without sex, if there is no way to talk. If there is a way to talk, maybe there is also no need for sex.

I will tell her but she think sex needed. I am sure that.

The conversation takes a while again before Nicki tells me, *She say, 'We will learn English. We will eat the food you eat. We will sit at the table with you when you eat. We will not speak at all when we not know how to say the thing in English. I will talk to my sisters, but I am sure they agree. When we have enough English, you will have sex with us. This you agree?' Sir, I tell them that*

so fast when I can't master Bisaya is beyond frustrating to me. At present I can't quite have a prolonged conversation with a one of them, but I suspect that the day is coming far too soon. Sheila turned fourteen half a year ago. Marjune is now thirteen and Shucily is twelve. It's bad enough to think about having sex with Sheila sometime this coming year. But I can't conceive of being sexually active with the younger ones, and to be truthful all are picking up English at the same speed. I am considering setting up age barriers to slow down the younger ones, especially Shucily.

Anyway, I had been struggling with all this and then your story was published. I read it and it hit me pretty hard. The first time, I couldn't even get through it without getting roaring drunk a couple of times. Once I did, I found that I needed to read it over and over.

It is why I wanted to write to you, but I didn't know what to say. I just needed reach out. It was a crazy feeling of need to make a connection. I felt so alone in this. I still do.

I am not asking for advice. I will follow my own path. In truth, Lolong's words still rattle around in my head, and that is most often what sends me back to the rum. Even if he is wrong, he's right. It's a pisser.

But as I live through this, I recognize in your words, in your story, a truth more profound, more real, more close to the bone, than any of your other readers might ever imagine. You call it fiction. I call it this side of painful, confusing, frustrating, and confounding. Yes, there is love. In all of this, there is deep, meaningful, and real love.

I do love my three gals, and they profess love for me. They make my day to day life sweeter than I could ever have imagined my life to be. Each has taken a role beyond where we started.

Nicki is my business partner as we acquire property and build commercial structures. That connection keeps us very busy.

Vi is the organizer at home. Everything goes through her. Everything.

Arny watches me very closely. In that it is like her soul is grafted to mine.

Sheila, even with her limited English, is becoming a real person to me. She has a sense of humor I find disarming, and an earnestness that I can only admire.

Marjune displays passion for ideas. Her biggest hurdle is how to find the English to express those ideas to me. It seems to be that which motivates her drive to learn her English even faster than her older sister. In that she may be succeeding. And as I see that in her, I understand the anger she evinced when she broke the glass candy dish. I am beginning to admire her.

Shucily is just too damned young in so many ways. She idolizes Marjune and respects Sheila. She is a sweet kid. I so want her as a daughter and not a lover.

I am an average man. I am not a whiz kid like those who I fell in with and brought me the financial windfall. I am not the sorry asshole my first wife thought I am. I am not the mean spirited husband who rained on a second wife's parade, no matter what she still thinks. I'm just an average guy. Average height. Average weight. Average intelligence. I am neither handsome nor ugly. Average. But like all of us average guys, each of us has a star by which we steer, even if we are a little nearsighted.

Your story did not tell me what is right or wrong. It did tell me that I am not crazy. That, Sir, was helpful in one way. But it gave me back my real problem in another way. It showed me, because I am not crazy, that I own my own problems and will have to find my own way through it all.

And all I can do is repeat what we are told so often here... 'It's more fun in the Philippines.'

P.S. After I wrote all this I wondered if there was anyone else I could show this to. There isn't. My gals don't have enough English. Even if he could read it, I don't want to show it to Lolong. There is no one in

my previous life in the States to whom I would ever consider showing this.

In this, I am alone, save you, out there in the ether. And the only way I know you are real is that what you have written has proved it to me in a way that cannot be faked.

Maybe I flatter myself, but I think I know the truth of it probably better than anyone else in the world.

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What Happened



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Recipes

Pork Afeitada

allrecipes.com



Rated: ★★★★★

Submitted By: lola

Photo By: traceyposner

Prep Time: 30 Minutes

Cook Time: 30 Minutes

Ready In: 1 Hour

Servings: 10

"Pork, liver, and potatoes are cooked in a tomato base to make a stew elegant enough for special occasions."

INGREDIENTS:

2 1/4 pounds boneless pork, cut into bite-sized pieces	2 tablespoons olive oil
2 tablespoons soy sauce	1 onion, chopped
1/2 lemon, juiced	2 cloves garlic, minced
2 pounds pork liver	2 large tomatoes, diced
3 tablespoons olive oil	1 green bell pepper, cut into chunks
2 potatoes, quartered	salt and ground black pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS:

1. Place the pork in a large pot; pour enough water into the pot to cover the pork. Stir the soy sauce and lemon juice into the water. Bring the mixture to a boil for 5 minutes. Remove the meat and set aside. Discard the liquid.
2. Refill the pot with fresh water; add the pork liver and bring to a boil for about 5 minutes. Remove the liver and allow to cool; cut into bite sized pieces. Set aside.
3. Heat 3 tablespoons olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat; fry the potatoes in the hot oil until golden brown and cooked through, 7 to 10 minutes. Remove the potatoes to a plate lined with paper towels. Add 2 more tablespoons olive oil to the skillet and allow to get hot. Cook and stir the onion and garlic in the hot oil until fragrant, 3 to 5 minutes. Add the pork and pork liver to the skillet; cover and cook for 5 minutes. Stir the tomatoes into the mixture; cook together, stirring occasionally, another 5 minutes. Return the potatoes to the skillet with the green bell pepper. Season with salt and pepper. Cook and stir another 5 minutes.

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