

Short Story

ROSITA'S stay in the island had not been very long yet. And to think of having completely left the past behind would be to rekindle the dying embers that, once when fiery, overwhelmed her with the wildest, savage conflagration in her life. The thought of it would once again consume her into the limbo of nothingness. And the hurt was not in having been snapped out of existence—it would be consoling were it forever—but in the resurgence of her senses, tremulously alive with the sweet and bitter memories that would wring her poor, innocent heart with such excruciating pain as would betfall a girl who bloomed with, and lay in rapture in, the glowing flame of love only to wake up a victim of a big cheat. Silagon could be her only world.

Silagon is a tiny heap of corals and sand, sprawling like a buxom, immaculate Nereid who must have lost the favors of Aphrodite despite the fervent supplications of a Pygmalion. Its pristine, evergreen plain, save for some brown patches of waist-high cogon grass scattered here and there, was a haven of tranquility and emancipation—a place away from loose tongues and big ears, away from the specter of an accusing world. Its white strip of sand indenting its smooth-flowing contours from the gentle, caressing, sometimes ferocious, blue sea

onslaught of temperamental waves and vile winds. Bulwarks as they were of the island, these rocks generously share the first streaks of dawn, the warmth of the morning sun when there is calm in the island.

Rosita could not ask for more. The city where she came from and the years with it were cruel to her. The dark of it had been deceptive; its lights illusive. That was after she lost Fred.

It was April when she first met this man, Fred, at the wharf—of all places! She was almost eighteen then and old enough to know the meaning of an evening chill, especially on an April night. Not that she was on the waiting line for the homecoming of someone special as there were a number of eager faces at the docking point of FS Visayas coming from the South. She had come because, for one thing, she loved to see the unsteady, sparkling plane of the sea and to feel the mild, cool breeze despite the pungent smell of burnt coal and oil coming from the big-chimneyed ships lumbering at the piers. It was, anyway, an escape from the crowded city—a relief to be alone in her own way.

Was it her dislike to be a part of the crowd or the unknowing desire for someone that brought her to the wharf—she was not sure. At seventeen it could hardly be the latter. She was like a young, docile actress who grew up back-stage, and, after having extensively rehearsed herself, was at a loss on what to do when the curtain was up.

By
S. Seville

in the tiny corner of her memory she saw him slim and tall and wearing the sad face of Gregory Peck with a second-male's cap on his head. He mentioned his name but once. She never saw him again.

She managed somehow to seek solitude—her only refuge, unkind perhaps, but surely quiet and accommodating than the noisy, uncompromising world where Fred was a part. She was too glad to accept the assignment offered her after graduation, passing a competitive test and using a very influential man. She even surprised her supervisor when the latter discouraged her about the place. In her mind, it did not matter if Silagon were a desolate grove or paradise. What she wanted was distance—a far-away nook where she could bury a past, where she could be born anew.

Her first day in the island convinced her she would stay—maybe for a lifetime. And the townfolk, hardly five hundred of them, were kind and hospitable. The children scampering to and from school every day were a delight. These children, the folks, the island, the sea and the breeze were helping her build the wall that might conceal her from the outside world. She might even forget that trust at the wharf with Fred.

But not this time when she was

In her mind, nothing could erase her . . .

FOOTPRINTS ON THE SAND

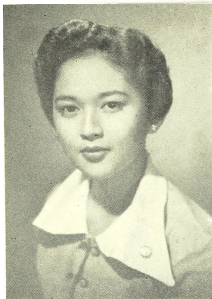
could be rounded at leisure paces in time for the tired molten sun at eye-level from the western horizon to hide its mellow light, giving way to a dreamy twilight and evening shadows. At the end of the afternoon stroll, the soft wind would be clammy as it glides through the trunks and palms of the coco trees that sway like chorus girls along the shoreline west side of the island. The east side is bare with protruding mass of rocks, high and wide, whose sharp and rugged surfaces are the frightening impress of the

He came anyway, this man, Fred, and she was not prepared for his spontaneous grin. She did not even know his name. The first thing he said was "Hello! Do you mind the intrusion?" She didn't say a word; she just stared at him, condescending that stare to a hypnotic gaze. What he did and how she reacted to his advances, she could not recall. She later realized that it was three in the morning when she came home and he was no longer there; that she was alone again with burning tears in her eyes. Back

barely ten months in the island and it was April and the breeze was cool in the evening.

Within her was the struggle to forget, to think of nothing else but the school children, the plan for the next day, and what she could do for them at the end of the recitation as classes were to close for long vacation. Her eyes glided over the sawali walls of the room splattered with pictures, charts and teaching devices; over the empty desks which an hour ago were filled

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Campuscrats

By
DELIA SAGUIN

Deadline... that grim calamity! Why should there be, such a word as deadline? And for us laborers of the eleventh hour it's really a big scare! It haunts us everywhere... in our classes, in the bowling alleys, in the gym where we are watching a thrilling game and oh! even in our dreams... there is always that inner voice nagging us wherever we go! "Remember dear!" it sez, "tomorrow is the DEADLINE!" Oh well, I guess this is part of the suicide...er... compromise we had plunged ourselves into when we agreed to be staff members a long time ago. Anyhow, we still got away with it and so for our necks still hold our "cocos" high.

Now that the mid-term exams are over, activities flood the Campus like anything... September Affairs, we call them... acquaintance parties, picnics, induction dances, convocations, et al... plenty of materials for the gossip column... they're so plenty that we just don't know what to do about them. The news section will do the job—we hope. Anyhow, folks, Campuscrats will try to cover-up some of them. Like for instance...

The Induction dance of the Jaycees at the Club Filipino... It was fully attended... COMMERCIALES Y COMPRADORES alike were there to enjoy a pleasant dancing spree. Congrats should go to Mr. ALFREDO VEGA (PREX of the Junior Chamber of Commerce) and all the officers for a successful agenda. Eye-catchers of the evening:

FLY LOPEZ, sporting an organdy number complete with its multicolored flowerettes, looked extraordinarily fresh and enchanting. TITA PEREZ looked exceedingly girlish in her cute *jusi* ballerina. There were still many others who looked stunning that night, but I don't seem to remember them now. Isn't it quaint to see Daddy and Sonny dancing together? Well, ATTY. YUSON and his son (JUNIOR I believe) did so and they really looked wonderful dancing around the hall with their respective graceful partners, following the rhythmic beat of the "Paso Doble." Everybody applauded them of course. So so for the JCC Induction Ball. NESTOR MORELOS danced a mean mambo. He sure can dish it out.

As for the induction ceremonies and cocktail party of the KAPPA LAMBDA SIGMA SORORITY, ALMA VALENCIA (Exalted Sister) is going to give you the details on a special sorority page. Just read ALMA's writeup and I bet you'll enjoy it.

We have something new here in USC... guess what it is... you don't have to guess... you know it... it's a new basketball court located somewhere near the baseball grounds. Gee, isn't it great! Last Monday was the opening of the big INTRAMURAL GAMES. At exactly 4:00 P.M., the new court was just crowded with people... Campuscrats! At first there was the usual parade of the departmental teams around the court... then the ceremonies... then the BIG GAME! As usual, each team prided off with a especially charming girl for its sponsor. That's part of the show-off, I presume. For instance, the Colleges of Engineering and Architecture chose cute and energetic LOUELA LACSON for their Sweetheart. Louela wore a red-white blouse'n skirt combination complete with a cute co-ed's skull cap. Something about her attainment... a first year in the College of Architecture, Secretary of its class organization. Her friendliness accounts for her popularity among house-builders.

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Footprints on ...

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ed with mischievous brats. Outside was quiet. The children had gone home before she could say goodbye as she used to do every afternoon.

She heaved a deep sigh and looked at her watch. She jumped to her feet as if afraid she would fail an appointment.

She really had a date with the setting sun, the breeze, the wide placid sea, the wavelets upon the shore, and the white smooth sand. With her feet bare, she walked. She liked to feel the lukewarm sand and how the tiny particles graded under her feet.

As she trod bravely on, she held her head up as if to defy a subjugation while a stream of wind caressed her face, her dark hair tousled by that naughty swift of sea air. Now and then she would walk down to the brink where the worshipping wavelets would lap at her feet. With a queenly smile and a coaxing look in her eyes, she would ask: **Who of you here have come for me and be my faithful slave?** For they were like countless swimmers who raced to kiss her feet. Looking back, a subdued laughter would suddenly burst into a wild mirth as she gazed at the gentle surf clashing against each other to claim for her footprints on the sand. And when these tiny waves receded to the big sea, she would feel sick in her stomach. A feeling of consolation would surge within her only when she saw her footprints expunged smooth by the sea. But for those that remained alive and deep because the striving wavelets could not reach them, a feeling of shame would constrict her heart.

At the sight of a very deep one she abruptly turned her face away, afraid that her silly reflections might break through the line of forgetting. She was afraid she might start from the beginning again. It would be the unfair, illusive world and Fred...

"Good afternoon, ma'am," said a husky voice.

She reeled at knowing she was not alone. As if lightning had struck before her eyes, she was blinded for a moment. Then slowly with the setting sun, the man's face took shape. And like the sailboats coming home from the far-away sea now in silhouette, she saw the fig-

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Your

Corpus Delicti

UPON strident telephone summons put through by Artemio Bemol, Lt. Haukee, member of the homicide squad of the local police, burned his tires to the home of the victim, Prof. Ramon Magno, and viewed the body. It had three bullet holes in the chest and was still clutching a gun which was probably the same that discharged the fatal shots.

"I had an appointment with him. The front door was open so I walked in," said Bemol. "I heard the shots just when I was crossing the hallway toward his study. I strode in and... that's exactly what I saw. I didn't touch anything."

He stated that this was his first visit to the Magno household and his business was simply to clarify his enrolment in a local school where the victim had been a dean.

The incident happened when everyone else in the house had retired for the night.

Pressing his inquiries to the members of the family, Lt. Haukee got a straightforward story from the daughter, Nida, from which he discounted the theory of suicide and became certain he could pinpoint the murderer.

"I always knew something like t-t-this would happen," exclaimed the tear-stricken young lady. "Pa and Ma couldn't get on being friends since Ma started getting hitched to the night lights. You know, the dazzles in parties and

that sort. She has become a great egg for society. I don't know why she suddenly got the germ for it. Papa didn't like it. Neither did I. After all that age she has and me—I don't even get a break m-m-myself!"

Curious by what she meant by a "break", Haukee learned that

by

Jake Verle

Nida's love-life, in spite of her youth, was riding on high passion of some sort with an emotional live-wire named Tony Guia. It seems that Tony and Nida, so deeply in love, had made plans for marriage which was sternly repressed and discouraged by Prof. Magno.

Standing on edge, Tony had once cried out, "Nobody can stop me from marrying you!" he was referring to Nida.

Investigating more in the scene of the crime, Haukee saw, still inserted in a typewriter, what appeared like a suicide note which bore the name "Ramon Magno" typewritten below. It read: "The indifference of my family has taken me to a sense of defeat within myself and I know that there could be nothing and no one else I could live for, now that I have lost the only dear ones in my life." There was no signature.

Was this suicide or murder? Lt. Haukee finds a murderer in his hands. Do you? **Answer on page 32.**

Footprints on...

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ure of the man, tall and slim. She started at him long and dumb-founded.

"Have we by any chance met somewhere?" the man's voice was confident.

When the man's face was clear enough, she was swung back to a void, her heart must have stopped, her blood clotted, total darkness engulfed her. The warmth of his strong grip as the man helped her stand upright brought her back to her senses. She wanted to cry; a lump in her throat stifled her breath. She closed her eyes; opened them again. Yes, the man's face was familiar. That sadness in his eyes!... Within herself she whined: **No, my God, this could not be so! No, not Fred!...**

"No," she voiced out the last word that ran in her mind. And she lied, "No, I haven't been to any place. I'm sorry."

She was about to run home when the man spoke again, "My name is Ernesto... Ernesto del Rio, Miss Libre. I hope there's nothing the matter with you..."

She checked her almost hasty exist. Her face now away from the man managed to steal another look at him. She straightened up the back of her head and inhaled a stream of good air. She now could hear the pounding of her heart against her breast. It was quite a relief—a relief to know her heart was still there—a relief to know the man was not Fred. **Thanks God, she heard herself saying. But...**

"How did you know my name?" her voice was tinged with apprehensiveness.

"Don't tell me you have been keeping that a secret," smiled the man. "Since my arrival two days ago, Ma talked a lot about you; the things you did for the children and the barrio. When she told me your name, a Libre who made a visit to my roommate in the seminary came to my mind. She was my roommate's cousin. I have come to check myself up. You look like her."

"Seminary? Did you say seminary? You mean you are on your way to priesthood?"

"Yes, why?"

"Are you from this island?"

"Yes. The greater part of my

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PMT Unit of St. Vincent's High School, Bonifacio, Misamis Occidental. After Graduation he must have asked himself, "dear heart, what then? Are we going to stop just right here? Is that all we can do to please those who love and cherish us and what we are doing? No... No.... For goodness sakes and in the name of the sword... No! That's not enough!" It seemed that this young man's heart just refused to be contented with a mere high school education and so with dreams of high conquests beyond the seas young Gumalo left his town and set sail across the waves... Destination—U.S.C.

So in the early weeks of July, 1950, he found himself enrolled as a 1st year Basic FA Cadet in this university's Department of Military Science and Tactics and after quite a display of strategy and cunning he became the Assistant platoon Sergeant of the 2nd platoon of "Charlie" Battery. As such he showed a marked degree of ability in handling men so much so that in the next school year he was promoted to Cdt. 1st Lt, commanding the 1st platoon of "Baker" Battery. With the same enthusiasm and zeal he strove hard to maintain honor and integrity and with a stronger esprit fulfilled his duties faithfully and so impressed his superiors that in the school-year 1952-53, when he decided to take the Advanced Course, they did not hesitate to promote him to Cadet Captain, FA. He commanded the "Able" Battery of the FA Battalion ably during the first semester and when the Department found him capable of handling the duties of a personnel and administration officer, he was promoted to Cadet Major, FA and became the Corps S-1 in the semester. As a Staff Officer of the Corps he marched briskly and bravely with his unit during the Tactical inspection in which it won the much coveted and celebrated "STAR."

The then Cadet Major Gumalo should also be well remembered as one who did not hesitate to volunteer for duty when the call for summer camp training for ROTC Cadets was sounded. He went with the Boys to Fort William McKinley; and there, being the highest in rank among the Cadets, he became "Charlie" Battery's First Sergeant in the ATU.

And so ends the short military history of the highest ranking Cadet

Officer of this university's ROTC top brass. We hope that with stronger courage, faith, loyalty, enthusiasm and *esprit* our pledged leader for this coming Tactical Inspection will inspire the men under his command to another glorious victory.

THIS YEAR'S CORPS SPONSOR by: TLE

A godsend beauty with the simplicity of a typical Filipina lodged in the graceful person of STELLA PENALES was chosen ROTC corps sponsor of 1953-54. Easy to chat with and a good conversationalist when you come to know her, Stella was all smiles after being informed of the good news. Before official cognizance of her as corps sponsor she had already won the hearts of many Carolinians largely due to her ability in making friends especially in the folds of the ROTC department. Lavish in her smiles to every friend she meets, it bespeaks much of her pleasing personality and good breeding. Although a newcomer in USC, a good part of the student body have already known her as a student and a good friend. As it is natural for every well-bred woman to behave, Stella is a little bit bashful when you first talk to her but you will come to know later, in the course of your conversation, that she was just being modest and cautious.

She hails from the beautiful landscapes of Davao, Bohol — the land of the historical figure, Dagohoy. She completed her primary education in her native place and took a Catholic education in the Holy Name College where she finished her high school years. During her secondary days in the HMC in Tagbilaran, Stella successively garnered high honors in her last three years of study, proving that beauty and brains really mix and stick like butter in your bread. Born on the merry days of May, particularly on the twenty-third, her parents named her "Stella" taken from the Latin word of "star". Living to the expectations of her name, she founds sponsoring a corps an easy task and was "seasoned" in Holy Name College for two years in the sponsoring business. Now she has skyrocketed to stardom in USC's ROTC galaxy of sponsors.

Sweet-voiced Stella is one of those sweeter-than-honey teen-agers who finds excursions and outings

Footprints on...

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life was spent on the green fields over there until my dying father willed that I should be a priest. I came home for an untimely vacation due to a bad heart. Doctor's advice, you know. I live on the east side of the island."

She laughed—she laughed her biggest laugh the way one would at seeing a clown perform antics.

"But why, Miss Libre!"

"Why?" she said between laughs. "Why, because... because I don't remember having a cousin whose idea of entering the seminary coincided with yours."

She lied. Only the sea perhaps could have said that she laughed it off: all the anxiety and the fear and the surprises and the coincidences that were happening within; the fact that the man was not Fred; and all the hurt that was within her—the nightmare of a buried past—the frustration at losing the second chance to live a life not with Fred but with this man who looked like Fred. She looked back again... at her footprints on the sand.

The End.

exciting and breathtaking. Dancing the latest craze of the month and singing the top hits of the day, Stella found these hobbies pleasurable and entertaining. She also tries her hand at dramatics of which she considers as "just one of her hobbies." Currently enrolled in the Pharmacy department as a neophyte, she hopes to complete her studies in the same university.

After the naming of Cadet Colonel Demosthenes Gumalo as corps commander, what created quite a ruckus and the object of many a speculation among campus cognoscenti was the grand quiz as to who he has picked among the several college beauties to act as corps sponsor. He replied without a moment's hesitation: "Stella Penales". And showed them her picture. A chorus of low whistles were their answers.