

Autobiography
of
ZACARIAS PADLAN MUÑOZ

(As written in 1978)



FAMILY PICTURE TAKEN DURING NORMA'S INN INAUGURATION, CABATUAN, ISABELA MAY 24, 1954

BACK ROW STANDING FROM LEFT:

[Rogelio \(11\)](#), [Avelardo \(18\)](#), [Aurora \(16\)](#), [Socorro \(24\)](#), [Consuelo \(20\)](#), [Bienvenido \(22\)](#), [Floro \(14\)](#)

MIDDLE ROW SEATED FROM LEFT:

[Josefina \(28\)](#), [Zacarias, Sr. \(53\)](#), [Zacarias, Jr. \(2\)](#), [Infant Jesus \(5 mos.\)](#), [Juanita \(46\)](#), [Alegria \(26\)](#)

FRONT ROW SEATED FLOOR FROM LEFT:

[Carmelita \(6\)](#), [Amelia \(8\)](#)

Paunang Salita
ni [Carmelita \(Lita\) Munoz](#)



Gusto ko sanang isulat ito sa Ilocano para naman maramdaman ko na parang nag-uusap lang tayo doon sa mahabang mesa natin sa Cabatuan at nagsusutilan. (Inday Badiday... Manang Socorro pala, nandiyan ka ba? Miss kita!) Pero hindi naman tayo maintindihan ng ating mga anak-anak at apo-apo. Kung Ingles naman, ang pakiramdam ko naman ay para lang ako magpapakitang-gilas, tapos yung mga cum laude diyan ay kokorekin pa siguro ang Ingles ko.

Kaya, sa mga hindi nakakaintindi ng Pilipino, kayong mga magulang, bahala na lang kayong magkuwento sa inyong mga anak; dagdagan nyo pa, kung gusto nyo, para mas may dating at lalo pang maaliw ang mga bata.

Napakatagal na sa akin itong autobiography nila Papang. Akala ko itatago ko na lang at ipamamana sa aking mga anak. Nakakatuwa naman, sa ganitong pagkakataon ko pala ito mailalabas.

Salamat, Geling, sa project mo. Salamat at naisip mo itong gawin. Magkakalayo man tayo pero para lang tayong nagkakaharap-harap ngayon.

Balak ko noon na ipakita ito noong 80th bertyday ni Manang Sofing pero may mga ibang bisita na alam kong hindi naman makaka-relate. At saka mas naging masaya yung kuwentuhan naming noon. Natulog nga lang nang maaga yung celebrant.

Kinopya ko ang sulat nila Papang na gaya ng pagkasulat nila, kahit mali ang ispelang at sentence construction, pero, siyempre, may mga itinago akong mga pangalan para mapangalagaan ang kanilang pagkatao. Siguro naman maaaliw pa rin kayo at maramdaman nyo rin ang kilig na naramdaman ko noong una ko itong mabasa at kahit sa paulit-ulit pa at ngayon habang itina-type ko.

Noong una kong mabuksan ang website ni Geling, kaagad naisip ko na ito na siguro ang tamang pagkakataon na mai-share ko rin sa inyo ang sulat nila Papang. Kinausap ko rin ang Diyos , humingi ako ng payo kung tama nga itong gagawin ko. Palagay ko, pinapayagan ako ng Diyos at nila Papang kasi hanggang ngayon excited pa rin ako.

Para kong nakikita sila Papang na umisem-isem lang habang tayo ay naghahagapakan na sa katatawa. Si Manong Avelardo, Manong Floro, at Jessie ang ganito, napakatipid nila sa tawa pero enjoy-na enjoy naman. Takot nga lang sila sa mga controversial na issues.

Sila Mamang naman, kahit na napaka-suplada nila, ang dali nilang patawanin. Kayangkaya ni Junior na patawanin sila. Ang sarap din sutilin sina Manang Sofing, Manang Conching, Manang Socorro, at Manang Auring; medyo delayed nga lang ang reaction -- at saka tatawa eh nasa ibang topic na tayo. Maalala ko noong nagbakasyon ako kina Manang Conching, sumakit ang panga ko sa katatawa, katsi-tsismis, at kakakain. Pag kausap mo si Manang Conching, matutuyuan ka talaga, madadala ka na dapat maramdaman mo ang bawat bibigkasin nang masamahan ng matinding emosyon.

Ang mga sutil talaga ay sina Geling at Junior. Paiiyakin ka talaga. Minsan, dumating si Geling sa bahay, ginising ba naman si Princess (sanggol pa siya noon) para laruin. Nagkandapagud-pagod tuloy kami sa pagsayaw kay Princess para lang matulog uli.

Si Junior naman, ay naku, napakarami kong dusang inabot diyan. Pati ba naman deodorant ko, di ko namamalayan, nakikigamit pala. Pero alam ko mahal ako ni Junior.

Ise-serialize natin ito para naman kunyari teleserye o kaya ay nobela sa Liwayway.

Totoo nga siguro yung sabi nila na “we are not growing old, just growing bold.” Pag tumatanda raw ay nawawala na ang takot at matapang nang humarap sa katotohanan.

Ito ang napakagandang iniwan nila Papang sa atin. Makikilala na natin kung ano ang pinanggalingan natin.

At pagkatapos nyong mabasa ito, siguro mamumulat din kayo na ang pag-ibig ay nadarama ng kahit sinuman, sa anumang edad, o sa kahit anong panahon; na ang pag-ibig ay nagdudulot ng kaligayahan, ng pag-asa, ng panghihinayang, ng pagkabigo, ng paghahanap, ng pagbabaka-sakali, ng pag-aasam. Nguni’t kahit ano pa man ang dulot ng pag-ibig, kahit may kirot sa puso, may kaligayahan pa ring madarama dahil nga nagmamahal. Ang kaawa-awa ay yaong hindi marunong magmahal.

Nawa ay nakurot ko ang mga puso nyo at nakapagdulot ako ng kahit kaunting aliw.

Lita Munoz
January 16, 2008

Zacarias' Origin and his Biography

Zacarias was born twin with his sister Isabel Nov. 5, 1901. But Isabel died at her age of 3. He came from the parents of 11 children, Pioquinto Muñoz and Regina Padlan of San Carlos, Pangasinan, whose grandparents in father side are Manuel Muñoz and Maria Muñoz, both curly hair in nature, and both Muñozes as that was the olden custom of forming their families. For reason, that their inherited properties will not be scattered to different families.

In his mother side are Agapito Padlan and Marina de Guzman, also of the same place and having 7 children. Zacarias was lovely and friendly to the people. He was the pet boy in his school during his time. His children are closer to him than to their mother.

His First School

Zacarias begun his first schooling in the convent of the parish priest in San Carlos, Pangasinan, year 1912, at his age of 11 years old. He learned first the doctrine of catechismo, the method of teaching of Spanish. After few months, he was transferred to a private school of old man Agustin Pantaleon and his wife Miguela. In this school, he learned how to read the caton book and the penmanship of writing. In these schools, instead of lightening your mind, you will become dull. Because once you did not know your lesson, you are punish by whip or kneeling. My studies did not prosper because my father and maestros are too strick, they are Spanish type. Many of the boys before used to hide, they do not want to enter the school, because of the strickness of their teaching. During my schooling at that time, I suffered many whips of rattan.

Central School

In 1914, at my age of 13, I begun entering the central school of English under the supervision of the Americans. From first grade up to fourth grade, of the primary, it took me 5 years to finished. I was repeated in my second grade, being spoiled by my teacher as a favorite boy.

When I was repeated, I was punished by my father of sending me to the barrio to pasture our carabaos. I only came home during Sundays to hear the mass. In my stay in the barrio, I have learned to weave basket and cook my own food. By punishing me I have learned to reform in my studies.

In 1918, I was already in the fourth grade. Pupils at that time were already teenagers. Here I met my first love, IM, but only a puppy love. We were very intimate as our love were developing. I proposed my love to many of them but only IM, I've expressed my secret to her. They were 5, but IM won first my heart. As time was going on, IM was also increasing her pretenders, being like a sprouting flower.

Elementary Grades Farm School

When we reached again the elementary grades farm school, we were in the same group, the same section up to our graduation year 1922. After finishing this school of elementary, we entered the different high schools. IM entered the high school of Lingayen, Pangasinan. And I, Zacarias, entered the Agricultural High School of Muñoz, N.E. In my stay here in this town, I met my wife Juanita Gabriel, as probably my fate guided me. IM was left single until she finished her high school. And after finishing her high school course, she became teacher as her profession.

But I, Zacarias, did not finish my high school, due to disturbed of girls. I only reached my second year irregular. So, that was our separation with IM. On Oct. 28, 1924, I got married to Juanita, and IM was left single behind. Later, few years after, she also got married to Eng. JB. But although we missed both our fate, I don't still forget her. Every year of Christmas season, I am sending her my reminder cards. And probably she also feels that I am keeping her still in my heart.

The Death of my Wife

On Sept. 30, 1965, I was widower, my wife died of high blood attack. And IM became widow in 1974. Had her husband died earlier, I should have married her first than Vicky, my second wife. But although, we are keeping still our love in heart. That now, we are both recollecting our sweet memories in our youth time on our early days.

In Farm School, 1921-1922

In our elementary course farm school was our very memorable days. Because we in our group at that year 1922 were very social. We the senior class at that time were all teenagers. Although we were only in the elementary grades, we were fond of social gatherings. If we have our occasion in our school, our faculty members and friends joined us with the affair. We often have a reception and ball or ribbon dances to produce some amount of money to support our athletes. And we the senior class used to undertake those affairs. In time of harvesting season, we used to have a pinipig party and dance. My friend Severo Bulatao was the center of entertainment because he was the famous singer. Our bidas, girls dancers were IM, Pelagia Martinez, Juanita Muñoz, Modista Bugayong, Maria Claudio, Filiza Casillan, Isidora Casillan, Maxima de Guzman and Francisca de Guzman, and others from different section of the class. I, Zacarias, act as the leader. And followed by the following, Doming Paronable, Domingo Cabañon, Gerondio Muñoz, Hipolito Beltran, Nicacio Sular, Vicente Paningbatan, Moeses de Vera, Felipe de Vera, Jose de Guzman, and Salvador Cilán, and others from different section of the class and friends from outside.

Trouble

The next morning after the affair there were some quareling between the girls regarding our dance. And Zacarias will be called by Miss Maria Simbello, a Home Economics teacher, asking what was the case of the incidents. The girls were spouting each other and they only say, "I am not hungry of a man like you, if you are hungry just follow him." "Alioaac ya narasan ed laki ya singa sica, tomboc mo labat la" (in Pangasinan dialect). Then followed by jokes of those naughty boys. Zacarias became the topic in school. His class characteristic was – highly educated in love affairs and dances.

Our Marriage with my First Wife

Later, at may age of 22 years old, I got married to Juanita Gabriel unexpectedly to avoid bothering my parents. I was caught in the act when I invited my novia to date. When her father noticed that we were together for 2 days, on my arrival, he ordered an Independent priest to get me from my casera, my compadres house, Fernando Ramos, near C.L.A. School. This took place in the barrio of my wife, Palusapis, Muñoz, N.E., Oct. 28, 1924. On the way, we crossed the Baliwag river through the carabao , with the priest, my companion. It was already lunch time when we arrived in the barrio. So just after our meal, at about 12:30 to 1:30 noon, the ceremony was accomplished. It was very frightful and fearful because the day was very pleasant. But when we already entered the church, and before the altar to receive our sacrament of matrimony, it at once rained so hard with thunder and lightning side by side of the church. I was trembling, I thought that was my last hour already because thunder and lightning cracked like a cannon gun. All people inside the church were terrified. I seemed not to mind the words of the priest because I was praying very hard to forgive me in all my sins. The church was full of people for their curiosity to witness our wedding. And just the ceremony was over, the rain also slowly stopped. This probably God heard my prayers, and granted me with His grace. (I thanked God.)

First Night Honeymoon

The first night of our honeymoon, I have not enjoyed so much because my thought was in my other love, whom I left very faithfully. She was the one who prepared all my things before I left her. And they even conducted me with her mother until the station where I started. We were like only one already, only we lack our matrimony.

After our Marriage

After our marriage, I sent a telegram to my parents, which says:

Dear Father and Mother,

Fate is fate and cannot be escaped. (Say capalaran aglaoas nalistaran.)
I am now united to Juanita, we don't want to bother you. Regards to all.

Zacarias

My Indispair Novia

When my novia learned my news in San Carlos, she came at once to our house crying and crying to my parents. My parents used to console her but all in vain. She look up my big picture hanging in the wall of our house, and she was there sobbing until late in the afternoon, according to my parents. And from those days, little by little she became thinner and thinner until her last. On the third day of my telegram, my father arrived also in Palusapis, our barrio, with some gifts bañgos, bocayo and young coconuts. He advised us not to come home yet in San Carlos for fear that the relatives of my indispair novia are still in hot temper.

On the 7th month I wrote my parents that we are now coming to San Carlos with my wife and my father-in-law to accompany us. I give my parents 2 weeks preparation for our arrival. Then when we finally go to San Carlos, Pang., my parents and relatives gave us warm reception to welcome us. In time of our reception all my close relatives and friends have attended, and guarded our house for fear of some revenge. We were given 2 time reception, one from my parents and one from my cousin Mr. & Mrs. Florentina M. Cayabyab. My first child Sofing was already 3 months conceived when we arrived in San Carlos, my hometown. A year after our marriage, we engaged in business and that was our means support of our living and family education.

Couple were Blessed of 15

Zacarias and Juanita both husband and wife were blessed of 15 children but the 3 were deceased. When the number of their children makes 13, one will die accidentally. Then later on, they produced again another child, it makes their children another 13. Few years after, one is again died of the same death (accident). These happened to my 2 beautiful daughters, Norma and Alegria. So, I can realized that these are my punishment to my previous beloved one, ES, M___ing her pet name. And the result of our wedding that which thunder and lightning frightened us. I suffer to lost my 2 daughters. God, I pray you forgive me.

Of the 12 living children, for our self sacrifice, they became all professionals, on jobs and most of them are under the national government.

In 1965, Sept. 30, my industrious wife died of highblood attack at her age of 57. After 4 years of being widower, I got married again to Vicenta Dulay, a midwife of Cabatuan, Isa., June 21, 1969. For my second wife, our relationship did not prosper anymore, due to we do not produce a child. But instead Broken Home.

Result of the Family

The result of my family with my first wife, I have expanded to great numbers of children, with a total number of 71 members of my family circle. From children, grand children, and to great grandchildren, as of this year 1978. And still some are on family way. I am nearing again to the last degree of great grandchildren, apo sa talampakan.

As of my retirement age of 77, I am only running my hotel and apartment business, Cabatuan, Isa.

Back to our First Life in Pangasinan

My first establishment was school supplies and a refreshment parlor, when Socorro was the child, in front of the Farm School of San Carlos, Pangasinan. We were successful for few years. Later, when there were many competition already in our business, I engaged again in the Zambales Mining Co. as a contractor with my brother Juan Muñoz.

In Zambales

As a contractor, we were bringing some laborers to undertake the jobs of one contract. Sometimes we got 40 or 30 laborers for 2 weeks only. In terms of payment is for every 15 days of the month. But every after pay day of every 15 of the month, our laborers can't return to their jobs, because they were attacks of the malaria fever. Malaria fever was very acute. There was no exceptional to every one who entered the mines of Masinloc, Zambales. Even my brother Juan and I have suffered this kind of malaria. There were very few of us who have enjoord this kind of sickness. Very often, we were having new laborers, but after the payday of the 15th of the month, they quited their jobs. However, we were successful here. We even bought a truck to transport this mines (chromite) for Pantalan Pier.

But when the second world war II between China and Japan broke out, our business were pharalized. The jobs in the mines stoped, and it was our headaches. I was praying hard, asking God to guide me where I could earn our living. I got already 8 children at that time. My wife was left in San Carlos during our stay in the mines. But the earning of our stone was not enough to support the family.

Then, time again has come to me. I have tought to invest my truck in the Isabela business, buy and sales. We bought the Pangasinan products by truck for Isabela. And on return, we also buy Isabela products for Pangasinan. I felt here that I was guided for a good business. (I thank God.) We shined in our business until the outbreak of the war between Japan and the Philippines. Compadre Luis Gomez and Severo Macugay were my co-business.

The Outbrake of the War

On Dec. 8, 1941, the war between Japan and the Philippines broke out. All ports and airports of the country Philippines were bombed. By this time, I left my 3 daughters in San Carlos, Pang. for their studies, Sofing, Alegring, and Socorro. After 3 days of my arrival in Isabela, it was war. All people were in trouble, thinking where they are going to evacuate. All transportation were abandoned, and all bridges were bombed. There were no convenient condition of the people. I was very much worried about my 3 daughters in San Carlos. On the five months of the war, there was peace, but the Philippines were controlled by the Japanese government.

In April 1942, I sacrificed to go to San Carlos by hiking with some of my company for Asingan and Tayug, Pangasinan. It took us one week on the way through the Cordillera mountains, passing the Salinas salt spring and the rice terraces of the upper part of the mountain. We spend 3 nights in the mountains. It was good my companions were so kind to me. They used to carry my things, and at night on rest time, they apliyd me some sapsapo in my legs, or baños of hot water. Then the next early morning, we proceeded again on our way. We paid one Igorot to guide us on our way. While nearing San Nicolas, Pangasinan, through bantay Lakay, Imugang, we were already exciting, we were now spotting the towns of Pangasinan, San Nicolas, Tayug, and Asingan. But when we reached the Pangasinan, we were somewhat reluctant to enter the towns, because we did not know yet, or we were not yet familiar with the Japanese soldiers in the country. Because I was already nearing to my 2 daughters whom I left in San Carlos, I took courage to continue on my way. I slept one night in Asingan. The next morning after breakfast, I started for San Carlos, arriving at about 2:00 P.M. to my 3 children, with my Igorot baggage at my back. In a distance of about 20 m. on the road, Alegring and Sofing have spotted me already out of the window, jumping and jumping for their excitement to see me. We felt very happy and seeming to cry in our reunion, because everybody thought we cannot see each other anymore. "Papang, Papang, we thought you are not coming anymore, and how is Mamang?" they said. Then everybody related her experience of living, that they evacuated in the barrio of their classmates and stayed also with their aunties. And later, after their evacuation, they came back home to our house, earning their living by gathering zacates and sales. They were realy very pittyful at that war time.

My Return to Isabela

On May 14, 1942, I returned to Isabela with my 3 daughters and some 14 bull carts loaded with salts. Every cart were loaded of 5 cavanese of salt the first time of our trip. I was very successful; I was gaining more than 100% of my business. I was the only one who brought salt in the Cagayan Valley. For the one sack of salt, I have bought my cow and a cart. These was our means of transportation of go and from Pangasinan.

When we reached the Balete Pass, Dalton Pass at present, it was closed. It was guarded by our Filipino soldiers. But when we were nearing to approach them, and our carts were to noise because they are many, the soldiers who were eating their breakfast run away to

hide themselves. We discovered that they were eating because they left their plates and food. Then we called them shouting, "Come out now, we are Filipinos vendors of salt from Pangasinan" we shouted. And I let our women companion, Inay Carato to stand in the place, to make her visible to them. Then after few minutes one by one of them came out, and said, "we thought you are our enemies, Japanese. Your carts are too noisy." And when we were there yet in that pass, they wired in Bayombong, that we the Pangasinan vendors are already on the way for Isabela. Our Filipino soldiers under Major Enriques were still in Bayombong, thinking probably when to retreat again. We also gave them salt because we know they need it, and to satisfy them too. From Balet Pass to Isabela, it took us 5 days and nights because we were delayed on the destroyed bridges.

When Geling was the Child

On Feb. 1, 1943, Geling my son was the child. At his two months, he is carried by his mother with the trip through bull carts and through the mountainous roads for Isabela and Pangasinan. We seldom stop nor sleep in our house because most of our time, we were on trip due to our business as vendors. Once, I was spung by the Japanese soldier in the country, of forgetting to give saludo to him. That is to make bow your head when you pass them. But if you give them palucha sugar, sato in Japan dialect, they are very kind to you. That is their favorite food, and give you sign to go directly.

In 1945 nearing Liberation

Before the liberation in 1945, the Americans bombed all places occupied by the Japanese soldiers. My daughter Alegring gave birth in our evacuation of Tandul and Gaddanan, Cabatuan, Isa. in the day of the American soldiers arrived. So her first child were named Victoria, meaning victory of the American forces, June 15, 1945.

In Macalaoat

While we were in Macalaoat evacuation, my daughter Socorro was brave to face the Japanese soldiers. She was a dalaguita at the time, and her business was to exchange eggs with the Japanese cloths, which we call Kokang. Every thing you exchange with the Japanese is call kokang. Once, she discovered her cloth stolen by the Japanese soldier. She went to the Japanese captain and reported him her cloth that she recognized. The Japanese captain at once punished his soldier of tying him in the trunk of a tree for a whole day.

Bombing

The next day came the bombing by the American planes. Everybody were an aware, we did not know where to hide ourselves. I was left alone in the house. My son Avelardo was transferring our things to move again in other evacuation. He was about 7 years old already but helpful to us. When I heard the bombing, I jumped in to my dugout to hide with some Japanese soldiers with me. The soldiers were only laughing, but myself was trembling and praying. We were scattered like chickens. Alegring was still pregnant and

was taking a bath. Anita my niece was also in the premises. They both deployed on the ground and head down.

After the bombing, I came out from my hide out to search for all my companions. Socorro and Mamang were with the Japanese soldier in their pacsol (dugout). They were making kokang with them when the bombing occurred. Sofing was in the other evacuation in the field with her youngers Conching, Auring, Floro, and Geling. Our house, the newly built in the place of Andres Bonifacio monument of Cabatuan was bombed and caught fire. I was very sorry, I was about to cry to lost our house. We got no shelter for my family. We were living with somebodies house.

After a week of my sorrowful, somebody came to me to sell his lot to us. Without delay, the agreement was made (Deed of Sales) of P100.00 only. This is where our Hotel is standing right now. And my children of the liberation time were born: Amelia, Lita, Norma, Junior, and Jessie.

And the second lot where my apartment is established was offered to me by my friend Lakay Senen Angco, the father of Doctor Angco, the dentistry. There were many offers to us before, but we could not do it anymore. The elders children were already in the colleges. Isu nga daytoy laeng macabaelan mi nga dua kenni Mamang yo nga mafabrica, ket pag-anosan yomet nga annac mi coma.

Liberation Time

By this time of Liberation, I was the very first one who were engaged in gasoline business in our town Cabatuan. Mr. Felipe Isidro and Mr. Jesus Aznar were my co-business. I was also very successful. I could sent my 3 children in colleges at the same time. Sofing, Socorro & Bien. But Bien was failure due to girls inducers. But when supper station were built in our town Cabatuan, I was again defeated in my business. My place is to narrow for the station.

I changed again my business in to Hotel and Restaurant with my industrious wife Juanita. And this is now where we are all earn our living and the family education up to the present time, and still existing.

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Year 1978 - Zacarias