

Beyond Barbies


 Ribbioned Realities
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Beyond Barbies | Ribboned Realities

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Letter from the Editor

2024 Badhi Awards Nomination Form



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Spoiler Alert: Living life in plastic isn't so fantastic.

An entire generation raised on Barbie dolls battled with society's paper doll standards. Barbie epitomized everything, from building dream houses and romanticizing life with Ken to chasing careers and fluttering life like social butterflies. Yet, deviating from this mold often drew excessive attention — far from celebrating individual choices. To live a glamorous life alone, forge a different path, and still remain inherently Barbie despite transcending boxed expectations. Ironically, conforming too closely to the Barbie ideal also invited scrutiny, leading to the shaming of girls for being... *girls*.

Beyond Barbies, there exist women leading ordinary lives, making imperfect decisions, and navigating the complexities of existing. Perhaps the untold Filipina narratives are concealed within the everyday presence of our mothers, the greetings exchanged with colleagues, and the women we pass by without a second glance, away from the heroic spotlight that dims our understanding of an empowered woman.

Cheers to all women in nature and by heart living diverse realities in stilettos, sneakers, or slippers. *Ikaw ang bida ng iyong kuwento, Filipina.*

Across all shades of pink,

A stylized handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ira Delos Reyes'.

Ira Delos Reyes

Beyond Barbies, Editor-in-Chief

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Being a woman is hard, but being a woman in the Philippines? You can only ever imagine what it feels like to live in a male-dominated society, preaching about how important it is to be a "pure" woman before marriage. And yet, these same people can't even dare to empathize for women's rights, not unless it affects no other than—them. With the controversial issue of legalizing abortion, it has been a long-standing record that many Filipino Women are practicing traditional unsafe ways of aborting unwanted pregnancies, ironically risking their own lives in order to live. Most of the cases regarding this are not only because they are not yet ready to raise a child, but most are sexual abuse cases not only from strangers, but some are from their own relatives as well. How cruel can men be? Although there are cases in which abortion is legalized due to the age of the bearer and cases like incest. To date, many Filipino women are still striving to earn the rights to their bodies. As the Philippines is known to be a devoutly Catholic country that continually instills the passages from the bible in its laws, even when outright oppression is at hand, some will even turn blind because it is contrary to their existing belief.

But how cynical is it to preach about what is right and wrong when the legal age of sexual consent for decades has been only at the young age of 12? It was recorded as the lowest age of consent in all of Southeast Asia and one of the lowest in the world. This outrageous bill has been on the side of sex offenders for quite some time, as it does not only negate their wrongdoings but is also a bolt to break loose from pedophilia allegations. According to an alarming report made by the Women and Children Protection Units, a confounding 72% of all cases of child abuse are highly involved in sexual abuse or assaults. With nearly 6,000 children in 2021 and 6,600 cases in the following year.

As of these realities, the Philippines is still in the hopes of protecting children from sexual abuse as it still does not have the resources to pass laws against the sexual exploitation of minors. How is the government sleeping safe and sound when its people are hungry for justice and protection that they could not give, even with years of them sitting on the throne of power and ability to help, but still turning deaf for the screams of the ones oppressed? The Philippines' national hero, José Rizal, once said, "The youth is the hope of the Fatherland." But, when the light has been dimmed in the facets of our children's faces, what would the next generation become? What would our country become?

Just in March of 2022, the age of consent has been raised to the age of 16. The nation is yet to know whether it would be of help or just with the same skin of the previous law, masquerading in a crusade of gleaming hope for the children that the current generation should be protecting.

Mother WHO'd



"Marry rich, stay pretty, and serve your husband"
- Says Who?

Societal expectations often dictate that women, upon marriage or motherhood, should prioritize their roles as wives and mothers above all else. However, a growing cohort of women bravely defy the status quo, choosing to embrace their own paths of resilience and independence instead. These women challenge the notion that a woman's worth is solely determined by her marital status or ability to conform to traditional gender roles. They redefine motherhood beyond the act of childbirth, understanding it as a divine gift, and exemplify the strength and grace that come with embracing their true selves.



BAR- BIE IS AN ANGEL

♥ By Ray Miguel De Jesus

Motherhood transcends the confines of birth or blood. It's a responsibility embraced wholeheartedly by women like the protagonist of this story, Jackie. She may be the auntie of Kyle by title, but this does not stop every essence of the caring and devoted mother she is.

When unforeseen circumstances left Kyle without her parents, Jackie didn't hesitate to step in and play a mother's role as she offered unwavering support to the young girl.

"I never saw her as a burden," Jackie says with a resolute smile. "Family is family, and Kyle is my daughter, period."

Jackie runs her own salon as well. She calls her hair stylists and nail techs "angels." Owning a salon is no small feat, especially when you're also the primary breadwinner for your family. Jackie's salon isn't just a place to get a haircut or a makeover; it's a vibrant sanctuary where clients are welcomed with genuine warmth. It's no wonder her business is a trusted gem in Caloocan City! But beyond the bustling scenes of hairdryers and beauty treatments lies a story of resilience and family dedication.

"For me, running the salon is more than just about business," Jackie shares. "It's about fostering a sense of community, of creating a space where people feel supported." And indeed, behind every successful salon day is Jackie, her family, and their unwavering commitment to excellence.

Balancing the responsibilities of a business owner and a full-time mom is no easy feat, but Jackie faces each day with grace and determination. Her source of strength? Her family, especially her daughter Kyle, who inspires her to keep pushing forward in business and life.

Jackie is known for her tough, no-nonsense attitude. She doesn't shy away from life's challenges. While her confident demeanor might seem intimidating, her steel heart is surrounded by glitters.

"People may see her as tough, but she's incredibly kind and generous," a friend shares. "She'd even give away her own birthday present to someone in need."

Parenting isn't always smooth sailing, and Jackie has faced her share of difficulties raising her daughter. Yet, she's managed to balance her salon business with motherhood effortlessly. For her, being a mom isn't about societal norms; it's about showing up, caring, and staying steadfast through it all.

As the day ends, Jackie closes the gates of her bustling salon, and despite the fatigue from tending to clients, she looks forward to returning home to her family.

"It's all worth it," she says with a smile, her dedication to her daughter unwavering.

In a world where ordinary moms might fade into the background, Jackie stands out not because she's different but because her love knows no bounds. Her journey reminds us that motherhood is about the relentless pursuit of love, no matter the circumstances. Jackie herself is an angel in the lives of many. Her story inspires us to face life's challenges with kindness and determination because somewhere in the busy streets of Cabanatuan, love still conquers it all.

I Can

♥ By Ira Marie Delos Reyes



Be

Her name beams a life filled with joy. Yet, as if fate were writing a cruel joke, she lived in a paradox where life's hurdles challenged the intent of this gift. Did she falter, you ask? Absolutely not, because Barbie's story shines just as brightly, even with the absence of Ken.

Rhode Ann Joy Nabor, a 47-year-old mother to her three daughters, experienced a love that many would believe had a bad ending – but Rhode believes otherwise.

It was the graduation day of her second daughter, a moment that was supposed to be filled with relief and joy. However, right after the ceremony, she took her husband to the hospital for a check-up. What started as a simple visit quickly turned serious when they discovered he had diabetes.

“Katatapos lang ng graduation ni Jebelle noon, kinder pa lang siya. After ng ceremony, nagpacheck-up si Papa niya. Nalaman namin una na may diabetes siya,” she shared.

Amidst the hopes for recovery, a week of oral medications brought no relief. They returned for a follow-up check-up with growing concern, only to receive a more crushing blow that her husband was suffering from kidney failure.

Rhode was pregnant with her youngest daughter when they received the devastating news. Despite the immense challenges ahead, she courageously balanced her pregnancy, work responsibilities, and role as a wife to accompany and support her husband through dialysis sessions. Their lives became intertwined with hospital visits that lasted for nearly two years. In 2009, Rhode faced the heartbreaking end of her husband's story, leaving behind three angels as a poignant reminder of the life they once shared.

As if the weight of her husband's passing wasn't enough, Rhode found herself confronted with the stark reality of grief on the day that should have been for celebration. Instead of birthday wishes, she was met with heartfelt condolences, and the festivities she anticipated were replaced by somber gatherings around a casket adorned with wreaths. The collision of mourning and birthday reminders was a cruel twist of fate. Still, with a heavy heart, Rhode faced each moment head-on, resilient in the face of unimaginable pain.

“Habang pinagbubuntis ko noon si ading nila, doon din namin nalaman na may kidney failure na pala si Papa nila. Sa kasamaang palad, namatay siya noong April 2009 at napakasakit din kasi noong time na nilalamayan namin, ‘yun din yung birthday ko,” she said.

Her voice still cracks when she reminisces about her days with her husband, and her eyes still water at the sound of his name. Nevertheless, Rhode manages to cast a smile, showing the strength that defines her journey.

Rhode admits she drowned herself in work to escape the burden of grief, taking on multiple teaching side jobs to distract herself. Before she knew it, a year had already passed since her husband's death.

“Ang work ko noon is nasa livelihood training center ako so nakatulong din yung mga naging estudyante ko para makamove-on ako sa pagkawala ng Papa nila. Then, at the same time, kapag Saturday noon nag-aaccept din ako ng mga sideline. Nagtuturo din kami sa ibang bayan,” she said.

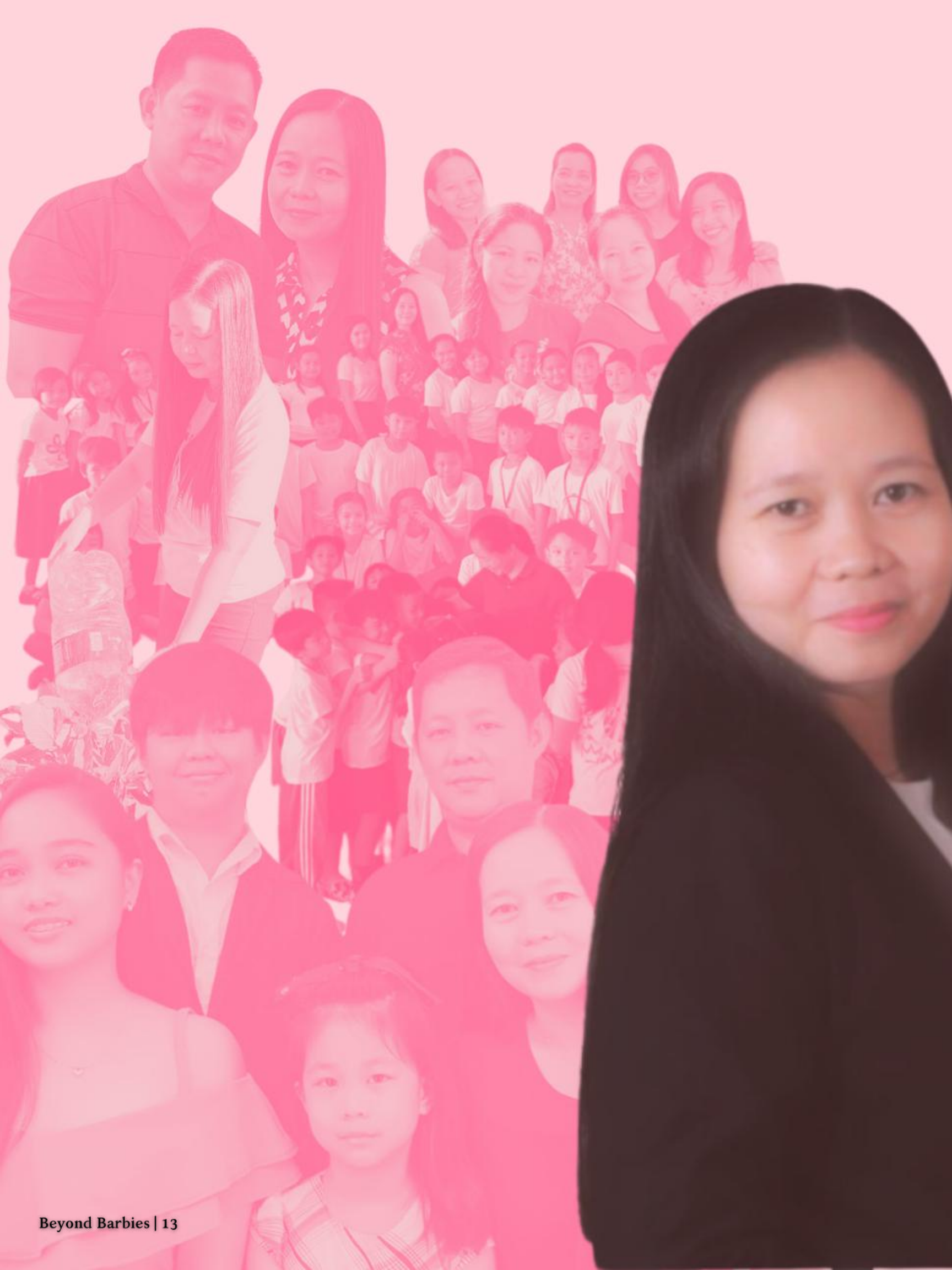
Despite her unconventional experiences, Rhode has built a beautiful life. She raised a loving family and nurtured her daughters into remarkable young women. Rhode expressed her deep gratitude for the friends and family who stood by her side during her darkest times. They became the foundation of her successful portrayal of Ken.

Today, Rhode works at the local government unit of Urdaneta, Pangasinan, and has successfully sent her children to school. She continues to live a life filled with purpose and gratitude. Despite her hardships in romance, she still hopes her children will experience love as beautiful as the one she once had.

Rhode never claimed solo parenting to be a breeze. Like anyone else, she needed help. Truthfully, everyone may stumble in the face of hardships, but the pressure doubles when you need to play the role of a parent. Regardless, Rhode tried her best to be mature and strong for her kids because the burden of an unhappy life shouldn't fall on them—it wasn't their fault they lost their father.

So, was it a bad ending? Not at all, because her story continues and will continue carrying the pride and promise of her name, Joy.

Ken



Turbulent

♥ By **Kemm Olarte**

The last handful of years have been some of the most turbulent Filipinos have ever seen. In a country seen to be amongst those most progressive in Asia, there are surprisingly a few large spots of stagnancy across different walks of life. Within this chaos, we zoom into the incredible story of a mother, a teacher, and a wife, who has pushed herself and her family through the turbulence and chaos of these past years.

Mrs. Marife Ticman, a grade 2 school teacher from Doyong-Malabago Elementary School in Calasiao, Pangasinan, tells us her story. During her younger years, she was but lovers with her now husband, Merlo Ticman. Due to unforeseen circumstances, her sister unfortunately passed away, and into her own home went little Agnes, denied a mother at only three days old. Mrs. Marife took the mantle of being a mother in an instant, while her husband took it upon himself to go overseas to work, to better support the newest member of the family, getting married briefly before going overseas. Her experiences from then on started to take on new colors and spread. The common narrative for couples is to spend their time living together as soon as they get married, but this did not spell true for Mrs. Marife and her husband.

It was only after three years of Mr. Merlo being overseas that they finally started living together as a married couple. Having found their footing with Agnes, who Mrs. Marife affectionately refers to as their “princess,” their family only started becoming livelier. She would soon be mother to two other children. As a teacher, her life was constantly drawn to instruction and raising children, and this very environment has helped her forge a new approach to life. As a professional, she keeps both lives apart from each other as much as possible, but she admits that having both lives simultaneously does introduce her to some interesting experiences as both a mother at home and as a second mother to young children.

“Hindi lang ako teacher, pero– marami akong natutunan sa mga estudyante ko, ‘yung mga walang magulang, – ‘yung mga may problema sa bahay. Pag bata kasi– ‘di mo maiwasan na i-kwento nila sa’yo ang buhay nila.”

Mrs. Marife recounts the difference between her and husband as well, when it comes to daily decision-making and their general outlook on life. Her husband, she points out, was more “rational,” and that he tends to stick to a certain plan that often focuses on one instance or day, while Mrs. Marife looks beyond that, and feels that she is often the one to make the more flexible decisions in their partnership.

Mrs. Marife recounts her biggest challenge in life to be the time she and two other members of her family including her husband were afflicted with COVID-19. Her family had had to wrestle with the difficulty of securing safe and comfortable quarantine areas for themselves and in the midst of this, she also tells of how her husband had acutely changed his demeanor. Being diagnosed by COVID-19, he had fallen into a state of despair and refused to show any willingness to overcome his sickness.

“Hindi na niya makumbinse ‘yung sarili niya na ‘kailangan kong lumabas’ – hindi, para na siyang nag-gigive up.”

Despite the grave trial she and her family had to face, in the end, she became a pillar of strength that kept everything together. In tough times where everything was unpredictable, she became a leading example of flexibility to cover for her loved ones’ needs. On top of this, she tells us of her secrets to her marriage and how it has managed to rise above several ordeals.

“‘Yung communication, dapat nandun pa rin, lahat ng decision mo, maliit o malaki, kailangan alam ninyong dalawa. Opinyon, pakinggan mo rin ‘yung opinyon niya, pakinggan mo(niya) rin ‘yung opinyon ko. Tapos ipaalam mo kung saan ka pupunta– dahil mahirap maghintay sa isang taong ‘di mo alam kung anong oras darating. ‘Yung respeto niyo–tiwala niyo sa isa’t isa, ‘wag na ‘wag niyong aalisin.”

As a woman who has been married for almost two decades, her story is a shining example of exceptional determination and love for family. She had faced several adversities from day one of becoming a mother and across her marriage, managing to come out on top every single time. Her story cannot be relegated to her role as a mother. She went above and beyond, and she is a woman whose heroic qualities allowed her to lead her family to where it is today.

Barbie's Survival Kit

♥ By Dana Marie Puspos

Periods shouldn't put our lives on hold. That's why we're diving deep into everything you need to feel confident and comfortable, from choosing the right period protection to self-care hacks that would help you conquer cramps like the *slay-vivor* you are.



2. Under Woman

Leakproof and absorbent, period underwear offers comfort and security. They come in various styles and absorbencies.



1. Perfect Period Partners

Pads: These comfy classics come in various absorbencies and lengths. Perfect for beginners or those with a heavier flow. **Tampons:** Discreet and ideal for active lifestyles! Tampons also come in different absorbencies for personalized comfort. Remember to change them every 4-8 hours – and don't cut the strings! **Menstrual Cups:** Reusable and eco-friendly, cups collect rather than absorb blood. They require a learning curve but can be a game-changer for many.

Girl Tip:

There's no one-size-fits-all approach to periods, and that goes for protection too! Don't forget to change and refresh your period partners every 3-4 hours to avoid infections and rashes.

It's better to consult a doctor if you really cannot handle the period pain. Remember, your period is a normal, healthy part of your body's cycle. By having the right supplies and self-care practices in place, you can take control and own your period experience! Good luck, my girlies!



6. CalenDUHr

Get an idea of when your period is coming! Track your symptoms and learn more about your overall reproductive health.



7. Watuh

Drink plenty of water to combat bloating and keep your energy levels up. Stay hydrated, girlsies!



5. BB Wipes

Gentle, unscented wipes are great for on-the-go freshening up.



4. Hawt Compress

Apply heat to your lower abdomen to ease muscle tension and cramps. A warm water bottle would work too!

3. Pain Relief

Stock up on over-the-counter pain relievers like ibuprofen or cramp-specific formulas to keep discomfort at bay.



Murals, Mattel, and a **Martinez**

♥ By Agnes Dela Peña

How many Filipina artists have you heard of? Can you name any women who are Cordilleran artists other than Apo Whang-od, other than the 10 Filipinas of the 66 listed National Artists of the Philippines? Maybe less, but dated, under theater, dance, or music, or are simply not “qualified enough.” Or maybe none at all because of the hall of men and their accomplishments - with women’s works hidden in the shadows.

But little do the people of Baguio know that a woman’s touch has been decorating the streets. Unbeknownst to rushing commuters, they are being welcomed and sent off by towering murals painted by a Barbie’s hands.

Rather, a **Martinez**.



From the tiny hands who drew the blue, green, and pink of Powerpuff Girls in the confines of her childhood home to the stretch of walls along the streets of Baguio - Venazir Martinez has been building walls of her title as a street muralist and visual anthropreneur in the Cordilleras.

Since 2017, this 26-year-old artist has pushed through her love of street art until she graduated cum laude with a Bachelor's degree in Fine Arts from the University of the Philippines Baguio. Inspired by her anthropologist grandfather, she aims to paint her own path - pursuing an artist's life that leads Filipinas to understand their cultural identity and recognize individuals from all walks of life and diverse cultures and backgrounds.

"Not everyone has the ability to appreciate art in its wholeness, so I wanted to bring it to the people. That's why I fell in love with street art as a democratic tool for the people," she declared.

Venazir's goal is for people to be familiar with the contemporary indigenous identities of the Cordillerans and to admire and see Baguio not only as the "Summer Capital of the Philippines." She hopes her works will showcase that indigenous cultures are not merely a thing of the past but rather part of a narrative that challenges the citizens' eyes through cultural symbols and revitalizes the ancestral heritage.

Her niche in Progressive Abstract Realism portrays a realistic depiction of different cultures; with visual landscapes featuring notable Pinoys and Pinays and the sceneries of Cordillera. Once, she was asked to paint Whang-Od, but she refused - explaining that there are many faces of a Filipina Cordilleran to commemorate, aside from the famous 'mambabatok.'

"It's now the time to change the mindset. There should be a progress at hindi lang siya (Whang-od) at may ibang faces [pa]," she added.

Upon taking a closer look at her murals, not one of the subjects stands alone. It represents us standing all on one ground as a community of culture. From this, she also considered the idea that a mural being added to a block turned the 'unsafe place' into an inspiring one. She transformed the assumption of alleyways ('eskinitas,' in Tagalog) being places where bad things usually take place - where most victims are women.

"Murals really change the energy of a place, and most eskinitas are scary places where bad things might happen. So I wanted to change that one eskinita at a time." Venazir stated.

In addition to that, she also sparked a multi-sensory street art festival, "Sining Eskinita," where the mundane alleyways turned into canvases for Cordilleran street artists.

She was also awarded Best Thesis in 2018 through her art and advocacy social experiment, Project Hila-bana (from "hilbanahan," the Filipino word for "temporary stitching"). This movement is made up of murals bound in red thread, left for the people to weave the separated stories as one whole narrative - the thread depicting all of the indigenous groups in the Philippines as a part of a bigger tapestry of the Filipino identity.

"I did this as a social experiment to prove this theoretical structure in a medium that's accessible to the public," she said. And that was just the beginning.

She continues incorporating traditional and modern-day Cordillerans in her masterpieces, leaving stories one mural at a time. She is more than the murals she makes but not more than the meaning behind the masterpieces she creates. A storyteller with stories left under the sun - standing tall for spectators of the capital.

Her works spread out among the walls that lined the junction of the Military Cut-off and Upper Session Road and of the Caltex Station near the Victory Liner Terminal. They can also be seen at the 7-Eleven Porta Vaga walls, the Figaro at the Baguio Cathedral, and at the Baguio City Hall. So, the next time you pass by a wall with figures and paint, think of the hands of Martinez, who has been silently speaking through the streets with her murals.

Mattel may have Barbara, but Baguio has many Barbies like Martinez.



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Photos by: La Pénderie

La Pénderie Clothing Co.

La Pénderie is derived from the French word meaning “wardrobe.”

This boutique was founded by Michelle Seny Solimen, a girl boss with a great passion for making women feel confident and beautiful with what they wear.

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Department of Social Work
PRIME MOVERS SOCIETY

Every Barbie is a **LeadHER**

♥ By Ma. Kyle Giechelle C. Balleras



In the realm of Women's Month and Social Work Month, there's a significant event that's worth reflecting on: "Women's Month and Social Work Month 2024: Honoring Women and Social Workers' Resilience." This gathering, which took place on March 20, 2024, was a powerful display of strength and perseverance. Under the resonating theme, "LeadHER: Women Leading Transformative Change for All," the event spotlighted the remarkable contributions of women and social workers. Among the notable highlights was a seminar titled "DefendHER of Justice: Navigating Forensic Social Work as an Emerging Trend in the Philippine Setting," featuring the esteemed guest speaker, Atty. Mary Inglay Capuyan-Fokno, RSW. This session offered invaluable insights into the pivotal role of forensic social work in addressing societal injustices and advocating for the rights of marginalized communities.



As the curtains gracefully closed on this enlightening seminar, attendees found themselves filled with a profound sense of purpose and duty. Armed with newfound knowledge and fortified by shared experiences, they stood united in their commitment to be unwavering advocates for fairness, justice, and empowerment.

Moving forward, they are determined to apply the lessons learned from this event to ignite progress and propel society towards a future where every individual, regardless of gender or social status, is treated with dignity and given equal opportunities. Together, they aim to continue paving the path towards a world where the principles of equality and justice reign supreme.

MeDOLLists

Apart from brightening their co-workers' days with their top-tier face cards, women also bring a unique sparkle and zest to the careers they pursue. In male-dominated fields where they are often underestimated, women rise to the challenge and excel, proving their mettle as formidable leaders. Beyond the glamour and glitz, it's time to hear their stories and learn about the backstage efforts that drive their success. We proudly present to you, our MeDOLList Awardees.





BARBUILD

Barb's the Builder of Dreams

♥ By Ma. Kyle Giechelle C. Balleras

Sheila Mae Geronimo Baracao Gomez, 38, has made a significant mark in the event planning industry as the owner of SG Events, a successful wedding coordination business. Known simply as "Sheila" to her friends and colleagues, she expertly balances her professional responsibilities with her role as a mother of three, embodying the spirit of a determined and driven entrepreneur.

Sheila's journey into the world of event planning began in 2018, a year that marked a focal change in her life. After planning her wedding meticulously, she realized her passion for creating memorable and seamless events.

"I decided to take a leap of faith after planning my own wedding," Sheila recalls. "I left the comfort of my work-from-home job, which was far from easy." Despite the uncertainties, Sheila's determination and vision drove her to start SG Events from her home, working initially with a modest team.

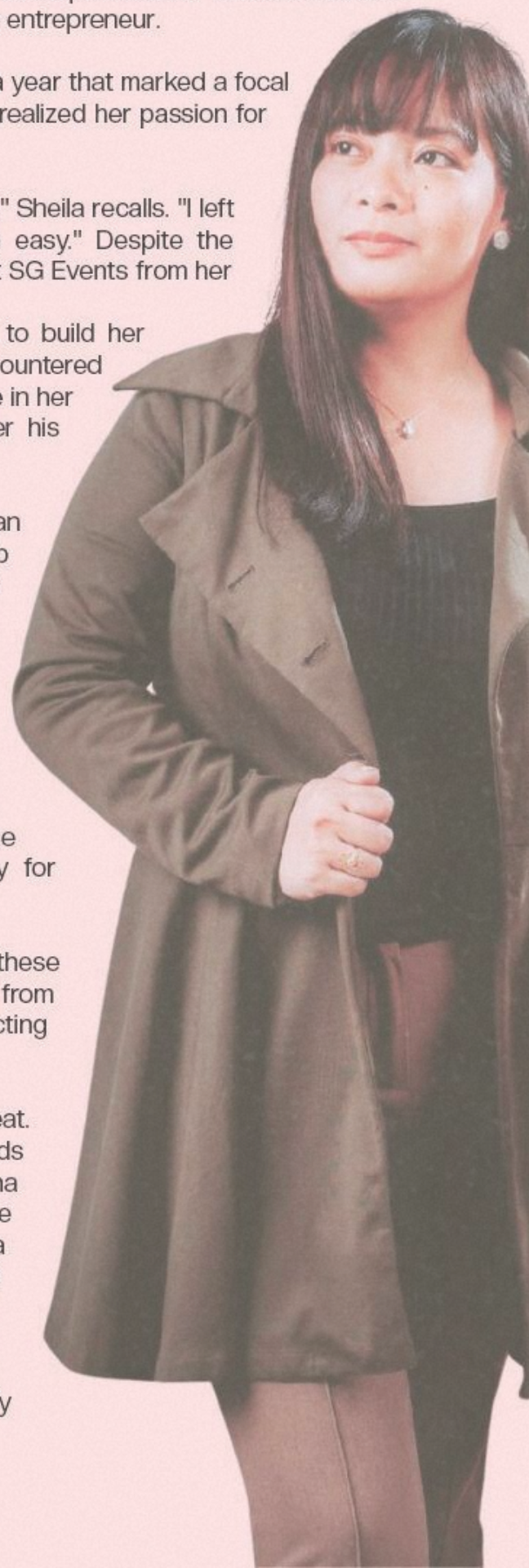
Her early days in the business were challenging. Sheila had to build her network from scratch, and it was during this time that she encountered Harold from R Memories Last Forever. Harold played a huge role in her journey, offering her the opportunity to learn and grow under his guidance.

"He told me, 'Panoorin mo 'yan, kung anong ginagawa niya, ganyan din gagawin mo,'" Sheila remembers fondly. Harold's mentorship was invaluable, providing Sheila with the knowledge and confidence to establish her own coordination team. With his encouragement, she began taking on clients, and slowly but surely, SG Events started to rise.

SG Events swiftly expanded its services beyond weddings to include corporate events, birthday parties, and various other special occasions. Sheila's company soon became known in terms of quality and creativity in the event planning industry. One of the unique aspects of SG Events is its strong advocacy for supporting single parents, working students, and women.

"Our mission, vision, and goal emerged from a desire to help these individuals," Sheila explains. Most of her team members came from these backgrounds, reflecting her commitment to positively impacting their lives.

Balancing her thriving business with her family life is no small feat. Sheila is also a mother to three energetic boys, and she often finds herself juggling multiple responsibilities. "Minsan sasabihan ka na 'sino nagbabantay sa mga anak mo?' The journey can be challenging," she admits. Despite the occasional criticism, Sheila embraces the chaos with grace. Her organizational skills, honed from years of multitasking, ensure that every event runs seamlessly. "I understand the importance of balancing family life with my professional pursuits," she says. To maintain this balance, Sheila has made it a rule to reserve Sundays exclusively for family time, with no work meetings scheduled.





In addition to her event planning business, Sheila recently ventured into the world of online retail with the launch of her store, Trend You. The store offers a variety of thrift clothes, brand-new items, and overruns, showcasing Sheila's entrepreneurial spirit and her love for exploring new opportunities. "I always seek new opportunities to use my skills and experience," she says. "I thrive on challenges and continually set goals for myself to strive towards."

For Sheila, the most rewarding aspect of her job is the joy and satisfaction of her clients.



"Creating events that leave lasting memories is incredibly rewarding," she beams. "It's a privilege to be part of such significant moments in their lives. When I see my clients happy and satisfied, it makes all the hard work worthwhile." Each event, whether it's a wedding, a birthday party, or a corporate celebration, holds special significance for Sheila. She believes in building strong connections with her clients, ensuring their special moments are unforgettable.



Sheila's motivation to excel in both her professional and personal roles stems from a combination of passion, determination, and a desire to make a positive impact.

"I want my business to grow so I can provide more jobs and lift the economic status of my family and my employees," Sheila explains. Her journey from being a single mom and working student to a successful business owner is a testament to her resilience and determination. "I want to reduce the number of people who experience the hardships I faced," she says. Sheila's story is a powerful reminder that overcoming obstacles and achieving greatness with hard work and dedication is possible.



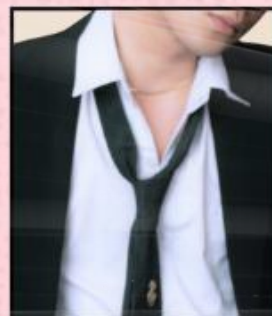
Reflecting on her journey, Sheila is proud of what she has accomplished but remains focused on the future. She continually seeks ways to improve her business and expand its reach. Her drive to excel is not just about personal success but also about making a meaningful difference in the lives of others. "Ultimately, my drive to excel stems from a combination of intrinsic passion, the joy of making a difference, and the support and inspiration I receive from those around me," she says.



Her story is about perseverance, passion, and purpose. As she continues to grow SG Events and her new venture, Trend You, she remains committed to her mission of empowering others and creating lasting memories for her clients. Her journey is an inspiration to aspiring entrepreneurs and a testament to the power of believing in oneself and striving for excellence.



Sheila is just one of the many women who prove that Barbie can step out of the spotlight and roll out the red carpet for her Barbie friends, and this won't ever fade the dazzling woman that she truly is.



I Ken be Barbie

♥ By Jebelle Nabor



I asked what their preferred pronouns were, and I was answered with a confident: "He, I still prefer He."

When society has deemed what is masculine and not, expressing oneself in the manner of the opposite gender can be a controversial thing to do. But despite this, the fire that comes within the art of drag performing is blazing in the heart of Red Unlayao, also known as "Burgundy," a young adult Drag Queen performer from Baguio City.



August of 2023, that's when the Drag performance opened its doors for Burgundy. "Actually, baby drag pa lang ako. August of 2023 lang ako nag-start," he says. But despite being a newbie to the industry, Burgundy has already bagged constructed days of regular performing gigs at The Hive Bar.

He admitted that Drag performing wasn't initially his passion, and he hadn't even considered pursuing it professionally. However, everything changed after he witnessed a mesmerizing Drag Queen performance at a renowned international Drag Show. Captivated by the artistry and creativity on display, he found himself drawn to the world of Drag performance. It was in that moment of awe that he felt a newfound curiosity, prompting him to delve deeper into the world of Drag and enter a journey of exploration and self-discovery.

Just like in any industry, Drag also has its fair share of misconceptions. Burgundy shared that Drag is not a smooth sailing boat at all times as well, "Hindi siya madali, sa tingin ng ibang tao kasi ganda-gandahan lang ang Drag."

He then went on to tell the realities of being a Drag Queen, that it is an expensive passion. From the cost of makeup and hip pads to wigs and extravagant footwear, every aspect of the Drag

performance requires a substantial financial commitment. It is surely a passion that will surely hurt your purse. "Drag is not cheap, it is expensive," he said.

They often encountered customers who were unfamiliar with the concept of Drag, but for Drag Queens like Burgundy, the priority was always to educate and entertain. "We try to introduce what Drag is to them, but for us naman din kasi, as long as we entertain them, napasaya namin sila. That's the goal."

Drag is not all glitz and glam. In fact, it is something that you truly have to invest in with your time, effort, and money. Nevertheless, Burgundy's passion lies in experimenting with different looks and showing them to the world. As a Drag Queen, Burgundy sees this art form as a means of self-expression without fear of judgment, regardless of the makeup worn. His ultimate goal is to inspire and evoke emotion through the transformative power of Drag.

Red Unlayao, known by the stage name "Burgundy," exemplifies the living legacy of Drag as an art form that transcends gender norms. Pursuing Drag does not diminish masculinity; it showcases the breadth of expression available to all individuals. With dedication and passion, individuals like Red prove that anyone, regardless of gender, can embody their desired personas and realize their dreams through the power of Drag.

Ken is indeed a Barbie, too, and beyond the conventional boundaries of womanhood lies the narrative of individuals like Red—celebrating the beauty of being Filipina while joyfully embracing their identity as Ken. It just shows that if c a n , Barbies then Kens can too.



LEGALLY BARB



The Pink Appeal with Cheryl

♥ By Agnes Dela Peña

The more lavish the color, the more spontaneous and powerful personality it carries. That is the Pink Appeal.

But what of it if this Bibble meets a Barbie, whose psyche radiates a color more than the pale tint of red? What of the court meeting between them?

A lasting impression stayed amidst the distance and time zones, past the 6-hour difference. Who knew that the University bridged the gap between past and present COMMAres? That, and a little help from a Ken of Badhi for an almost 11,000-kilometer link.

This former 'COMMAre' of 1989 is none other than Mrs. Cheryl L. Daytec-Yangot. A Cordilleran in Switzerland, she is one of many things. A valued representative and member of a few national government agencies, a lawyer, a beloved wife to Baguio's City Councillor, a mother of three, and a former professor and Alumna of Saint Louis University Baguio. She is also a human rights advocate, educator, researcher, writer, and poet. Quite the background and case to unpack - but an interesting case nonetheless.

A Chyt-Chat on her Career. Now in her 50s, she works as the Head of the Philippine Migrant Workers Office (PMW) in Geneva, taking care of the concerns of our Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs). Before her current work, she has been many things - a representative of the International Labor Organization (ILO), who sets the world's labor standards, and does human rights work by practicing as a lawyer. She still continues as a Law Professor at Lyceum Northwestern University - with Mrs. Chyt's reason being, *"para hindi ako maboba."*

Back in her youth, she was recruited as an Assistant Secretary of Justice (under the Department of Justice in the Philippines) and even has an academic and professional history with Presidents Aquino and Ramos as a Director of the Cordillera Executive board - a college woman barely out of her twenties. The thrill of the extensive occupations she has handled has never faded - as she still finds her current work exciting and entertaining. She sees it as a medium where she could bring everything that she 'was'.

Nadadala ko lahat yung natutunan ko in my field work as a human rights lawyer, my knowledge on law, nadadala ko yung skills ko as an educator."

This is especially handy when it comes to dealing with OFWs; who need empowerment, psychological counseling, and standing as an advocate to stand for their rights. She mentions, however, that she misses her former jobs, like person-to-person teaching, going (visiting) jail, going to court, and being out on the streets in search of a story - and defending innocent people who were complained against. Nevertheless, in each job - she expresses her feeling of fulfillment.

The Pink Portfolio. With her portfolio involving law, politics, and human rights - one would think of Mrs. Cheryl as an achiever and a competitive type of person. But she denied being any of that. Instead, she's been setting the standards she wishes to uphold.

"No, I've never been competitive, because if I was competitive, my competition was always myself. I would set standards. 'Yan yung tinuro ng tatay ko eh. Set standards for yourself, and then try to live up to those standards. Don't look at others na, wag mo na tignan ang iba. So, that's how you navigate."

When asked about her taking on a male-dominated field of work, she recalled her time in the academe of law schools in UP and UC. Before, there were mostly men in the classroom - but that changed as the clock turned.

But she had to give a piece of her mind on the matter, *"You know when you move in a male-dominated world, it can really be intimidating, noh? But there's something I've learned from this poem, Desiderata, and it says there that 'Do not compare yourself with others because always there will be greater or lesser persons than yourself'."* - which is something that your friendly neighborhood Bibble struggles with.

Sensing the Stereotype. Mrs. Daytec-Yangot also elaborates on her perspective on men in the workplace and the stereotypes that cage not only the women but the men - who are victims of the system that they set up. She addressed the struggles, pressed expectations, gender-based stereotypes, and tradition-bound culture that women and men go through.

Thus, she speaks up on gender issues and advocates gender consciousness not only to her students and seminars but even to the high-ranking officials of the government - to provide insight into cases that may tackle such topics.

"Nabuhay naman tayo. Nagsurvive naman tayo. And you know, it's not just about women surviving, but we look at the bigger picture. It's about liberating an entire society. We just have to work together with everybody else, and with men as well. As I said earlier, we should not look at men as our competitors. We look at them as victims as well, of a culture na inaasahan sila... A culture that expects certain things from them that they may not give."

Cheryl's Challenges. With her work involving the government, the pink tends to get smears of red - and not the good kind. She shared instances where her safety and security were threatened when she was under a climate of tyranny in the presidential rule in the early 2000s. People were going missing, and people were both labeled and spilled red. And as a Human Rights lawyer, her job was at its most scary and significant state yet - doing pro bono work for the victims who sought her aid. She survived, safe and sound.

On a personal level, a challenge she had battled with constantly was how to balance her family life and work. She expressed her guilt about not being there for her husband and kids.

"I would have to admit na I was so committed sa aking work, I have forgotten at times that I was a mother as well. I would feel guilty, and I would tell myself na, 'Yeah, but I am also a mother, not just of my children - but of other children of the world. There are issues that we mother, and with the things that I'm doing, I'm doing it in order for them to live in a world where there is peace, no violence, no oppression'..."

Mrs. Cheryl admits feeling the guilt creep up on her until now, that she should have done better as a mother of her trio and a loving wife - to give more time to her family. *"But you know, things are as they are - and these are all in the past. I cannot undo them."*, she concludes.

The Inspirations of the 'Inspiration'. She is an all-around Barbie, yet she seems to draw a lot of strength to fulfill all of her duties. Asking for the reason behind, a long and detailed talk about God, Jesus, and the Bible stretched the conversation. This is the norm for a Christian household, which Cheryl described as how she grew up. She even added the teachings of her good and generous-natured dad. In addition to this, she believes that the Bible sparked her sense of justice - quite a new take on the book of religious faith.

Putting it simply in her own words, *"Pinaghuhugutan ko is Jesus Christ and my dad. He was a man for others, and he was the go-to guy when it came to those things."* She also admires Karl Marx, and Jimmy Carter.



Woes of Women at Work. Upon asking what steps to take for aspiring Barbies who are interested in law and politics, she shared two (2) things you need to keep in mind: 1. Pursuing a career that truly makes you happy, and 2. Make sure that the career you choose is relevant for other people. *"...Because habang ninanavigate mo ang career na yun, nakakatulong ka sa madlang people. You're helping the rest of humanity," she graciously added.*

With this in mind, she also shared her personal opinion on what an ideal Filipina is. She expresses the difficulty of having an actual definition of a Filipina since placing a fixed definition would exclude others. Instead, she beautifully listed down the possibilities of how a Filipina should be identified, expressing that 'She' should be somebody who is conscious of her struggles as a woman, struggles of the poor and the marginalized. She adds, *"She spends every waking moment of her life trying to do something, to change the structure where the Filipino woman has to labor to be equal to men."* And this is something to live by. Just like Mattel's Barbara Millicent Roberts, Mrs. Cheryl Daytec-Yangot's take on the many possibilities of what a Filipina can be, in itself, makes up the facets of being a Filipina.

"A Filipino woman is- well, a lot of things. She could be a Maria Clara, she could be a Gabriella Silang; she could be apathetic to the issues of everybody else. She could be weak, she could be strong, she could be empowered. So, ang hirap (for me) to define a Filipino woman. I would rather give you a picture of who I would consider to be an ideal Filipino woman." That in itself provides truth to the Pink Appeal of someone that is the "Legal Barb."

As the 'chat' with Mrs. Chyt comes to a close, and so does the judgment upon the court of curiosity concludes - but the trial continues. I am yet to write something compelling about that wonderful woman. Three days have passed, and I have yet to produce something that captures the essence of her identity. And here I am, full of words, but none meaningful enough to write. I see this as a sin of writing -and with the constraint of time, the moment of judgment is upon me.

My Verdict? **Pink.**

Wrapped Up and Left Out

It took a skirt to hide the skin--and reveal the prejudice within.

On May 17, 2024, a Facebook post detailing a distressing incident involving an LGBTQ+ student quickly went viral. The student, wearing a modest black shirt and a long skirt that reached his toes, was reprimanded for his attire, which was deemed inappropriate and not in line with basic decency. He was even subjected to a hurtful comment, "*Born male ka, 'di ba?*" Despite dressing modestly, the student was called out, issued a warning, and forced to write a promissory letter agreeing never to wear a skirt again.

Tales of the same thread have long been shared, and countless frustrations have been voiced. Even with the calls for change, the light of the North continues to choose silence. The problem lies in the judgment of clothing based solely on outdated gender norms and biased views of authority figures. Cross-dressing is often condemned only when it involves males, reflecting a deeply rooted double standard. Clothing is a form of self-expression, yet societal standards on gender often blur our perception of what seems to be appropriate.

Would a woman wearing the same outfit as a man be forced to undergo the same meticulous process? Where do we draw the line between appropriate and inappropriate clothing when a woman can dress in masculine outfits just fine, yet men can't express femininity? Shall we also be sarcastically asked, "*Born female ka, 'di ba?*" for wearing long sleeves, sweatpants, jeans, or ties? This inconsistency highlights the biased perceptions of gender and clothing.





No student deserves to exert extra effort in hiding along the university hallways in fear of being called out like a grave sinner.

Promoting inclusivity inside and outside the university should not be a superficial addition to our statements. In case you didn't know, inclusivity does not stop with building gender-neutral restrooms. To echo the student body, failing to uphold these values internally undermines the institution's goals.

When the doors of our personal homes slam shut against our self-expression, can we truly seek refuge in our educational institutions, which are meant to be our second homes? Can the touted inclusivity, which is supposed to embrace all differences, extend beyond religious beliefs to encompass gender expression as well? Is the much-trumpeted embrace only applicable to religious beliefs, while other forms of diversity are ignored? How can we genuinely champion gender equality and inclusivity if the members of the LGBTQ+ community are spotlighted only when they are reprimanded?

The eyes we set on the student body should be the same eyes that recognize the shortcomings of anyone within the institution. Bring back the light the North once had. Let the commitment to inclusivity and equality be reflected in actions. Let the voices of the students be heard and never again be stifled underneath the length of the daily clothes we wear.

Admit it, girls always give the best advice!



♥ By Ira Marie Delos Reyes

Just when you think you're smoothly cruising through life, there come those moments when you'll need a reality check from your fellow queens.

We're all about seeing each other win, so no gatekeeping is allowed! Whether it's a killer tip, a glamour hack, or a lightbulb moment, hop on, Barbie! **It's time to spill the beans!**

Deyn

Don't be shy ripping the adhesive cover from your pad in the public restroom! No one cares even if we hear it!

Den

Never lower your value just so everyone can afford you. Not everyone is going to like you. There will be people who will dislike you, whatever you do. And that is okay, what matters is that you love yourself and you know your worth

Bini.m

Life is not a one size fits all, don't be afraid to stand out in a crowd. Your individuality is your superpower ୨୧

Clover

It is never embarrassing to make the first move to a person you like. One day, you'll look back, either laughing about it or thinking about what could've been because you didn't took the chance while you can. So take the risk and live life to its fullest. YOLO but also remember, be intentional with your mistakes. Best of luck, girl!

Akiyama

Periods can be invalidating sometimes. One moment you're feeling down, then before you know it, it's already your first day. "Was I really sad? Or was it just my mood swings?"

Sky

I know college can be demanding, so I advise all my girlies not to stress themselves too much. Enough with being so grade-conscious, focus on personal growth and learning. Find yourself good company; it helps a lot to have good friends around you, someone who will help you grow and survive the life of a college student. Do stupid things with your friends, travel a lot, eat a lot, and do everything you can. Also, prioritize self-care and compassion. Taking care of yourself physically, emotionally, and mentally is important. Make time for yourself, and do activities that bring you joy and relaxation. If you find solace in self-isolation, that's okay! That's valid! However, it's also important to strike a balance and reach out for support when needed.

Maloi

Make-up is truly a confidence booster! If you're shy, JUST DO IT bc you'll eventually learn what suits you. Plus, you'll receive compliments from the girlies too !!



Elizabeth

Don't be afraid to open discussions especially concerns with others. Don't let them get away with their bad behavior or enable them.

Fairy Godmother

Rice water worked wonders for my hair when I was struggling with excessive hair fall due to stress. Just use one cup of rice and one cup of water (or 2 if you want it less potent) and let it sit for about 24 hours at room temperature. Wash your hair with it (I know, try not to mind the smell!). Massage thoroughly onto your scalp and rinse afterwards.

Nyx

Gifting Advice: Can't think of a gift for your girlie with a hyperfixation? Dedicate a commission or ask for a commission from an artist (traditional/digital) to make something related to their hobbies/favorite shows.

Your Anemia Girlie

Tired and low on energy for no reason? But you ate enough food, had enough sleep, are not burnt out? That, and having a feral craving for ice cubes? You're probably low on iron. Iron pills from Unilab (United Home Fersulfate Iron, 65mg for 100 pcs.) does the trick. Add orange juice into the diet, and maybe a handful of "itlog pugo" (quail eggs).

A Girlie with a List

Gifting Tips: If you're a "kabaw" (forgetful) girlie like me, list down the things your friend likes (favorite color, style preferences, hobbies & hyperfixations, receiving love language/s). That way, when a special occasion comes - getting a gift or planning a surprise for her is no sweat! Bonus if you scroll through her reposts and take note of the things she'd want

Little Red Juliette

Sometimes, setting strict goals can backfire. I'm sure many self-help books disagree with me but, in my experience, a relaxed approach to things can actually be more effective. We might not realize it but when we tell ourselves stuff like "I need to lose this amount of weight by the end of the month" or "I need to stop eating so much junk food," we can pressure ourselves to the point of complete inaction. Instead you can simply try to get out of bed and stretch for a few mins. Maybe jump rope to Taylor Swift or learn the "Pantropiko" by Bini dance. We're all made for movement. Our bodies secretly crave it. So, don't pressure yourself and just find one thing you can enjoy, even for just a few minutes. I promise, it'll make a huge difference in the long run.

Katnip Everlark

Mix honey, sugar, and coconut oil (optional), and you have a skin exfoliant. Scrub your legs before shaving and your skin will feel like silk afterwards. And it works for the lips too!

Belladonna

Making your world revolve around a man is the easiest path to a life of suffering

Nami

Girl, if you're thinking of doing something you are not confident about, JUST DO IT!! nobody cares. Girls will look but they will forget about it the next day so if you want to change something about yourself just go. Girls gossip but you do too! So regardless just wing it and slay because there will always be people who will appreciate it, xoxo

Kain

Be yourself, dont throw yourself away for another person. It may seem like everyone is against you but you may be looking at the wrong crowd for people who deserve your presence

Eryn J

If you're under 27 and a man over 30 wants to date you, it's 99% not love. That guy is having problems with women his age so he goes younger. No matter the intentions, there's no reason for someone his grown age to be pursuing someone who's just starting adulthood/just graduated school

Shortcake

Thrift shops are life savers for budget girllies! The brand won't matter, if it suits your taste and budget then just go and buy it. You'll literally snatch something good for 10 to 100 pesos. Huwag magpabudol sa 200 and above please tumawad ka! GO GIRL, MAG-UKAY KA NA!

A CHAT WITH CHYT: LEARN FROM A LAWYER OF LOUIS

♥ By Agnes Dela Peña



“Marami kang magagawa! Actually, in the field of communications - communicators, they are considered the ‘watch dog’, diba? Ang professional communicators... Marami kayong pwedeng magawa to change the world.”

Accompanied by her rich background as a human rights advocate and a lawyer, and her experiences in law, education, and politics, Mrs. Cheryl Daytec-Yañgot was a student at Saint Louis University and even taught as an associate professor at the School of Law (SOL) from 1999 to 2015. Some communication students might even recognize her - since she has always been requested and invited as a speaker for seminars, career conferences, and interviews. She shared that the fact that revealing that she was also a Communications major to the students surprised most of them.

The esteemed Alumna has a few nuggets of wisdom to share with the younger batch of Communication students of Saint Louis:

1 Stop the Stereotypes!

She asked whether the communication course was still being underestimated by other departments. *“Because when I was studying in Saint Louis, they considered our department (mass communication) ‘mga boba,’ which should not be the case. ‘...they looked down on us.’”*

She shared that in her time, people saw the Mass Communication students as “maarte,” and even thought that it was an easy course - that everything being taught could be done without taking the classes. But just like all courses, it has its fair share of ups and downs - a fair share of skills and secrets that only communication students know and keep.

With the passion and the energy of a mentor and Alumna, she strongly advised against the negative, *“Wag niyong payagan na inookray-okray kayo. Kasi hindi totoo yan (the communication department’s stereotypes). So wag nilang okray-okrayin ang communications ng SLU.”*

2 Be an Agent, Activist, and Advocate.

Ma'am Chyt shared a little bit about her student life in Louis, and how she was an active member of the department's council. ***"I was the president of the Mass Comm Society (MCS). And syempre akitibista (ang MCS)! I led the petitions against the payment for lab fees - hindi naman namin ginagamit yung lab, diba? Quinestion ko yan!"***

She also added that as she was active in the student council activities, she was a Dean's Lister - and graduated on top of the communications class. She wasn't always on top, but she did mention being number one for 3 consecutive semesters. Not only was she juggling and excelling in academics and her council, but she was able to stand up to sociopolitical issues that affect her and her fellow students - which is something to think about. Coming from a now Human Rights advocate from Geneva, she's quite the example to emulate.

3 A+++: Advance, Adapt, Achieve!

With the stereotypes and assumptions about the students in the field of Communication, it would be pretty difficult just to brush them off. But young Chyt was not one to stay still when there were opportunities in front of her.

When she was in her 4th year of college, she learned about the entrance exams at the University of the Philippines (UP) Diliman, in the College of Law. That's where the doors opened, and the 'competitors' dropped like flies. ***"Nag-exam kami. Yung mga kasama ko na nag-exam were Laudes (Cum Laude, Summa Cum Laude) from other departments. Nakasabay ko sila. Ano ang ending? Ako lang ang pumasa!"***, she stated proudly.

The UP Law Exam at her time was difficult - and even until now. One should be able to pass and have a high rate. Young Cheryl landed above a 90% exam rate, and she passed the interview - while the Political Science Laudes who took the entrance exam alongside her weren't able to pass the first base. The irony was that she has been assigned as the department's associate professor a few years later.

So if she can, COMM can! Right?

4 Consider Integrity and Etiquette.

The Human Rights advocate and lawyer opens up about the subject of ethics after a brief conversation about the recent events in her office. ***"Ayun, alam mo yung ethics na yan - napakaimportante 'yan wherever you go. Integrity is really important, noh? There's a lot of plagiarism going on, and even the use of AI!"*** she pressed.

She mentioned an incident where two essay entries submitted for the Women's Month contest last year were written using an AI Tool to make the grammar and delivery polished and appear proper. Upon reading them, she did not feel anything. ***"May nag-submit ng dalawang entry na napakaganda ng English, pero habang binabasa ko, I could not feel an emotion."*** She didn't even dwell too much on the grammar, even being a self-proclaimed grammar nazi.

For her, a self-made narrative should be able to express your perspective and tell more about yourself. Your narrative should be able to answer, ***"What's your story?"*** Chyt thought, ***"Ang galing ng English ng dalawang 'to, napakalyrical! Pero hindi mo mararamdaman yung kaluluwa ng sinulat. So, I asked my staff, 'Bakit ganito 'to? Bakit hindi ko naano 'tong dalawang 'to? Tignan mo ito, mahilig siyang gumamit ng word na 'symphony!'"*** Only then did the staff alert her about the AI tools used to fix and automatically write the submitted essays.

She raises the concern of DOLE - that the world is getting digitalized and is worried about the future of work for humanity. Nevertheless, she pressed on the values of ethics and integrity and kept these values to heart - especially now, in a world where manners and etiquette are fading.

5 Budget, Bargain, Boycott.

Being aware of the issues related to capitalist greed, she has a bit of advice regarding buying and avoiding specific brands and products. ***"What I learned in my years of working with communities is that yung buhay mo, sa araw-araw na ginagawa mo - conscious ka. You bring in all of your realizations in life. That's the reason why I don't buy certain products."*** She mentioned having boycotted companies such as Mcdo, Walmart, Nestle, and Amazon, where there have been reports of issues related to violations of labor codes and underpayment of workers. She has been boycotting Starbucks since 2003 - much longer than the boycott raised in response to the Israel-Palestine war.

She also provides advice on being smart when buying products from big brands and corporations, adding her own take on buying branded products only when they're 80% off - to get back at the greedy industrial giants. ***"Magtataka ka, like 'Why is this so mura?'. (When buying you should always) ask, 'How much did they pay the workers? Who made this?' So, tayo - pag bumibili tayo, it's good to buy the cheap ones - but it's also good to think why the product is cheap."***

Learning from the experiences of an Alumna of Louis' Communication department, much could be said about what possibilities the future holds with graduation. Mrs. Cheryl was able to do these things because she knows which values to keep and what to do when situations call for it. She encourages the students of Communication not only to communicate but also to have their fair share of giving back to the community in a handful of ways: ***"You know, in our life - in the way we live our lives, we should contribute. Maski bite-sized na contribution natin, we can change the world."***

And even though in the current sea of everybody 'communicating', where everybody feels like he or she is a journalist, the 'unregulated domains' in the form of would-be journalists, bloggers, and vloggers - there can and always be room for the COMMunity of Mass Communication to shine amidst the challenges, the chaos, and the chitchat. Along with her tips, there is much learned from the wise words of Mrs. Cheryl Daytec-Yañgot.



**EXPERIENCE
CULTURE,
HISTORY, &
SUSTAINABLE
CRAFT AT YOUR
FINGERTIPS.**

**EXPERIENCE Narda's
Handwoven Arts &
Craft.**



Narda's is a local business selling handwoven products such as clothes, bags, accessories, home decorations, and fabrics. It started as a project in **1972 by Narda Capuyan**, a family planning nurse who had a hand-knitting hobby at the time. She started the business by encouraging women to weave, revive the Cordillera Ikat design, and turn them into products. They use eco-friendly and recycled materials in producing their handicrafts. Depending on the product, their prices range from around PHP 300 to less than PHP 8,000.

For more information, visit their physical store at **151, Upper Session Road, Baguio City** or check out their website: www.nardas.com



INTERVIEW

FROM

KEN

♥ By Kemm Olarte

It took me a long time to understand the subtle conflicts behind gender roles. I grew up in a traditional Filipino home, where we mostly followed conventional gender roles but didn't strictly limit our options. This was especially true on my mother's side of the family. My Tito made some of the best homemade dishes for dinner, and one of my older male cousins crafted my favorite chili oil. My Lola didn't know how to do the laundry; most of it was done by her two sons.

Unconsciously, this more flexible view of gender roles became part of my own lifestyle. However, it often clashed with the rigid expectations I encountered in society every day. This left me in a state of internal conflict, trying to reconcile these differing perspectives. How exactly could I overcome these deeply ingrained societal norms and embrace a more inclusive understanding of gender roles?

These events helped me and perhaps can help other people, too. Even now, I still struggle with these preconceived notions about gender roles. My father was pretty central to these notions as a kid. But when my female classmates in Junior High hammered my uselessness back into me during my home economics classes, I started to wonder. I was convinced by my father that housework was something that was exclusively feminine, but funnily enough, he was every bit as capable and knowledgeable in housework as my mother was.

"Bakit ka naglalaba? Gawain ng babae 'yan," he years later, he tells me some of the most clothes. My father was caught up in trying to but he failed to realize that once upon a time, preconceived notions. He was once a young striving to be the best version of himself and to

would tell me as a kid. Then, a handful of detailed advice on handwashing impart to me the manliest advice, he was on the spectrum of those teenager, much like any other, feel capable.

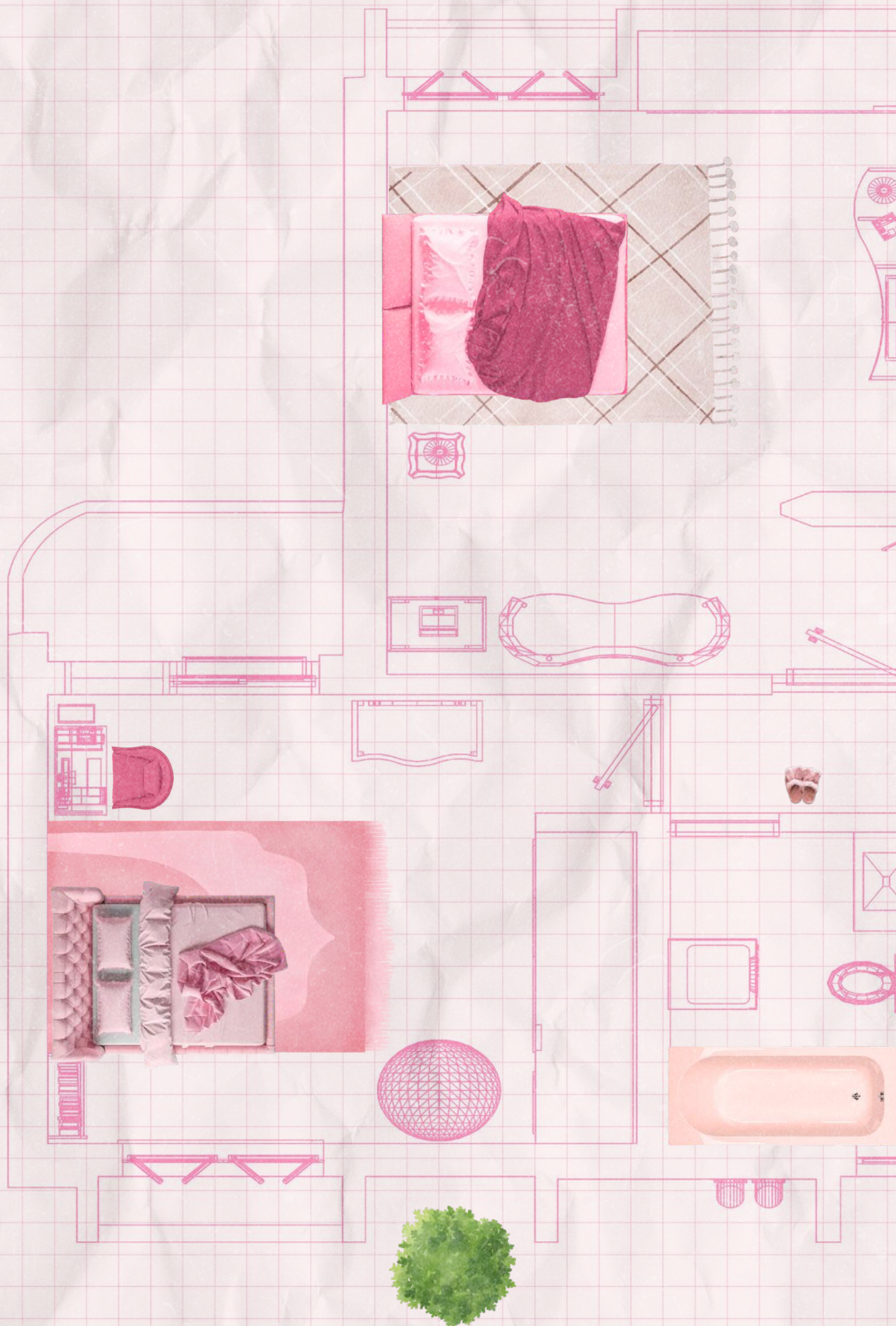


The activities society relegated to specific gender roles each held their own significant value. Understanding this was key to how I began to overlook traditional gender roles: by putting myself in the shoes of others and appreciating the worth of all tasks, regardless of who performed them. Sounds simple enough, but is actually really hard if you think of how vastly different the male and female experience is.

As a straight male, oftentimes in the past, I was called to make fun of women for how they thought about things differently. "Too emotional." "Lacking rationality." "Irritable." "Unreasonable." It's very easy to make fun of them or think of them less when you look at women with these very surface-level descriptions that arose from baseless prejudice. However, as I slowly grew up, I started having more and more female friends, and before I knew it, the majority of my friend group was made up of girls. Being close to them didn't necessarily mean I instantly knew how they felt about things. In fact, for the most part, I don't think it pushed me towards that direction at all. But being close with more female friends expanded my view of the world, at the very least.

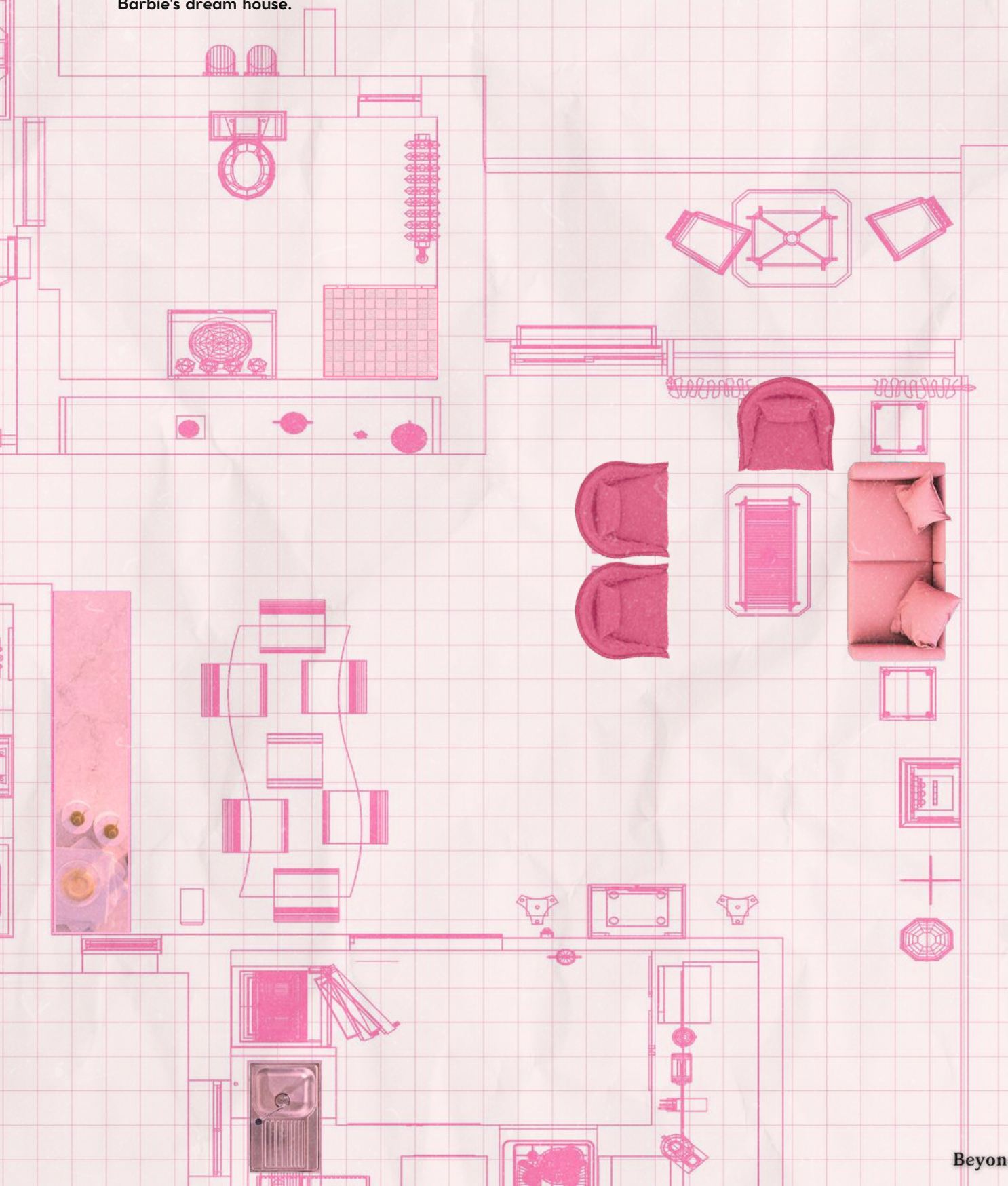
"Ah, guys who act like this around them upset them." "Ah, I shouldn't assume this of them." These accumulative experiences with them allowed me to be more accepting of traits I once found annoying and unreasonable due to my earlier upbringing.

From then on, my experiences only continued to expand. Being introduced to the city and even more people of different shades and identities only allowed me to shake off the shackles of prejudice and deeply rooted sexism. I don't think I've eliminated all traces of it, but I sure am making progress, and I hope all Kens will promptly follow their own versions of this journey as well.



Barbie's DreamHOWs:

What does it take to build Barbie's dream house? Is it all about the perfect shade of pink interiors or the lively gatherings? Perhaps not. A true dream house is a place crafted with warmth and care. So long as the gates welcome you home, you have arrived at Barbie's dream house.



Life in the **DORM**house

♥ By Ydelvess Faith Morales



A four-storey house stands in a vibrant corner of the city, where the hustle and bustle blend seamlessly with serenity. With pets running around, this may perhaps even be a modern-day Barbie's dream house. However, this enchanting home belongs to Zenaida, a 65-year-old woman who has transformed her residence into a vibrant haven not as a dreamhouse but rather as a dorm house.

Zenaida's dorm house is more than just a home; it's a vibrant community. Here, young women from different backgrounds and with different dreams come together. They don't just stay — they flourish under Zenaida's warm and caring guidance. Her house is a lively mix of creativity and friendship. Each resident brings something unique, weaving a beautiful tapestry of stories and experiences within these colorful walls.

Unlike in Barbie Land, Zenaida's house did not come from Ken's emergency briefcase, nor was it finished in a single press of a button.

"Meron itong slow na umpisa, kasi hindi naman yung buong building napatayo agad", she stated. Although the blueprint included a 4th floor, she did not have enough money at the time to establish the house completely. *How was the house finished then?* Well, it started with someone who believed and invested in its future. By depositing an advanced payment, an acquaintance gave Zenaida a headstart for her dorm business. She continued the construction of the second, third, and fourth floors little by little with the income that she received from her tenants. *"Gradual— slow but sure,"* she added.

As for her tenants, Zenaida has encountered diverse characters. May it be the characters of Raquelle, Midge, or even Ryan, she's met them all. *"May maayos, may hindi maayos. Hindi lahat bed of roses lang."* Just like how Barbie has multiple jobs, Zenaida tries to have a flexible personality to accommodate her tenants. She keeps this principle of talking it out properly for things to end nicely. There are goody-two-shoes people like Midge, who Zenaida says are consistent in their studies and are compliant with house rules and regulations.

However, there are also renters like Raquelle, who are rather disobedient and rebellious. In the dorm house, though, they're mostly known as the ones who bring friend groups home without permission or get drunk with the guys. Funnily enough, Zenaida also meets people like Ryan, the boyfriend of the tenants who were supposedly not allowed to enter the apartment. With the landlady's long years of experience, she surely knows how to handle different personalities.

Despite both the good and bad memories from her tenants, Zenaida admits that there are instances where she feels as if they're her children. *"Kaya kahit minsan, playing mother na rin ako sa kanila eh,"* she expressed.

Whenever girls like Raquelle would be uncooperative, she would always remind them of the right things to do. Since they're still young adults who are studying away from their parents, Zenaida understands that they would need a mother— or a parent figure to guide them. It would also be a bonus for her if the tenants were well-behaved because it would be easy for her to distinguish them from those who are unmannered. *"Mafifeel mo naman yung bata kung compliant eh. Mafifeel mo yung bata kung mayroong respeto, napalaki ng maayos, makikita mo yun. First impression pa lang alam ko na."*

This Barbie is not one you will see in the movies. Her dream house is not perfect; the tenants living with her have different characteristics, and she definitely doesn't have a talking closet. But her DORMhouse has been both her company and home for a long time. It has been her routine to keep it warm and homey for other people, and it's also where she gets income. Zenaida is a Barbie who treats her tenants as her children because no matter what difficulties she may have faced, this is still where she invests all she has.

"Pero rewarding din naman in a way, kasi ito naman ang bread and butter ko eh. Ito ang tumutustos sakin," she said.

A Girl's

♥ By Dana Marie Puspos



Barbie's dream house is a Church.

Sonia Fajardo wasn't always the woman who greeted churchgoers with a smile and a spare scarf to police you if you're not following the church's dress code. In her youth, she was an activist whose voice echoed through rallies and whose body became a familiar sight on picket lines. She was one of the people who participated in the EDSA People Power Revolution. She stood up for her people—her fellow Filipinos.

Girl

But passion, like a double-edged sword, can be both empowering and draining. Years of relentless activism took their toll. The constant battles, the sting of setbacks, and the weight of the world on her shoulders began to chip away at Sonia's energy.

"Bagong lipat lang ako sa Bataan noong nakapasok ako sa simbahan. Nung una, volunteer work lang tapos kinalaunan naging presidente na ako ng CWL (Catholic Women's League) sa Santo Cristo Parish sa Cupang" she shared.

Week after week, she returned to the church, drawn to the quiet strength and the sense of peace that permeated the space. Gradually, a metamorphosis began to unfold.

Sonia didn't abandon her core values. The fire for justice still flickered within her, but it was now tempered by a newfound faith. She discovered a different way to contribute, channeling her formidable organizational skills and unwavering dedication into serving the church. The streets may have been quieter without her, but within the church walls, she became a pillar — organizing feeding programs, visiting the orphanage, and offering a listening ear to anyone in need.

"Madami kaming gustong tulungan sa CWL pero ang pinaka malapit sa akin na project ay yung tinutulungan namin magkaroon ng pagkakakitaan yung mga single parents at yung mga out of school youth para makapag ipon sila ng pang aral nila at ng mga anak nila."

Her story reminds us that social change doesn't always come from bullhorns and raised fists. Sometimes, the most impactful actions are born from quiet dedication and unwavering service. As Sonia herself says with a twinkle in her eyes, *"Tao sa tao rin ang pakikibaka, mababago natin ang mga maling nakaugalian at mga nakasanayan sa pamamagitan ng pag tulong at pagpapalawak ng pagintindi."*

Sonia Fajardo's journey is a testament to the evolving nature of activism. It's a lifelong commitment, and its form can morph with our experiences. The quiet strength she exudes while serving at the church is a powerful continuation of the fire that once burned brightly on the streets. It's a reminder that while the methods may change, the core desire to make a difference can remain a constant force, propelling us forward in unexpected yet meaningful ways.



The Dream House is a Dormhouse

♥ By Zach Ezekiel Klaud Kaniteng

“A dream house in the making- for forty-six years and counting.”

A bunch of newlyweds could only dream of one thing during the 60s- that is, to build their dream house. A roof to build for themselves as they enter this new phase in their life. Well, that would be the case for the then elementary teacher, Mrs. Leonila T. Dangatan, and her husband after securely tying the knot in 1969. Aside from that, building this home for their soon-to-be children was also on their wishlist as a couple.

Little did they know that from this dream, they would raise more than 50 kids at the same home for forty-six years and counting.

Starting with three adopted kids, Mrs. Dangatan, as most neighbors call her, opened the doors to her dream house at Bakakeng Norte to families and students by renting it out in 1978. As a veteran landlady, she tries to recall the first tenants who rented the first unit as she shared her realizations about sharing her dream with other people.

“Building the Foundation”

Mrs. Danganan remembered that almost everyone who started to build their houses at their barangay always thought of renting their place out for aspiring Baguio residents. As she and her husband were still employed at a mining town near Baguio, they thought of the same thing: to have extra income from their previous jobs.

It was a dream easy for them to reach since renting it out also meant that their dream house was used and taken care of even when they were far away. However, along with these dreams were setbacks that she needed to face even until now.

“Kung hindi mo (sila) maintindihan- kung hindi ka patient sa kanila, eh wala. Pero, ananusam ah-” is what she remarked immediately after looking back on her previous tenants. Doing so, the 82-year-old initially shared her frustrations from sharing one floor of her humble two-storey home, sharing how the role of a landlady could be stressful sometimes.

However, with all of this, her chosen source of extra income has laid a new foundation for what her future holds, even though her dream house is *already* finished. Unconsciously, this choice has slowly ticked off an item from their wishlist as a couple- to raise kids in their humble home.

Finishing Touches?

Auntie Leonila had three adopted children with her husband, who had occupied the house's second floor with her. But when her husband met his untimely death with her kids building their own dream houses in different places, she was left alone in her orange and yellow home.

Well, not too alone since she had tenants to keep her company for most of the time. With that, she said that she felt happy in making her dreamhouse a house for building dreams also, with most students renting her first floor units. Aside from seemingly raising and taking care of other young people aside from her three kids, she expresses her gladness in doing so under her roof.

Parang pamilya din. Parang nanay ka, tapos mga anak mo sila (mga umuupa) na iba-iba ang ugali.” she said as she compared her experiences as a mother to a landlady. When asked about her thoughts and how she feels about caregiving for other kids, she said that she no longer feels afraid to be alone upstairs because she knows she can ask for help from her younger residents.

Having her own kids build their own dream homes may have been the conclusion of Mrs. Danganan's dream of raising children. However, taking care of student tenants may have stopped the finishing touches of her soon-to-be-accomplished dream of raising more than 50 ‘kids’ under her roof. Nonetheless, she is more than happy to make her dream house other people's dream house as well.

“Building MORE Foundation”

With more students and other individuals coming to Baguio, Auntie Leonila and her kids thought of creating more units for renting. Upon visiting her residences, you may see construction workers building more foundations beside another unfinished building from her green gate.

When asked about the gray three-storey building behind her dreamhouse, she responded that her daughter thought of having a transient rental, although she was unsure if this plan would ensue in the near future. Nonetheless, she patiently takes her time in the morning to inspect and ensure the units are constructed well.

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Girl!!!

Dinner?

♥ By Ray Miguel De Jesus

On TikTok, a seemingly fun and harmless trend has taken center stage: "girl dinner." It was coined by TikTok user Olivia Maher (@liviemaher), who shared a video of her dinner back in May 2023. These solo dining showcases, often featuring haphazardly assembled snacks and meals, initially appear as lighthearted expressions of culinary independence—also known as “adulting.” Nothing says “I’ve got my life together,” like grazing on a charcuterie board while binge-watching Kdramas in sweatpants that haven’t been washed since last week.

Of course, the best part of “girl dinner” is the sheer creativity it inspires. The trend has quickly evolved, with TikTok users sharing their own “girl dinners” consisting of anything from a single slice of pizza with a side of chips to a bowl of cereal paired with a glass of Coke. That’s how bizarre this trend is, and we’ve listed down some of the quirkiest versions you might want to recreate, or not, for your dorm dinners!



Pancit Canton with Egg

Talk about conventional, yet on-brand. You can never go wrong with Pancit Canton paired with Egg for just P26! The juicy noodles paired with either a runny egg or boiled one create a satisfying, comforting meal that's perfect for any time of day. It always feels like home, not home-home, but home as in comfort zone!

Skyflakes with Condensed Milk

A sweet and savory twist, this combination pairs the classic Skyflakes crackers with a drizzle of condensed milk. It's a quick, easy, and surprisingly delightful snack that balances the saltiness of the crackers with the rich sweetness of the milk.

Gummy Worms Sandwich

For those who have a thing for the peculiar, the gummy worms sandwich sure makes an impression. Simply take a couple of slices of bread and stuff them with a handful of gummy worms. The result is a chewy, colorful, and sugary treat that defies traditional meal conventions.

Skyflakes with Tuna

For a more SAVEory twist on the classic cracker snack, pair Skyflakes with a spoonful of tuna. You can use canned tuna mixed with a bit of salt, and pepper to taste. This combination is not only quick and easy but also packs a punch of protein, making it a more filling and nutritious option that does not hurt the pocket. It's perfect for those moments when you want something light yet satisfying on the tummy.

Oxygen

Do I still need to explain?

Champorado with Fish Crackers

Champorado, a chocolate rice porridge, is traditionally paired with tuyo (dried fish). For a bizarre twist, try it with fish crackers instead. The salty crunch of the crackers adds a different texture and flavor to the sweet porridge.

Balut with Cheese

The most "exotic" Filipino street food, foreigners have ever known has other alternative sauce. Try it with a twist by adding a sprinkle of shredded or cream cheese, instead of salt. The combination of the rich, savory balut and creamy cheese creates a unique, flavorful snack.

Andok's Spicy Chicken Sandwich

A perfect blend of classic and conventional, an Andok's Spicy Chicken sandwich takes the beloved breaded Fried Chicken to a new level. This sandwich is readily available in just 5-10 minutes, and just a bit quirky, fitting right into the "girl dinner" theme. Just don't forget to order the spicy one!

A STORYTELLER AND HER BOOK

♥ Ydelvess Faith Morales

A journalist tells stories of what people should know. “Ms. Patricia is a journalist, and I know some others, too. What makes her so different from the rest that I’d listen to her talk?” was what I thought at first until she entered the stage and began telling a story. Patricia Evangelista is a trauma journalist and a former reporter. She has a story to tell, but it’s not hers. Her book is about other people— victims of reality and trampled upon by brainless guns.

Ms. Evangelista’s book *“Some People Need Killing”* won the 2024 Helen Bernstein Book Award for Excellence in Journalism and was included in The New York Times 10 Best Books of 2023. She has been going around places, doing book talks, and sharing with the audience the essence of her work and what it means. That’s how I knew about her book, heard her story, and opened my eyes to see the reality in my country. I thought I was aware of the issues that were happening, the lies that were spreading, and the killings that were very unnecessary. However, Ms. Pat made me realize that I was barely awake. My eyes were half-closed all this time, and I was just a clueless citizen who had just woken up from a dreamless slumber.

One of Ms. Pat’s stories was about Ladylove, an innocent girl of a family who is also a victim of the drug war. It was a lovely name— I thought— as an alias for someone who had such a tragic experience. **“She had the grace to give me something,”** Evangelista stated, referring to how Ladylove was willing to share her story with the world. Ms. Patricia had other sources, which are given in her job as a journalist. But what I learned especially from her, was to always get to know the interviewees as a person, no matter who we think they are. Start with a casual conversation, let the respondents talk about themselves, and make them feel comfortable and safe with you. This way, trust is built.

Her job as a journalist sounds challenging, especially since she mentioned being on the night shift and taking cases where blood is splattered on the ground and on people’s hands. “My job is to go to places where people die. I pack my bags, talk to the survivors, write my stories, then go home to wait for the next catastrophe. I don’t wait very long”. She expressed that there was also this guilt of dealing with the victims, which she had to swallow to put up a professional front and fulfill her role as a reporter.

“Isipin mo muna, tao ka o reporter ka?” This question by Ms. Patricia made me realize how much of an emotional toll it must take on a journalist to do their job. Not only do they talk with the victims of the stories, but they are also responsible for sharing the reality of what happened to the whole world. Justice cannot be given that easily. But what Ms. Pat did was tell a story and make it as compelling as she could so the people would be the ones to demand justice for those who deserve it.





PAGLAOM STUDIO





Store Hours: 9 AM - 8 PM

Location: 4th Floor Porta Vaga Mall Annex,
Session Road, Baguio City, Benguet

If you want to have the scent and aura of Baguio in your own home, **Paglaom Studio** is the place to go. This shop sells Baguio-inspired, handmade fragrances and scented candles using recycled materials, then produces them through eco-friendly processes. The business was established by **Ruth Ramos**, a woman entrepreneur who believes that scents positively influence one's mood. Their products include Scented Candles, Pure Essential Oils, Body Spray, Diffusers, and a lot more. The products' prices range from PHP 50 to PHP 1,499.

For more information, visit their physical store or check out their website:
<https://paglaomstudio.com/>

PERK
of an

SLU Communication Student



Across all industries, there is still a high demand for communication specialists because businesses understand how crucial good communication is to managing their reputations and fostering relationships with stakeholders.

Communicating gives you the chance to explore various media and storytelling media as well as to express your creativity. You have the opportunity to hone and display your creative abilities in writing, graphic design, video production, and social media management, among other areas. If you are passionate about visual communication and storytelling, this can be especially rewarding.

Journalism, public relations, advertising, media studies, and interpersonal communication are just a few of the many disciplines that fall under the broad category of communication. Because of its adaptability, you can explore and focus on a variety of areas according to your interests and professional objectives.

It's a humbling experience; yes, that's a perk!

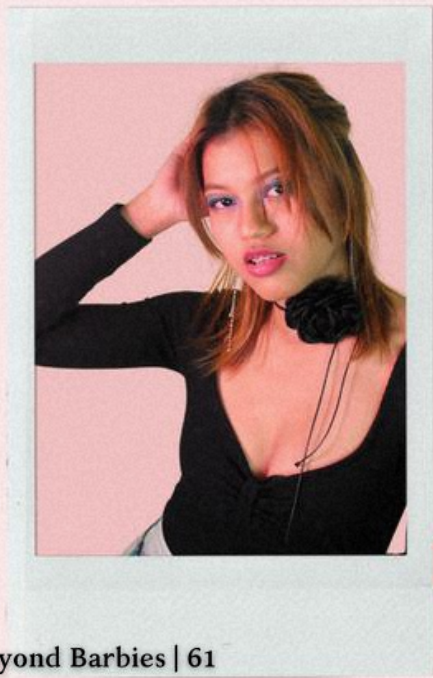
Communication programs usually provide opportunities to network and establish connections with industry professionals. Guest lecturers, business gatherings, internships, and alumni networks are among the opportunities you might have to network and learn more about potential career paths.



The success of our first digital magazine wouldn't have been possible without the dedication of our entire editorial board. After overcoming the challenges of maintaining efficient operations and defying creative blocks, we have created something truly special. Our writers have used the power of their words to uplift the voices of unheard Filipina narratives, and our design team has masterfully applied their creativity across every shade of pink. We express our utmost gratitude to everyone who contributed to the success of Beyond Barbies-- Most especially, to our course facilitator, Mr. Jules Tillay, for allowing us to express our creativity, for challenging us, and for igniting our passion for our program. ***Cheers, COMMpamilya!***



ACK NOW LED GE MENT











They're out of the box.

