

# MAN in t

by A. G. Hufana

Our time starts at 7:00 a.m., December 29, 1896.

Fort Santiago chapel. One long bench and the steps to the altar are the most prominent fixtures of the scene. A seven-branched candelabra, in turn, is the most prominent fixture of the altar which is draped with a blue mantlepiece with yellow trimmings. Lording over it is a painted full-moon-like Host on which is etched the Great Eye of God radiating unto a painted chalice. Enter Rizal, in black suit and derby hat, with Spanish officers.

## Scene I

**RIZAL** (looking around, fixes his eyes on the altar, and takes off his hat) Are you sure this is the right way, gentlemen? I thought you were taking me back to the cell.

**OFFICER** (taking off his cap; the others follow) The General's order, Señor Rizal.

**RIZAL** (facing officers politely) I see. It is very fine of the

General. (Walks up to the altar; turns back) But what shall I do here?

**M. CHAPLAIN** (coming in) Prepare your soul, my son. I offer my services.

**RIZAL** Oh... oh. Thank you very much, Father. (Walks up to the altar, mounts the steps and fingers the candelabra) Would you mind, señores?

**M. CHAP.** Be it so. We have not much time left. (Walks up to Rizal)

**RIZAL** (lighting the candles with a match) Father, I prefer to be alone, if you do not mind. (Walks down to the officers) Would you mind, señores?

**OFFICER** As you wish, señor. As long as you will not receive outside visitors until further orders.

**RIZAL** I appreciate the orders very highly. And it was an honor to have had breakfast with you. The roll and the coffee-cake were very good. The coffee — Dutch, I suppose?

# he MOON

**OFFICER** (chuckling in spite of himself) Very Dutch, señor. Recently imported.

**RIZAL** (chukling with officer) Aliens produce our wants. (Seriously) Father, this matter of soul... I feel queer about it.

**M. CHAP.** Queer, indeed, my son. That is why we cannot help being human. Every human being must be guided to understand.

**RIZAL** Understand? To be guided to understand? (Looks at the altar) I have kept you long and I have kept God waiting. Father, I shall be very glad to borrow your books on meditation.

**M. CHAP.** Be it so. I will have them sent. God be with you.

**RIZAL** Thank you. God for everybody is God for nobody. Thank you, señores. Oh, before you go, may I ask you a favor: Would you let in my pupil who is detained by the guard at the door? (One of the officers goes

and returns with a boy of 17, held by a guard who begins searching him)

**RIZAL** You need not look for contraband on him, guard. I did not teach my disciples to carry arms. (To the boy who looks happy at being freed) How are you, Doming?

**GUARD** Remember: only five minutes.

**OFFICER** Man, you are giving orders! Remember yourself that Señor Rizal is to be given all courtesy due to a prisoner.

**GUARD** Excuse me, sir.

**RIZAL** Thank you, guard. You are very civil. Come, Doming. We have lessons to do. (Exit officers, chaplain and guard)

**BOY** (taking Rizal's hand; kisses it) What did they do to you, Maestro?

**RIZAL** Not that I discourage you but from now on, you must not kiss anybody's hand if you are an orphan. A man should not worship another man. Now, to lesson two. You must not...

**BOY** Can we not go home again, Maestro? Will they not let you go?

**RIZAL** (troubled, walks up and down) Yes, the farm must be harvested by now. Our chickens are starved. Tomorrow, you go back to Dapitan, huh? That is lesson two. I am afraid I have to stay for a while. You see... they got me... and... (forces himself to smile) You are really a big boy now. How tall are you? Let me see. (Makes boy stand up and stands back to back with him) Just as I thought: you are taller by three inches.

**BOY** You are much stronger, Maestro.

**RIZAL** Keep s rong: that is the secret of strength. Come, let us test ourselves. (They play Indian wrestling on the bench. Trick lighting fades in the Dapitan pupils of Rizal — ranging from 10 to 16 in age —and they gather around the wrestlers. They clap when Rizal wins the match) Oho! You surprise me. How did you get here?

**BOYS** Bravo, Maestro! We were fencing by the river as you told us to when you left. (They show Rizal the big sticks they carry)

**RIZAL** God! Do not mob me again with these, ha? Be good: I am not always with you. Tell you something? I never really left. How did you know I was back?

**BOYS** Cosme Paez shouted it from the tree up there.

**VOICE** (upstage) Hellow! I am here, Maestro! I saw you riding on your handkerchief over the surface of the river. You landed on the other side. Then you jumped over to this side.

**RIZAL** Lord! I could not believe it myself! That is twenty feet across. Cosme, can you reach for the moon up there?

**VOICE** (upstage) O, yes, Maestro! I could even see the fiesta in Dipolog. Climb up and see for yourself.

**RIZAL** You are joking, Cosme. Come down before you see too much.

**BOYS** No, Maestro, he is not joking. Have you forgotten that you drew the map of Mindanao from the top of that tree?

**RIZAL** I am not sure. Be careful of legends. They are only told for entertainment.

**BOYS** Show us how to shoot, Maestro.

**RIZAL** (taking a gun) Very well. Whose initials will I shoot on the bark of that tree?

**BOYS** (together) Mine! Mine!

**RIZAL** Easy! Easy! Since I cannot please all of you I will have to please Cosme. He likes to see people shooting except at himself. (Levels gun upstage) Aim, hold breath, steady, count one, two... three... (gun report)

**VOICE** (upstage) Eeoow! (A hat flutters down)

**RIZAL** (laughing) Do not worry, Cosme! I just closed your eyes. That is it, boys: do not shoot to kill. Aim high. Now, do not play with guns. Run along now. See you. (Trick lighting fades out boys)

**BOY** (pointing to Rizal's back) Someone comes, Maestro. (Trick lighting produces a 20-year old girl with a waterpail who picks up Cosme's hat and approaches)

**GIRL** Doctor, I want to see you...

**RIZAL** (turning around) Bonifacia! How are you?

**GIRL** I heard the shot. I was down to get water. O, it is good to walk again.

**RIZAL** Do be careful yourself. Relapse is a harder thing to cure. (Trick lighting produces Josephine, big with child)

**JOSEPHINE** (eyeing the girl crossly) I'm sorry. He's my husband.

**GIRL** (innocently) Are you... you... married?

**JOSEPHINE** Can't you see? (Embraces Rizal) Who's she, darling?

**GIRL** I am his patient. I have the right to know from my doctor what is wrong with me.

**JOSEPHINE** Okay. Okay. Nothing's wrong with you that's not the matter with me. If Pepe and I are not married, we think we are. And that's as good as any of your outward ceremonies.

**RIZAL** Josephine! When will you behave? Love is not a public scandal. I am sorry, Miss Elumba, Miss Taufer is my wife.

**GIRL** (sobbing, produces, from her bosom a packet of letters tied with a red ribbon) Burn these for me... (Rizal takes the packet. She stares at him undecidedly. Rizal stares back at her and is about to put a hand over her shoulder when she shrinks and runs away, sobbing.)

**JOSEPHINE** Well?

**RIZAL** (absentmindedly) Well.

**JOSEPHINE** Well, I didn't know you had written her so many. Aren't you going to review your relics?

**RIZAL** (skimming over the letters) From my sisters... except Narcisa and my favorite sister who died when I was four. I'm condemned to love one woman. That woman is you. Believe me.

**JOSEPHINE** But one called Leonor?

**RIZAL** Leonor is dead. Forget her.

**JOSEPHINE** Let's not quarrel again, darling. I shalln't burden you, I promise. You've other problems.

**RIZAL** Problems! I'm out of politics. Now I can attend to my own house. Let's live here in peace. You and I alone. (Josephine swgons) Josefina, what's wrong?

**JOSEPHINE** Nothing . . . I just fell down the stairs. No . . . I struck against the iron stand.

**RIZAL** The child! It's my fault. I'll tear down that step. I wish it is that friar who bungled with our license. I'll wrench out that stand. I wish it is that friar who played politics with our love.

**JOSEPHINE** Darling, take me home. I feel it kicking inside.

**RIZAL** It'll be a boy! I'll barter with heaven for it to be a boy!

**JOSEPHINE** Pepe! It's dead . . . I know . . . I know. I am seeing things . . . (Trick lighting produces a man carrying lamps.)

**MAN** It is just Tamarong.

**RIZAL** Are you also part of this bad dream?

**MAN** In person . . . fulfilling his personal promises. I promised when you restored my sight I would light the way to town so that no soul would stumble in the darkness that I once knew. Well, here I am — with the lamps.

**RIZAL** What there! Who tempts me again? (Trick lighting produces a lay Jesuit with a bandaged finger) Ah, Brother Tildot!

**LAY JESUIT** A leak in the dike. I stopped it with a finger till your boys came to the rescue.

**RIZAL** Brother, you are a hero. But please do not mention this incident again. The dam is dreamed up by Father Sanchez

and everything dreamed up by the Fathers ought to stand for ever.

**LAY JES.** Do not be modest, Jose. The dike was laid out on your plan and direction. I sent the plan to the Governor this morning — with your name. I affixed mine in the order as constructor.

**RIZAL** I am absolutely out of politics now, Brother. You could have signed the plan alone.

**LAY JES.** And tell a lie in science?

**RIZAL** Until science is known by another name. As of now, even God and man are intermixed. Brother, please look after the mixing of the concrete. One of cement, two of sand. I will come down later. Come, Josephine, to our ivory tower. (Trick lighting fades them all except the boy who falls on his knees in the attitude of silent prayer.)

### Scene II

(The boy is seen still on his knees when Rizal reappears from the shadows)

**RIZAL** On your feet, Doming. That is lesson four. What did I tell you about our past?

**BOY** There was the Dawn Man . . . the Little Man . . . the Tall Man . . . the Brown Man . . . the Men of Cham-pa . . . then Men of Band-jar . . . I forget easily. After them I think no more.

**RIZAL** More, Doming. And more. Our history is an honor roll. We have only to sit back like in a *moro-moro* play. But someone has to call these players out. They know their audience. You do the calling, Doming. I like to pretend I enjoyed them myself. Do you know who comes next?

**BOY** Lima... Lima... Lima-hong?

**RIZAL** See? You forget because you are serious. What did I tell you? Take it easy. History is not catechism. To refresh your eye on the past, the next is a suicide.

**BOY** One who killed himself?

**RIZAL** Why not? History is the lives of suicides.

**BOY** I do not get you, Maestro.

**RIZAL** I do not even get myself, Doming. Someone did get himself. This someone got himself after getting another. Lapu-lapu! (Trick lighting produces a well-built, nigh handsome warrior with long hair kept in place by a headband. Around his neck is a string of teeth. The most striking part of his body is his G-stringed torso, a deep bronze like the suntan of a recluse, on which leans a huge *kampilan*. He holds a big shield by his side. A man, in battered Spanish coat-of-mail, lies at his feet. The face of the lying man is bloodless and were it not for his bushy beard, we could take

him as cut out of marble. His hands and the flesh out of his metal dress are caked with blood)

**WARRIOR** (sternly) What do you want?

**BOY** (fearfully) He is asking what you want, Maestro.

**RIZAL** (matching his voice with the warrior's) Relax, Mr. Lajulapu. I am a friend.

**WARRIOR** If a friend, why do you not speak my tongue?

**RIZAL** Ay, ay, *kalisud*...

**WARRIOR** *Kalisud*... Aha, you are just a poet. So what?

**RIZAL** So what? Poets have no country. I, without a country, respect you, with a country. Hail, Patriot!

**WARRIOR** Stop it! Stop it! You are flattering me. I fear flatterers. They do more harm than a fighting enemy. The enemy can only kill or be killed. A flatterer can sell or buy you. I must be on guard against your kind. You cannot buy me with talk as that Humabon and that Zula were bought. Pshe! Humabon with his granary! Zula with his goats! It is really their flattery I fought this morning. This stranger (pointing to the man at his feet) was their medium. He stood in my way so I cut him down.

**RIZAL** By cutting him down, what did you get?

**WARRIOR** Flatterers, that is all. Myself, above all.

**RIZAL** Why so?

**WARRIOR** You are like a historian. Historians are like women. They are very fertile from the neck up where women are from the neck below.

**RIZAL** (determinedly) Why so?

**WARRIOR** You are like a hunter. You please me. (Relaxes)

**RIZAL** Not to flatter you or anybody, because I do not flatter easily, I know the facts. Long long before and long long after I meet you today I was, am, and shall be used to you.

**WARRIOR** *Ay, ay, kalisud.* It is my regret that I am Lapulapu. Today I have become an *anito*. Everybody is asking me to tell his fortune, to cure his mother-in-law, and so forth. I should not have led the day. It is far far better to have slept through the battle and to eat and sleep and live and die normally. I even had to please a newborn which could not be fed but with coconut milk. I climbed that high tree there, and fell. I stood up for fear of displeasing anybody. But I was really hurt by that fall. I am hurting all over now. But what can I do? I am Lapulapu so I have to stand here, pretending to be as useful as a dog and as long-lived as a cat.

**RIZAL** This pretense will kill you. It is too late: you cannot die anymore. That is the trouble.

**WARRIOR** Be gone! You are telling the truth. Truth is very hard to take. I'd rather climb many coconuts and fall many times than take the truth. If you desire passage, I give it free, but be gone! Be gone like the sea wind!

**RIZAL** I am a magician. I could send you to the shades if I like. But I would not do that. I will bring your enemy to life so that you can rest at ease. You see, it is this killing that really bothers you. Blood is on your mind. Magellan, come forth! (The prostrate man arises, shakes himself as if from deep sleep, and looks around but seems not to see anybody)

**RESURRECTED MAN** *Pobre me!* What a nightmare! (Laughs to himself) Killed by an Indian! Me, killed by an Indian? (Looks at himself). But I am wounded and it is painful. Where are my... Barbosa! Serrano! The cowards! They have left with the boats. Nothing but seagulls in the distance. I wonder if the birds will feed me with worms. Not even roots perhaps on this godless reef. Exiles usually choose their domiciles but now I reside actually on nothing, without family, country and church. And what did I

think once? Ha! Ha! An empire. . . An empire on a reef? A reef for the Queen? That Queen has a vast amor propio. She fell for my fish talk about a land of onions, garlic and pepper where the sun pops up every morning unmindful of current events. Now where is this land of the morning? This? (Scoops up dirt from the ground) This? What will the Queen say? Poor Queen! She cashed in her jewels in this hide-and-seek on an outdated paper map that promised spices. I pity her. She has been dieting on the King's dog biscuits just to let me have five boats to look for onions, garlic and pepper. O, she must be very thin by now. Dieting on a husband's dog food is very bad for a blueblooded wife. I should not have played with her amor propio so. Now, she must be dreaming of me and onions and so forth. Hungry women have hungry dreams. If I could only kiss her lips to lips — I am not very old for a lover, am I? Then she would forget I bring her this earth—a fistful of barren earth. But I could not do that. A woman's lips are reserved for a man who tickles with sweet promises, not with results. Such a man is the King. Wait a minute! I got an idea! I am always leading with misleading ideas. I hope they lead me back to

the Queen this time. There are footprints on this earth. Aha! I named such a foothold of dust on March 17. Would the Queen understand and forgive? I have not known any woman who understands and forgives. The King could not even advise her without advancing grounds for divorce. Ah, me, Spain's darling!

RIZAL I would that you were criticized to death. To be criticized is to be immortalized.

R. MAN (looking around) What is that? It sounds like my scriptwriter Pigafetta. Pigafetta is always whispering greatness into my ear. Pigafetta, if you are alive come out and do not converse at the back of my head! Come out to be seen!

RIZAL He has written your epitaph, Magellan. You will like it next to an empty stomach.

R. MAN Who is that who speaks unseen? Pigafetta has never been like this. He compliments in the face. He values face values very much. Pigafetta, come out to be seen! You have not been false to anyone. I thank you, Pigafetta! We are the only ones left. The others have run away. A pack of cowards. Pigafetta, can you hear me? You have always stuck to my side like a spare sword,



even in thirst and drunkenness, how could you talk at my back like that! You who have willingly made me a shadow, I respect you! Come, let us drink what is spilt and be sad and forget we are alive! Let me hang unto you. I will let you hang unto me!

**WARRIOR** Stranger, it is blood that is spilt, not *tuba*. Look at me.

**R. MAN** Alas Pigafetta... I (Feels Lapulapu from head to toe) By my soul, I seemed to have met you before...

**WARRIOR** Dawn this morning, old scalawag!

**R. MAN** What are you, dear lad?

**RIZAL** May I have the pleasure of introducing you to each other? You were not in the mood for formalities this morning. Mr. Lapulapu, meet Mr. Magellan — a Portuguese sailor in the service of the Spanish Crown, circumnavigator of the globe, discoverer of the Philippines. Mr. Magellan, meet Mr. Lapulapu, chief and stubborn individualist of Mactan, a gentleman without humor.

**R. MAN** Ha? You are that Lapulapu who could fight like me when I was younger? Well, I am glad to know you. I want to offer you my sword but I see it is broken.

**WARRIOR** You broke it on my shield. You were a brave

man. It was my honor to have killed you. You are foolish: you work for nothing but a crown. Tell me, are you from hell?

**R. MAN** From hell? My young friend, you do not say that even in jest. With an interested third party here...

**RIZAL** I am sorry to be a witness to your amicable settlement of a little quarrel out of court. I am glad to be of use, however. I am Jose Rizal from the present.

**R. MAN** You infer that we (pointing to himself and the warrior) are from the past. The past is the refuge of those who could not exist. Better know what you are talking about. (Rizal laughs) But, Mr. Lapulapu, you have a good place out here.

**WARRIOR** Do feel at home, Mister. Your companions — they were so scared — were asking for your body before they left I know not where... and...

**RIZAL** 115 are all that is left of Mr. Magellan's men. They are still looking for spices but all they can meet with is hunger. You will not go hungry anymore, Mr. Magellan.

**R. MAN** You mean...

**WARRIOR** Yes, you are conquered, Mister. But you, Mr. Rizal, you are butting into this polite conversation. As I was saying, Mr. Magellan, your

companions were asking for your body but I did not let them. They would only commit you to the water whereas I intend to preserve you in a jar with full military honors.

R. MAN A pagan burial! Am I truly dead?

RIZAL Neither of you is dead or alive. You are very much a set of political inspirations to the future.

R. MAN *Que barbaridad!* Murder is cleaner than suicide. And I thought of committing suicide. So it was you who killed me, Mr. Lapulapu. I remember it all now, can you forgive me?

WARRIOR So it was me you wanted dead or alive, Mr. Magellan. Can you forgive me too? I will give you my *kampilan* as a souvenir. Here.

R. MAN I do not need it. Let us bury our wrongdoings here and now. I am tired.

WARRIOR I am tired too. But you sleep first. I watch over you.

RIZAL Too comfortable to be true. History is fun, no? And the fun of it is played out of history. Before you retire, Mr. Magellan, I have news for you.

R. MAN Out with it quickly. This is not a play. This is real. And I am so tired...excuse me. (Falls down at the feet of the warrior)

RIZAL (reading) "Thus our

light was extinguished." Signed Figafetta.

R. MAN (sleepily) Never mind that. Figafetta is always playing with words. He cannot be serious. Playwrights are punsters. They have nothing to say. Ho..hum...the earth is very warm, and sleep is healthy.

WARRIOR Go, Mr. Rizal! Can you not see that my righteous enemy wants to be left alone? And what are these sons-of-dirty-loins going to do? Hey, you! (Trick lighting produces a number of men setting up a papier mache obelisk)

RIZAL In memory of Fernando Magallanes, killed by Lapulapu through some slight misunderstanding. That is the best they can guess to do.

WARRIOR An excuse for a holiday? Hey, you! Do not trespass!

RIZAL (addressing men) Really, my countrymen, you should not...Some other time, not now. There will be a time for monuments. Let us honor the past with more worthwhile work. Go home and raise vegetables. (Trick lighting fades out the men, Magellan, and Lapulapu in a final glow of triumph)

MESSENGER (enters with books) Padre Cordero sends books to you, señor. He says you can keep or give them

away. He wants a last word from you.

RIZAL Convey my deepest gratitude to him, will you?

MESSENGER Something deeper than that, he says, señor. Something like what you are thinking between today and tomorrow.

RIZAL I am not prepared... Well, I am not the last man.

BOY Maestro, I was thinking... what if you are him?

RIZAL Him what, Doming?

BOY The Last Man...

RIZAL Last Man. Oh, Last Man. I see what you mean. Of course, you are not the last to say I am the Last Man. You are carrying history too far, Doming. It does not end with me or any last man of yours. There simply is no Last Man. (To the messenger) Can you take down dictation? I have a message for Padre Cordero. I could write it myself but my hands are trembling. (The messenger takes out pad and pencil) Are you ready? I will pronounce very slowly so that you can take down every word I say. Ready? (The messenger nods. Rizal looks longingly at the altar, breathes deeply, and walks slowly up and down) Now and... at the hour... of our death... we ask for... strength to accept... the lot that we deserve... O God... O Amun-Ra... O Buddha...

O Tao... O Allah... O Bathala... (The messenger looks up disturbed) Never mind then. Padre Cordero will understand perhaps if I do not say anything. (Absentmindedly) Because the worst world wars happen in the soul... what if only those who are driven by thoughts of death live? O, it is cruel... it is like disturbing someone in his grave... to look for buried gold or for a needle in eternity. Doming, let me see how you can endure a prayer. After this you can go. I shall have set you free. (He falls on his knees, motions the boy and the messenger to fall on their knees on his sides)

### Scene III

(Rizal is seen awakened from a nap on the bench by a voice loudly expostulating offstage in the direction of the guards at the door to the chapel)

RIZAL (peeping outside) Good evening, guards. Have you ever been in love?

VOICE I am not allowed to speak to you. *No puedo aceptar ninguna responsabilidad...*

RIZAL *Espero se servira dispensar buena acogida.* And you, master, could you tell me if the moon is out by now?

SECOND VOICE The moon might not rise until Three Kings, señor.

RIZAL Oh! I have been indoors too long. I feel I could

walk through the walls. How are the other prisoners?

**SECOND VOICE** They are all snoring. One is talking in his sleep.

**RIZAL** Ah, blessed are their bones! I would like to walk among them. Sleeping men remind me of breathing tombs. How young is the youngest?

**SECOND VOICE** Hard to tell. A new one was brought in yesterday. He was running high with fever. He was crying for milk and wanted only his mother to give it to him.

**RIZAL** I feel like a child myself. It is not joke to be a child. A child must always have a mother. This afternoon my mother was here. She looked very old. The hard years have caught up with her. (Swooning) O, Inay! (Trick lighting produces Doña Teodora beside Rizal. They embrace lovingly)

**DOÑA TEODORA** My son! My son!

**RIZAL** (tenderly) Inay! (Checks his emotion and holds D. Teodora apart) There: my big old lady has never been so little and young looking! Your tears are like the tears of someone who is sixteen, and in love. Here, my handkerchief is scented with April blossoms. Let me wipe the tears of my sweetheart. (Wipes her eyes) Are you happy?

**D. TEODORA** (shedding tears anew) Pepe, I pleaded to Señor Polavieja.

**RIZAL** (stunned) For what? For my life-imprisonment, Inay?

**D. TEODORA** Yes, yes. It is better than losing you forever, my son. But he would not listen. He did not even receive my petitions asking life for you, even in prison forever.

**RIZAL** (absentmindedly) That is better. O, you did not see me about these things, Inay. How are my sisters? What do they think about me?

**D. TEODORA** They came with me. We can only see you one by one. They are waiting outside for their turn. Josefina is in the fort, too. Not with your sisters.

**RIZAL** Josephine...so...so unhappy. Inay, it was a long time. It want to see them... all of them...one by one...

**D. TEODORA** Not until I go out, Pepe. I am jealous of them all now. Let me feel how much you are still a baby. (Pulls him to the bench; takes his head to her laps and combs his hair with her fingers) Do you remember asking me big questions when you were so little?

**RIZAL** Little questions have big answers. I ask myself: Are the people on the other side of the lake happy? Why does

the moth dive to sure death in the flame? Inay, I have done nothing to make you happy. I have been a very naughty boy.

D. TEODORA *Filio!* My Pepe is *filio!*

RIZAL When I operated on your eyes I felt God take over the operation. Miracle! I could not believe I did it.

D. TEODORA Love guided your hands, my son. Then I could see Hongkong clearly. Such a new world! Not like Manila which ends at walls every turn you make. There were the kites! The rockets! The tinpans! Was that a fiesta below your terrace?

RIZAL (laughing) That was the Year of the Horse and the Chinese Day of Lovers. I wore my mother's heart that day. (Trick lighting fades out Doña Teodora. Rizal goes to the door and peeps outside) Can one of you stand guard inside? (A guard bearing a lantern enters) Thank you, guard. I feel weak. The flesh is weak. Can you tell me something about the dungeon which somebody said I am lucky not to be in?

GUARD Nine cells run down to it. It is like a deep well. I would lose myself in it without a companion. The prisoners there do not receive any sunlight. The jailer himself smells of moss when he comes up.

RIZAL I am luckier then.

GUARD O yes, señor. The new prisoner was taken down there this morning. He took the chains of the oldest one I knew. This old one was transferred to your cell. You could not know him if he were your twin brother — beard a foot long: I think he has not much time to live. He does not talk of dying. Perhaps death has missed him.

RIZAL Life has missed him equally. I am luckier I guess. At least the sun had been reaching me in the cell. I had visitors, both friend and enemy. The first one greeted me after the *misa de gallo*. (Trick lighting produces Lt. Luis T. Andrade, defense counsel of Rizal, extending his hands)

ANDRADE Merry Christmas, Pepe.

RIZAL Same to you, Luis. You are risking everything in haggling for my freedom.

ANDRADE This can be a page in history, Pepe. I think we can make it if we bluff well with our last card before the Council. The hearing will be resumed tomorrow.

RIZAL (contemplatively) No, Luis, that would be gambling a page of history on a story stake.

ANDRADE But, Pepe, do you not see what the stake is? Your life! You are on trial as a traitor and you are still

talking about the rightful course of events.

**RIZAL** Who cares? Is there no law?

**ANDRADE** There is only your honor system which makes it hard...even for me...to... Pepe, come! Come to it! Do you not see that if we oblige them a little you shall live?

**RIZAL** And remain bowed though the strong wind shall have passed? I thank you for everything you are doing for me.

**ANDRADE** (clasping Rizal's hands tightly) On your honor system then. If I lose I will not be able to face you again. Goodbye, Pepe. (Trick lighting fades him out)

**RIZAL** Guard, where are you from?

**GUARD** The Sacromonte hills, señor.

**RIZAL** You are Cale then? I am sort of gypsy too. My name is Jose Protacio Rizal y Mercado. Friends call me Pepe. What is yours?

**GUARD** Zumel. Julian Abad Zumel. I am better known as Gitano among my comrades-at-arms. My Spanish is not good because we gypsies always speak Cale at home.

**RIZAL** Any language will do as long as you can express yourself in it. But next to Tagalog, I like to know enough English to come to think in English about the prophecy of

our fellow gypsy Jagor. He is a very free man. (Trick lighting produces Feodor Jagor, in a German professor's clothes of the 19th century)

**JAGOR** Hello, Don Jose. The Spirit of Good Voyages put me ashore and told me to see you. I did not expect to find you here.

**RIZAL** You look well yourself, sir.

**JAGOR** Ugh...I feel spent. The trouble with the few of us is we are everybody's conscience.

**RIZAL** Who are with you?

**JAGOR** Progressives. We are a boatload. Most of us are dead but each time we put to shore, the dead come to life again. Does it not tickle you to read *Apocalypse*? That is our boat's name. It is really the Flying Dutchman's ship. We seized it from him. It is keeling with barnacles on which the living feed on in mid-ocean. The dead are nourished by memory.

**RIZAL** No politicians on board?

**JAGOR** I assure you no rats, no pearls, no swine. We might sink with them. But we are a merry lot. When we weigh anchor we are again in our element.

**RIZAL** I was about to ask you something but I have forgotten it. It is tipping on my tongue.

JAGOR Ask it and it shall be answered. If I cannot, I can summon one of the crew to answer it. That is our universal purpose. We are called to answer the nearest call. First come, first served: we also practice this capitalistic creed.

RIZAL Your prophecy about an English-speaking people who will someday succeed the Spanish... I was thinking over and over that if we are to have another master...

JAGOR Did I put that down in black and white? O, yes, I published it. I even copyrighted it. But I imitated it. I cannot remember how I imitated it. It just came about when I was lonely, I guess. And in the confusing course of my travels, I unwittingly wrote it down in my diaries. I should have burned such an emotion. Emotion only happens in a play. The players memorize the emotion and deliver it an emotion. Nothing is original with them. They mouth substanceless memory.

RIZAL You could not have imitated the players, sir.

JAGOR O, that I myself could play the part I write for others! But I must observe the ethics of visiting. I could talk on and on but I am not your last visitor. Hmmm, what do you have here? (Picks up one of the books on the bench) *De la Imitacion de Cristo y Menosprecio del Mundo*. Nice

book. Suppose you talk with Thomas-a-Kempis. He is master of imitation. I simply could not imitate anybody but myself. Excuse me.

RIZAL I will. Thank you, sir. *Auf wiedersehen*. (With a goodbye flourish of his hand, Jagor fades out. Trick lighting fades in St. Thomas-a-Kempis.)

A-KEMPIS How do you do, son of man?

RIZAL Is it you—in the flesh? I will not touch you lest I will not believe.

A-KEMPIS (laying his hand on Rizal's head) Christ be with you. Faith is too much of a confidence but, in all faith, you can confide to Christ.

RIZAL Kindly, O Saint, remove this mortal agony from me. (Sinks to the bench) I feel very sick at heart.

A-KEMPIS Promise me you will not join the *Apocalypse*. I am not one of them.

RIZAL I promise. I promise you everything if you relieve me of this exceeding sorrow.

A-KEMPIS Belief can only make you happy. You have not believed sincerely. Let us pray. (They cross themselves and pray silently)

RIZAL (stands and looks up at heaven) I believe! I have always believed!

A-KEMPIS Therefore be happy. Feel happy. Do not think you are unhappy. That is the

whole of life. Life stays the earth while it turns the stars.

**RIZAL** For a little while... (covers his face with his hands) O, it is terrible, Saint, to know I have done nothing.

**A-KEMPIS** Then you feel you have done everything. Knowledge comes to naught. Love is the only reality worth knowing.

**RIZAL** So... if I... if I do not love at all?... if I only loved myself? Myself is my death. Grass will cover me.

**A-KEMPIS** Eternity has humbled you. Christ will raise you from the grave.

**RIZAL** My most serious doubt has been the existence of life after death.

**A-KEMPIS** Doubt is the first step to faith. I doubted much. Very much. But I troubled hell with my doubting. The devil came in the form of a torch singer. I stood my ground against that thing and many things afterwards. When I was ready, I was conferred faith. Faith is a crown, only the coronation takes place inside you. All hell will clear off your path when you walk and you will walk back to God.

**RIZAL** (inspiredly) Eternity, Eternity, here I come! But how could I earn it, Saint?

**A-KEMPIS** By not denying the Resurrection and the Life.

**RIZAL** It takes a lot of courage to do that.

**A-KEMPIS** A lot of humility. Heaven is at the bottom of humility. To be humbled is to be awed as to be gentle is to be in love. It is only through the eyeview of the worm we see that to be humbled is to lose pride and to be in love is to begin to lust.

**RIZAL** Death, then, can only be proud? No human being can?

**A-KEMPIS** Life alone can be proud. (Unbares his chest) Look: I once burned myself with a torch, with which I conquered my first desire. How does the firebrand look to you?

**RIZAL** (tracing the tattoo on a-Kempis' chest with his fingers) It looks like a burning bush... a flowering cactus.

**A-KEMPIS** You know much of plants and flowers.

**RIZAL** Rice, orchids, everything that has roots.

**A-KEMPIS** With all the care for other plants, it is a wonder how a cactus grows unaided, no? It does not even begin with roots. It thrives best where other plants could not grow. But is not the desert more deathly without the cactus? Life is in the strangest places. Over death it plants its burning bushes and flowering cacti. Trust there is no



end to this and you trust in life. Creation goes on and on.

**RIZAL** You have died and arisen: what agonies must these experiences be! O, Saint, you are calm: how do you suffer and not show it?

**A-KEMPIS** (producing a crucifix which he kisses and extends to Rizal who kisses it) Re-sign yourself to the Divine Will. He who conquered death for you and me was also born to fear the death of the body. If He was God why was He not able to save Himself? If a mortal, why did he not run away? Lest we fall into temptation, son of man, let us pray. (They fall on their knees. Trick lighting fades out a-Kempis)

**RIZAL** (dazedly) I must have fallen asleep. Gitano, has my visitor gone?

**GUARD** Visitor? There is no one but us here, Señor Rizal. You were talking about the sun reaching you, then you were talking about man reaching the moon. You were murmuring many foreign names.

**RIZAL** Dr. Ferdinand Blumentritt...ever constant to the last moment... (Trick lighting produces Blumentritt, walking in with a cane, and with a pince-nez which he takes off on seeing Rizal)

**BLUMENTRITT** Happy birthday, Jose.

**RIZAL** (surprised) O! Thank you, Doctor. Yes, it is June 19 again. 1861 to the present. A long time...

**BLUMENTRITT** You were not down at the coffee shop. So I came up to know what is so important that keeps you from breaking your fast.

**RIZAL** I thought...But did you not meet my double on the street? I sent him to eat my usual toast and eggs for me...a little while ago.

**BLUMENTRITT** Man alive! You are exhausted. It is late morning outside.

**RIZAL** Did the kingdom change much the last three days?

**BLUMENTRITT** Not at all. But I have taken to stretching my legs around town at sunrise lest I start forgetting their use. They are not meeting yours in the park or in the museum anymore these days.

**RIZAL** (laughing, feels for something in his pocket) Ah, the invitation to the tea session at Hidalgo's three days back. (Takes another piece of paper from his pocket) Oho! It seems I have stood up a sweet señorita at the Filipino colony's party which was intended for her.

**BLUMENTRITT** There! The kingdom is palming you these symptoms of decadence. (A newsboy's voice cries offstage: "El Anuncio! El Anuncio!")

Hear that? They usually shout the whole headline at some world-shaking event. Today, it is just some banker that shot himself, or another bishop has been incarcerated by the long arm of the Minister of Ultramar. Or another who could have been a Caesar has been stabbed in a free-for-all. (Female vendor's voice cries offstage: "Roses! Roses! Fresh roses!") Or another bachelorhood and spinsterhood have happily terminated. Or another boy and girl have eloped and returned asking forgiveness. But flowers always remind me of death. Spring is too pretty to hide her frailty like a bride. Death never misses...

**RIZAL** Death never misses... death never misses. That is a very pretty phrase. Doctor, if I did not know you were a scientist I could call you a poet.

**BLUMENTRITT** (mockingly) Or another canned soup is advertised. Very soon we will also forget the use of our teeth. There are not even volcanoes now to shake us into our senses.

**RIZAL** Krakatoa gutted itself out for its own sake. We cannot always apply science on humanity without dismembering it.

**BLUMENTRITT** Leave that to the police and the Cortes.

Genius does not even get minimum wage. Come, you need food. (Trick lighting fades him out)

**RIZAL** What time is it?

**GUARD** Five to six by my timepiece.

**RIZAL** Mine has stopped at 12:00. It has been behaving this way since the verdict. (Trick lighting produces Polavieja presiding over the Council of War. Andrade is standing beside Rizal who is seated. The Council men nod. A clerk of court stands up)

**CLERK OF COURT** Will the prisoner please stand up? (Rizal stands) Be it known to all present that: Whereas the defendant, Jose Rizal, was found guilty of the charges brought against him which are, to wit, rebellion against the Church and State and treason appurtenant thereto, by official decree of His Excellency, the Governor-General, which is concurred upon by the Council of War assembled and Her Majesty, the Queen Regent of España, the said defendant is ordered to be executed by a firing squad composed of his countrymen... (Rizal gasps in surprise at "countrymen")... at seven o'clock in the morning, Manila time, on the thirtieth of December in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred ninety-six, on the field of Bagumba-

yan. The said defendant is further required to indemnify the court the sum of twenty thousand pesetas for damages. That is all.

**POLAVIEJA** Señor Rizal may now say what he wants to say.

**ANDRADE** I will speak for Señor Rizal as his legal defense. Your Excellency, you will be only igniting the fuse of war by...

**RIZAL** (holding Andrade) Lieutenant, a word with you. (Take him aside) Luis, I thank you as I have not thanked anybody before. Give me your hand. (They shake hands wordlessly) Thank you, Señor Polavieja. I have nothing to say.

**POLAVIEJA** I hate to do this, Señor Rizal. However, if you change your mind and wish to retract, I might still consider...

**ANDRADE** Pepe! Now is your chance, Pepe!

**RIZAL** (smiling) Hundreds have already read the truth, Luis. I do not have the strength to rob them of their reading pleasure. Even you, I think, consider the truth good fiction. Read it someday and remember me. (To Polavieja) I have nothing to say, General.

**ANDRADE** Goodbye, Pepe. Think kindly of me.

**RIZAL** Goodbye, Luis. Pray for me. (Trick lighting fades out Polavieja, Andrade and the council)

**RIZAL** I am always asking the time from guards. I think God has a hand in this. Both time and God seem... (Cockcrow in the distance) It is dawn. Not much farther is... Gitano, how long do you expect to live?

**GUARD** As long as I may be in my right mind, señor. When my time comes I hope to mumble a little adios to my friends.

**RIZAL** In bed? I wish I could die in bed and choose the friends I like to see me leap like a bird to the sun. It must be terrible to die in the night. Gitano.

**GUARD** Not if in the open, señor.

**RIZAL** There is not always a moon to look up to. Right now it is a dead moon up there. It cannot borrow light from the source. The earth stands between, a shadow. I wonder if in the shadow I could find... (Trick lighting produces Trining, Rizal's sister, wearing a bandana with which she tries to hide her tears)

**TRINING** *Kuya!*

**RIZAL** (turning to her) Trining! (Embraces her) O, you have grown up overnight. Do you gather mushrooms for Paciano? How you used to hate me in the season of mushrooms!

**TRINING** I love you, *kuya*.

**RIZAL** (holds her chin up and

takes off her bandana) Quick, smile. Why these tears if you love me?

**TRINING** (smiles forcibly) We have lost you after all, *kuya*. We have burned a thousand candles at the Virgin's feet for many nights and days. But she has not heard us. She has not heard us, *kuya*.

**RIZAL** Virgin Mary is the Mother of the living, Trining. God also wants to father me and he has bidden St. Joseph to lead me to my Brother, Jesus. Jesus is very glad to have me because He has only few playmates. Thrice a night I wake up to Him calling me from the darkness. (A child's voice: "Pepe! Pepe! Pepe!") And I find him looking for little lost lambs in the starlight. He touches me and I am again a child. (Guard's voice outside: "Hurry up! Hurry up!") But man also calls you back. We are too near this world to be able to stay in that real life.

**TRINING** I will not leave you, *kuya*! I will not leave you!

**RIZAL** (takes her by the shoulder to an alcohol lamp) Remember me to Mrs. Tavera. She warmed me with this little lamp the nights in Paris. There is something inside. I wish you keep it safe. (Trining receives the lamp, wipes her tears away, faces Rizal bravely. Rizal smiles. She puts back her

bandanna and slowly goes out)  
**RIZAL** Do you believe in ghosts, Gitano?

**GUARD** I have never seen one, señor.

**RIZAL** You must also believe what you do not see. Look at the dogs. I think they are more religious. They detect ghosts.

This is a time when ghosts walk back to the scene of their crimes, no? (Dogs howl in the distance. Two white habilitated priests enter)

**FIRST PRIEST** Well, Jose, we can work together for your pardon if you will just cooperate.

**RIZAL** I am not clear on this thing, Father.

**SECOND PRIEST** No, Jose, you made your stand against the Church very clearly.

**RIZAL** What else could I do?

**F. PRIEST** Retraction is another way.

**RIZAL** How? How can one be born a Christian and die in another way?

**S. PRIEST** Masonry, Jose, masonry. It is the enemy of the Church.

**RIZAL** Once upon a time men wanted to know. Their eyes saw glory and they were baffled. Finally, the question had to be asked and an ignorant judged, harried to decision by a mob of truth-seekers, did question the question: "What is truth?"

**S. PRIEST** We have come a long way, yet the truth is never

nearer with our philosophizing it. We have come only to feel and not to use wayside facts to measure how far truth is still from us. There is a thing as wisdom of the heart.

**RIZAL** We have come a long way to become single truth-seekers. One thing is sure: nobody is sure of the truth. It is the seeking that counts then. It is a virtue, unless virtue is sin. Did Pilate will it so?

**F. PRIEST** Pilate started an age of doubt and it will not do us any good to make him a reference. The origin of man can lead us to the truth. Man does have a soul. The soul is the absolute truth. We are interested in knowing the nature of the soul.

**RIZAL** Something in a fish tells me there is in it little that man has improved on himself.

**S. PRIEST** Use your heart, Jose. It is given you to feel. You can use your mind only against yourself.

**RIZAL** Father, I am a-grieved. I felt like this a thousand times before. When I am writing a poem, I am praying, praying, praying. Between verses or prayers I am also thinking that this cannot be happening... happening to me. O, no, not me! Yet, despite what I am thinking I keep praying or writing till the rosary or the poem is whole. Only then can I go back to my body which

cannot understand again what I have just done. Father, the truth cannot be had in a single lifetime.

**F. PRIEST** We are all guessers at it, Jose. Sometimes the Holy Spirit does inhabit us and we get a glimpse of glory. But no one can get all what he wants. Now, will you sign? (Produces a document)

**RIZAL** The earliest Christians were pretty sure that they would have. They signed with the figure of the fish when they were sure of being watched. The synagogues were full of eyes and I wonder if hell is not as packed as that.

**S. PRIEST.** Just your signature, Jose, and you will be saved. Do you not want to live?

**RIZAL** How can a human being live? All my life I have been asking myself: How can a human being live?

**F. PRIEST** It is a pity that so gifted a youth should not have used his talents in a better cause. Jose, my son, masonry is the enemy of the Church.

**RIZAL** My religion which is your religion has no enemy. Nobody could pretend to peace without religion. It is just our human practices that make religion inhuman. Hervosa, my brother-in-law, cannot even rest in death. Extreme unction was denied him. Suppose my

soul will fly around like that without anchor... Father, I prefer to be buried in Paang Bundok —with your permission. Will you give me your blessing?

S. PRIEST See, you are just a shy Catholic, Jose.

RIZAL I am a sinner, Father.

F. PRIEST Reconcile with the Church now. The times is near.

RIZAL Have I not been always with it? *Vengan los mas valientes!* (Enter Josephine in immaculate white; a white mantilla makes her look like a bride)

JOSEPHINE Darling, please live! Live for my sake! (To the priests) Father, I feel... unwanted...

RIZAL (approaching her) Don't say that again, Josefina. I've always wanted you as nobody ever did. Right now, I want you to be my wife and I'm asking you to live for my sake. Father, will you marry us?

F. PRIEST Until you sign, Jose.

JOSEPHINE I want you, Pepe! I want you, darling!

RIZAL I am so earthbound I want to crawl. For your sake, Josephina. (He signs the document which the priest extends to him without reading it) Whatever you say, Father. Now, will you marry us?

S. PRIEST (handling Rizal a blue scapular) This is our greatest hour. God is looking down.

JOSEPHINE (sobbing) Father, if you have power set Pepe free. We'll go to Borneo... far, far away where you'll not see us again, I promise. We'll not come back to this place.

RIZAL Josefina... (takes Josephine aside: they embrace lovingly) This is not the place to talk of places. Why, we're here! Together! And in a moment we'll be united. Come, come, give me a smile.

F. PRIEST (on the steps to the altar) Come now, Jose, Josefina.

RIZAL Now, you stand here. Be beautiful and you're beautiful. I'll stand at the steps. I'll be waiting for you there. This comes once in a lifetime. Pretend you're walking on a mountain trail which is straight. Be careful not to fall. On either side is a deep abyss. Let me see if you can walk your own...

JOSEPHINE (walking slowly and fearfully; midway she becomes braver and attains Rizal's arms) O, Pepe, it's fearful in the imagination! Hold me!

RIZAL Imagination's always afraid my dearest. Control yourself and you control everything. Now, you can walk alone.

**JOSEPHINE** Can I? O, darling, can I?

**RIZAL** Yes, yes, yes. Now, are you ready? Father I am ready. (The ceremony is performed.)

**S. PRIEST** I congratulate you, Jose. Good luck, Josefina. (Produces a carving of the Sacred Heart) Jose, do you recognize this?

**RIZAL** (taking the carving) The image I carved when I was a student. It has not aged...

**F. PRIEST** Things God shall not be dated. They are only re-discovered.

**RIZAL** I wish to contemplate on the Sacred Heart for a while.

**JOSEPHINE** Father, I wish to be with my husband alone for a while.

**S. PRIEST** May you find peace, my children. *Dominus vobiscum.* (Both priests exit)

**JOSEPHINE** (embracing Rizal) Pepe...

**RIZAL** Josefina...

**JOSEPHINE** Pepe, we're together always? You'll be with me once in a while?

**RIZAL** I will. I will. We find ourselves in difficult circumstances. I can only give this (gives her a book) as a reminder. The most is the giver though.

**JOSEPHINE** (reading the dedication) "To my dear and unhappy wife — Josephine. December 30th, 1896, Jose Rizal."

About Christ! O, darling, it's beautiful!

**RIZAL** Christ will always look after you for me.

**JOSEPHINE** Look, darling... (points to the painted Host) It's like our moon in Dapitan.

**RIZAL** Will you always look for me in the moon?

**JOSEPHINE** I wish I'd follow you soon. Tell me there's a land somewhere where we'd be alone.

**RIZAL** No land, no earth but this one, Josefina. We all leave our loves behind here. We surrender to love here to be redeemed in the next. The next life will be all thanksgiving... and further work. Leaving the earth is an escape at its worst. Don't do that.

**JOSEPHINE** And you do it?

**RIZAL** I'm forced to do it. I may say I'd always amount to nothing. It's true. Perhaps the people at Balintawak have been right after all. I didn't believe at first in their method. Now, now... O, I'm just a Man in the Moon. I objected at first to my name used as a battlecry. Very soon I'll be forgotten and what the people did will be remembered. Anyway I'm happy. I've supplied the madness to their method. Josephine, what will you do after this exile?

**JOSEPHINE** I can teach. I can join the guerrillas. I can

cook, and I can... I... can cry...

**RIZAL** Don't cry. Here, promise me, you'll never cry. Once I saw you dancing...

**JOSEPHINE** I danced alone — with our unborn. I didn't know you were peeping.

**RIZAL** Don't be a wallflower. Even if you step on your partner's toes. Everybody wants you to dance. And dance you will (Shouts offstage: "Viva España!" thrice)

**JOSEPHINE** They're coming here, Pepe! They're coming to get you. Pepe, I'll follow you.

**RIZAL** Josefina... (Embraces her) Josefina...

**JOSEPHINE** Pepe... I dreamed you died but came back to life...

**RIZAL** O, never mind. Let them come. This is the last station of the cross. Gitano, what time is it now?

**GUARD** Some minutes to seven. I cannot see the numbers very well. What is the matter?

**RIZAL** Open the door, Gitano, and admit the light. The altar lights are going out. Josephine, can you see me?

**JOSEPHINE** No, Pepe, I can't... Where are you?

Voices at the door: "Kill the traitor! Kill the traitor!" Guard opens the door. Early morning light floods in. Voice: "Attention! Sergeant of the Guards speaking to guard in charge of chapel. Acknow-

ledge!")

**GUARD** (presenting arms) Guard in charge of chapel acknowledges Sergeant of the Guards.

**VOICE OF THE SERGEANT** Deliver the prisoner at once! (Shout offstage: "Kill the traitor!")

**RIZAL** (standing at the entrance, in the full force of the light from outside) My body is safe through the night, sergeant. I am committing it to you. I was just accustoming my eyes to the light. O, I see: my escorts are ready. Pedestrians are lining the drive. They do this in victory parades, don't they? It is like the homecoming of a hero to accept the key to the city. (Voices: "Viva España!" Three men break in — an Igorot, a Moro, and a contemporary Filipino — and breathlessly take hold of Rizal's hands, hat, clothes...)

**SERGEANT** (entering) Three wise men, eh? Do not be funny. You are only civilians. You are not bound by the articles of war. You do not have politics. Go before you break the law.

I., M., & C. F. Law?

**SERGEANT** Ignoramuses! The King is the law.

**GUARD** Really, my friends...

**SERGEANT** Friends? You call these friends? They cannot even write or read, I know.



**GUARD** May I have the permission to speak to them, sir?

**SERGEANT** All right, all right. Out with your talk.

**GUARD** (to the three men) The King is the law, yes, my friends. And the King is nothing but a human being that is obeyed. One who disobeys is an outlaw. It is only an outlaw that is free. But who is the king that wants his people free? To be free is to help only one's self. And who will help the King if everybody helps himself?

**SERGEANT** Quickly! Quickly!

I., M., & C. F. Well, let him help himself.

**GUARD** Think again and do not blame the King for being the law. He does not know any other occupation but being the law, poor King!

**SERGEANT** What, Zumel? Poor King? Clarify your statement.

**GUARD** Yes, sir. May I continue? I will clarify your statement on politics. My friends, politics employs the King. Without politics he has no income. If he has no income he has to resort to *juez de cuchillo*. So do not blame us soldiers too. Soldiers are only civilians working for the livelihood of the King for fear of their own lives. Now, go on. You have only to run in and out of luck: it is your game. The King and

his men have to stay lucky: it is their duty.

**RIZAL** Go on as ordered, my countrymen.

I., M., & C. F. Dimas-Alang, a last message for us.

**RIZAL** My message is known. Widows and orphans will only multiply if you do not watch out.

**SERGEANT** Finished? You, you, and you, get lost! You do not, huh? Guard throw them in the dungeon.

**GUARD** Sir, we cannot afford to multiply our enemies.

**SERGEANT** Zumel, tomorrow your generation will be saying, "Why did we have such a coward for a father?"

**GUARD** Other soldiers would comply with your wishes. . .

**SERGEANT** You. . . you? Hey, guards! Throw them all to the dungeon! (Guards enter and seize the three men, including the guard. The sergeant sizes the guard's gun and rips his shirt) As of this moment, consider our connections ended. I will recommend you for dishonorable discharge. (The guards take them out)

**RIZAL** Sergeant, may I have a last wish? Will you set them free?

**SERGEANT** The order is ordered. I cannot change it. Come, yourself, señor. You are delaying. . . (Shouts: "Kill the traitor! Kill the traitor! Viva España!")

**RIZAL** Just a moment. Josephine... (Josephine comes to him) Cheer up. Now you stand here again. Be beautiful and you're beautiful. Imagine I'm there at the altar as before. Pretend you're walking on a mountain trail which is straight. Be careful not to fall. On either side is a deep abyss...

**JOSEPHINE** Kiss me! (Rizal kisses her) Pepe, the way... the way... is dark...

**RIZAL** Can you manage it?

**JOSEPHINE** O, Pepe, it's fearful...

**RIZAL** Imagination is, my dearest. Imagine there's a moon and I'm in it. Now, walk up to it. Are you ready? (Josephine starts to walk up to the extinguished altar. Rizal sadly looks at her till she attains the steps and has fallen on her knees. Rizal smiles and turns to the sergeant)

**RIZAL** Shall we go... our way? (The sergeant leads the way out. Shout: "Viva España!")

\* \* \*

### **Eat While You May**

*Two cannibals met in a mental institution. One was tearing out pictures of men, women and children from a magazine, stuffing them in his mouth and eating them.*

*"Tell me," said the other, "is that dehydrated stuff any good?"*

### **A Political Definition**

*Another example of marvelous equilibrium is a politician standing on his past record.*