

ELIAS and SALOME

By Am. F. PAREDES

Most of us are acquainted with Dr. Jose Rizal's classical novel *Noli Me Tangere* finished in Berlin on February 21, 1887. This volume is acclaimed as the "Filipino Bible of Nationalism" and the "most precious relic of the free Filipino people."

What the average reader is not so familiar with is the fact that there was an unpublished chapter from the original *Noli Me Tangere* manuscript entitled *Elias and Salome*.

This chapter was written in the handwriting of the author. The pages of this particular part were lined with blue-pencil by Rizal without a number of the chapter to indicate it from the other chapters. While Rizal was in Berlin, he used to re-write portions of his novel, and even deleted paragraphs and chapters to improve it.

This chapter deals mainly with the love affair of Elias, one of the principal characters of the novel, and Salome, the embodiment of Filipina beauty and modesty like Maria Clara as portrayed by Rizal. It also depicts the sincerity of their love affair and the entangling circumstances that sealed their fate, leading them to poignant parting.

Mr. Charles Derbyshire, an ardent Rizalian scholar who translated Rizal's two novels, the *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo*, and some of his poems, explained why *Elias and Salome* was deleted from the original manuscript.

With regard to this chapter, he wrote: "In the original manuscript, this chapter appears immediately after Chapter XXIV, *In the Woods*, but it was blue-pencilled and lacks a number such as the others have in pencil evidently for the printer's guidance, the next succeeding chapter being so marked XXV... After a careful consideration of various sound artistic reasons for striking it out, and in deference to the author's clearly-indicated wish, for he personally super-intended the printing of the first edition published, this chapter was not included in the complete English version, *The Social Cancer*, the endeavor therein being to present the finished work exactly as the author himself finally issued it... In the preceding chapter, a party of picnickers had been roughly broken in upon a squad of civil guards searching for the outlaw Elias. Salome is a character not even hinted in any part of the story or the novel (Italics mine)."

Here is a brief translation of the chapter entitled *Elias and Salome* which Rizal wrote as a continuation of Chapter XXIV:

The civil guards that disturb the picnickers are looking for the outlaw Elias everywhere. If they had gone to a picturesque hut near the lake, they would have found what they sought. On the *balatan* of the hut, a girl of about seventeen to twenty years is busy sewing a *camisa* of bright colors. She is attractive and beautiful, but her beauty is like the flowerette that grow wild not attracting attention at first glance, but rather flowerets whose beauty are revealed when we examine them carefully.

Now and again, she would watch the lake, waiting for the arrival of Elias. Suddenly, she heard footsteps. She laid aside her sewing and waited patiently beside the bamboo stairway. Elias appeared carrying a bundle of firewood and a bunch of bananas which he placed on the floor while he handed a wriggling *dalag* to Salome.

Salome opened the conversation: "I thought you would come by water, Elias."

"I couldn't, Salome," replied Elias in a repressed tone. "The *falua* has come and is patrolling the lake. There's a man in it who knows me."

Salome noticed in his features and actions that he was sad. Deep in her heart, she knew that Elias was being sought by the authorities. She asked other matters to make it indifferent, something about the girls—pretty ones at the picnic. He told her they were many and among them was Maria Clara, the sweetheart of a rich young man who had just arrived from Europe.

Then he arose, and spoke in a low tone: "Good-by, Salome. The sun is setting and, as you think, it won't do for the people's hereabouts to say that the night overtook me here—but you've been crying. Don't deny it with your smile, you've been crying."

Salome was crying simply because she was sad at leaving this house where she was born and reared. She explained to him: "Because it's not right for me to live alone. I'll go to live with my relatives in Mindoro. Soon I'll be able to pay the debt my mother left me when she died... to give up this house in which one was born and has grown up is something more than giving up a half of one's being. A typhoon will come, a freshet, and everything will go into the lake."

Elias remained speechless for a moment, then held her hands and asked her: "Have you heard any one speak ill of you? No? Have I sometimes worried you? Not that either? Then you are tired of my friendship and want to drive me away..."

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mon feelings of humanity for a temporary advantage, and in every respect discredited the government which he represents.

And yet today, Governor Lacson is still a hero to this government. If a man completely devoid of high principles, totally without shame, ruled by his savage hunger for power and not by his sense of righteousness—if such a man can remain a hero for long to this government, what sort of government do we have anyway?

Gentlemen of this Congress, we are the direct representatives of the people, and it is our sacred duty to restore the people's faith and confidence in their government.

The case of Captain Junsay involves a clear and fundamental violation of the Revised Penal Code and the most cherished liberties guaranteed by the Constitution. Inasmuch as the administrative investigation of this case has only been belatedly ordered, and the participation of members of the Constabulary in the despicable beating of their fellow officer and comrade in arms creates doubts in the public mind as to the impartiality of an administrative investigation, this Congress should see to it that a separate congressional probe be instituted.

This Congress has the power to supervise the execution of executive functions, the duty to enact legislation to implement and protect the rights guaranteed by our Constitution, and the obligation to turn the spotlight of public opinion on current events, for as James Madison has said, in the final analysis, the chief palladium of constitutional liberty is the people whose representatives we are, the people who are the authors of this blessing must also be its guardians, and their eyes must be ready to mark, their voice to denounce aggression on the authority of their constitution.

This House cannot allow such barbaric practice as those employed in the Junsay case to continue. I therefore ask and so move that a committee of five be created, two of them to be appointed by the Speaker under nomination of the minority party and three under nomination of the majority party with full powers to investigate the case of Captain Junsay and his men, and the prevalence of the practice of extorting confessions by force by law enforcing agencies of the country, to determine and fix the responsibility therefor, and to report the results of its investigation to the House with recommendations concerning the measure to be adopted to implement the constitutional rights of our people.

Elias . . .

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"No, don't talk like that. I am not tired of your friendship. God knows that I am satisfied with my lot. I only desire health that I may work. I don't envy the rich, their wealth, but..."

"But what?"

"Nothing—I envy them nothing so long as I have your friendship."

"Salome," replied the youth with bitter sorrow. "You know my cruel past and that my misfortune is not my work. If it were not for the fatality which at times makes of the love of my parents with bitterness, if it were not that I don't want my children to suffer what my sister and I suffered, you would have been my wife in the eyes of God. But for the sake of this very love, for the sake of this future family, I have sworn to end with myself the misfortune that we have been inheriting from father to son, and it is better that

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We have behind us the lesson of 1941 and we can improve much upon that lesson in carrying out the traffic movement of our scattered reservists. We have the same postal, telephone and telegraph, and the better equipped, expanded and improved nets of wireless to direct the traffic. Our land, water and air transportation are also now with better and increased equipments, and can be brought into the service of mobilization and continuing defense necessity. No doubt, all can be immeasurably utilized to serve the procurement and delivery end of our man-power to the army, this time, schooled and more efficient.

But, again, this ferret out how much the defense authority has move toward a direction of lining up, acquainting, and bringing these national equipment into ready availability in the interest of mobilization or army use. It is doubtful that there is any. We know of no significant measure taken by those in authority to reduce this problem and work it out to the highest advantage of the military. We cannot be too early about this thing, as in all others, under the international clouds that we are in these days.

The Receiving Disposition of the Army. — When material is made available and the man-power is collected and delivered to the army, mobilization as a civil function ceases. From there the army administration takes over. But for the army to be in the position to take over, it must have, perforce, provided for the adequate installation of mobilization and training centers all over the country for the reception and refresher training of the reservists. At these places the reservists will be sheltered, fed, clothed and equipped, and cared of health meanwhile that they undergo the change to make them ship-shape for final direction to their divisional cantonments or to battle stations. Rightly putting it, this is the phase where general mobilizations anchor ultimately.

The military authority have, perhaps, mapped out and designated the sites of these mobilization and training centers. But are these centers equipped and prepared to receive reservists? Equipping and preparing of these installations is not limited to the quartering facilities of men and officers but extended as far as meaning ready and competent camp complements to operate and administer these centers, ready stores with adequate stocks for immediate and continuing issuance, and ready trains and convoy units essential to troops and supply movements.

Winding up.—Scarcely a year and a half after the Philippine Commonwealth started the program of national defense, it saw fit to stage, and as a matter of fact it successfully staged, a practice mobilization. From then it carried it on from year to year until in 1941, beyond the expectation of even the most advised in the government, the Commonwealth was complemented for its efforts the past four years in the descent of the need of a real and war caused mobilization. The sign of the time that had influenced our government then to take those early steps to gear for mobilization is not more telling than as it is now. Neither is the cost of holding one, relatively with our state of finance then and our finance now, less prohibitive than it is now. It is only the mastering sense that a practice mobilization is the ultimate thesis with which to grade our reserve system of training from year to year that so inspired our military planners at that time to stage those dry runs. Yet, this is the fourth year of the Republic, and the fifth since liberation and our reestablishment; it is a bit alarmingly striking that we have not one practice mobilization to rate the cohesive soundness and efficiency of our reserve upon which we can only rely in its possession of that walled state.

To wind up, this is what last we may hope our military policy makers and defense planners may have in mind to be guided by: The implication of our reserve system of national defense essays a concept that the reserve branch

Elias

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it should be so, for neither you nor I would wish to hear our children lament our love, which would only bequeath them misery. You do well to go to the house of your relatives. Forget me, forget a love so mad and futile. Perhaps you'll meet there one who is not like me."

"Elias!" exclaimed the girl reproachfully.

"You have misunderstood me. In my words, there is no complaint against you. Take my advice, go home to your relatives. . . Here you have no one but me, and the day when I fall into the hands of my pursuers, you will be left alone and alone for the rest of your life. Improve your youth and beauty to get a good husband, such as you deserve, for you don't know what it is to live among men."

"I was thinking that you might go with me."

"Alas!" rejoined Elias shaking his head. "Impossible, and more so than ever. . . I haven't yet found what I came here to seek—it's impossible! Today I forfeited my liberty."

He related the incidents of the picnic and fishing expedition that morning, and told her how Crisostomo Ibarra saved his life from the jaws of a *caiman* (crocodile).

He was so grateful, and vowed that he would repay the good deed of Ibarra, even though it would cost him his life. He said that anywhere he would go, even in Mindoro, the past would still be discovered.

"Well, then," Salome said to him as she looked at him tenderly, "At least after I am gone, live here, live in this house. It will make you remember me and I will not think in that distant land that the hurricane has carried my hut into the water. When my thoughts turn to these shores, that memory of you and of my house will appear to me together. Sleep where I have slept and dreamed—it will be as though I were beside you. . ."

"Oh!" exclaimed Elias, waving his hand in desperation. "Woman, you'll make me forget."

Freeing himself from the girl's clasp, he left nastily and was soon lost amid the lengthening shadows of the trees now silent and still at twilight.

Salome followed his fleeing form with her gaze, as she stood listlessly, listening to the sound of his footsteps that slowly faded away.

of our armed forces does not exist for the regular branch but, rather, the regular exist mainly owing to and for the reserve. The regular can only find the reflection of its soundness and readiness to meet a war emergency in the cohesive and responsive soundness of the reserve for which it exist. There stands absolutely no motive at all to maintain a regular standing force in our inability to maintain, preserve to usefulness, and provide for the adequate and timely transformation of the reserve from its civil isolation to a mass of rolling divisions and task groups for effective defense.