

Chapter 2

The Spider, the Fly and the Virgin

Before the launch of my coffee table book “Philippines” at the Manor Hotel in Baguio on April 5, 2008, I saw Gabriel again at the Figaro coffee shop on the Promenade in Greenhills.

“What’s another word for war?” I asked the devil on earth.

“What?” he asked.

“America,” I replied.

“Aaahhhhh... That hurts,” he answered.

“That’s okay. It’s good to have another perspective. You’ll grow from it,” I said, smiling.

“Black Widow is really a good name for you,” he told me.

“And where did you dig up that name?”

“Nowhere,” he said smiling, “I just think that is the most appropriate name for you.”

“I like She Dragon.”

“Can’t you see who you are?” he asked.

“What do you mean?”

“You are only bound for greatness,” he continued.

“You know about the prophecies?”

“No. I just see it,” he answered.

“I don’t believe you. You must have gotten a hold of the prophecies. I think Paulie had written it down on his computer and somebody sucked it out over the internet.”

“Really, I just see it that way,” he responded.

“If you are concerned about my destiny, I will teach you how to destroy my path. I knew you were coming into my life before we met. I know your role in my life. You have the power to bring me death. There are many kinds of death- spiritual, mental, physical... I will show you how to kill my path. I will show you how to kill my future as it has been foretold.”

“If my future says that I should fulfill a great task, then I will accept it with all humility. But if my future says, I should become a “nobody,” a humble farmer in one with the earth and the universe then I shall accept this destiny with all humility, just the same. The seers say that I will become a symbol of hope for the poor in the Philippines. One day soon, I will give you the power to decide my fate, as it was written in the cards.”

“Don’t you see? There is nothing, nothing on earth that could take away who I am. At the end of the day, I am loyal only to the evolution of my soul.”

“It has been foretold that two supreme warriors from my past lives will come to assist me in this life. One warrior is powered by the forces of good. And the other is dominated by the forces of evil. The latter is you. They call us Trinity. The seers say I am the daughter of heaven, a cosmic conduit that can access the energy of yin and yang. I have a karmic debt with you, same as with the other warrior, the one whose heart is pure. If I do not settle this karmic accounting with the two of you, I will have failed in this life.”

In June, after he read my essay, “Men in Boxes in the Name of Peace”, Gabriel hit the roof.

“Your essay is so one-sided”, he said in an email.

“So you’re saying I am right but it is one-sided. It’s not one-sided. Read it again and this time read it with an open mind. Try.”

“I’ve read it ten times already. How can you make such terrible accusations? We are always the first to help other nations in trouble,” he stated.

“Help? What help? There is help but there is subterfuge. The Americans are here to take, not help. Where was your government during hurricane Katrina? You couldn’t even help your own people let alone mine!”

“The Filipinos love us here,” he continued, describing their reception in Mindanao.

“You are a fool. Our culture dictates that we be gracious and hospitable towards foreign people. Just because we are polite and giving doesn’t mean we like you. We never show our true feelings towards foreigners.” I declared.

We finally brought our argument on to the phone to barking at each other.

“We come with good intentions but nothing comes for free. And if it were not for the US, who would take care of Bin Laden?” he announced.

Enraged I replied, “Do not tell me how good your people are. Once upon a time, a man working for the US government told me that a passenger plane coming from Europe going to New York was about to blow up in the air. I didn’t believe him but it did. My mother-in law’s friend’s daughter was in that plane! Your people do not care about human beings when they are American, let alone other people!”

Breaking into tears now and even more furious, “I wish tomorrow I could wake up as dumb as you so we could at least understand each

other. And do not sell me the bullshit about the US and Bin Laden! Men like you believe what is shoved down your throats because it conveniently justifies your actions. If you want to continue this ridiculous conversation then you must come and see me in person. I would incriminate myself further by using this damn cell phone!”

There was silence between us for several days.

On August 26, 2008 I sent Gabriel a draft of Chapter One and the beginning of Chapter Two from this book asking him for his comment. I told him I didn't want to say anything in the book that would upset him.

In my email I wrote:

“You are the first one I am sending this to. I have named you Gabriel in the book. It still needs work. If you can speak, let me know what you think.”

I heard nothing for another two days. Then August 29, he emailed back saying:

“I can speak and have read the chapter. It's interesting how some of the pieces are now falling into place. But I would like to talk to you about something that concerns me. Text me when we can talk. Gabriel”

I emailed him back and said:

“I can't text you. I erased your mobile number permanently from my phone. I thought I'd give you some rest, stop pestering you for a while. So you have to text me when we can talk.”

At around 10 pm that evening, he sent me a text message saying he was ready to talk. I phoned him.

“What is your concern?” I asked.

“It's best you remove our titles. I don't really care so much since I'm leaving the army soon. But Caesar has more years to go. The title will give him away.”

“Then I shall remove the ranks,” I said. “Why have you ignored my emails? I needed your advice and opinion on those matters especially the ones regarding my security.”

“Because....,” he said hesitating. “Because....”

“What!”

“It’s part of your growth.”

“I don’t understand. You used to provoke me without hesitation. You would attack and push me to my limits. Now you have changed. Why do you let me intimidate you? Why are you distant all of a sudden? Why are you afraid of me now?” I asked.

“It is not fear,” he answered. “It is deep respect.”

“I don’t need you to respect me. I need you to advise me,” I said. “And why are you being so nice all of a sudden? There must be a trap somewhere.”

“Ha ha ha!” He said. “You are so funny. Welcome to my parlor said the spider to the fly. I don’t call you Black Widow for no reason.”

“So what do you think of Chapter One? You must have found something for us to argue about. Come on. Fight with me. My mind needs the challenge,” I urged him.

He laughed at the other end of the line. He paused to speak.

“Come on...I’m here for the taking. After silence for ten days, we can’t end this conversation without a fight,” I insisted.

“Alright...alright,” he answered. “I agree with most of what you say... But... There is a part when you are asking yourself if there is an end to all these wars. There isn’t you know. The world you wish for doesn’t exist.”

“Aaaaagggghhhhhhhhh! I don’t know if you are just stupid or blind. That’s not what I meant. My God! How do I explain the depth of Eastern wisdom to the mind of an American man whose brain has been grilled in the military for decades?”

“This world is alive through the existence of opposite forces - the energy of yin and yang, which are eternal and infinite. There is no end and no beginning. Therefore, for as long as there is life, there is death. For as long as there is love, there is hate. And for as long as there is peace, there is war. You cannot have one without the other. It’s not possible. Otherwise we cease to exist. Without these opposite forces, we vanish into thin air, gone. But peace lies within our hearts. It is there waiting to be found.”

“I do not look for a perfect world. I can only dream for a better world. This book I hope will help people find inner balance, inner peace. The point is if each of us could aspire to free our mind and spirit, if we can accept with an open heart that there is good and evil within ourselves and embrace them both, then we can find balance. We can find inner peace. Peace begins within each of us. And maybe collectively, maybe en masse we can exude this energy of peace toward the whole world. When one person changes and finds balance in himself, the world changes with him, because we are all connected. The power that drives this universe is the energy of yin and yang and we are all connected to this. In this manner, each of us has the power to alter the course of the evolution of mankind, the earth and the universe. And maybe collectively we can tip the balance of good and evil towards good. Then perhaps we can save humanity and the earth. Yet we must start with the individual. We must begin with you and I. I believe this with all my heart. It is true. It is possible.”

“But how can you possibly see the world? How can leading military men like you understand the needs of mankind when you refuse to look inside yourself? If you cannot see the world within your being then you are blinded to everything else.”

Gabriel was silent on the other end while I spoke which probably means I was getting to his hard head somehow. Otherwise, he would be barking back at me like a wild beast, his fangs out and ready to attack. The seers say I must settle my karmic account with this man in this life and guide him to find a better path. Heaven must be laughing at me from beyond, watching me deal with this demonic man whose iron will is exactly as difficult and impossible as mine.

“I swear if I fail to settle my karmic debt with you in this life and you don’t come to terms with your emotional baggage, I will cast a spell on you and turn you into an old, ugly, fat, decrepit, dick-less, hairy, gay toad,” I continued.

“Well take out the gay part and that nails it on the head don’t you think?” he said, teasing.

“I’m ready for the next argument. Come on...”

“Why do you have to seek Hugo Chavez, the President of Venezuela?” he asked.

“Because I can! And I know I can assimilate a wisdom from this brave man which I would never acquire from you,” I answered.

“Aaaaahhhhhhhh! I took that trap, bait, hook and all didn’t I?” He said, laughing.

“Chavez is going down you know. He’s not going to last.”

“No one stays in power forever. But I may learn something from Hugo Chavez. I will go to Cuba too. As much as the US may hate to accept it, Cuba has better health, education and welfare for its people than Americans get from their government.” I explained.

The following morning I sent Gabriel a text message: “I have your cell phone number again. Am I going to pester you now?”

“Hey! You’re not a pest. It’s these people I work with who drive me nuts,” he answered.

“Ok. Here is your shit for the day,” I said.

“I know who I am. Whereas you are still trying to figure out who you are. The problem is you do not have the humility to accept I am your guide. I am the answer.”

“Aren’t we full of ourselves today?” he replied.

“Fucking hell! So it’s true. You can’t teach old dogs new tricks. I’m going to find myself a puppy then.”

Silence.

“Got you didn’t I? You hate it when I call you old. Here’s a big kiss. I hope that makes you feel better,” I said.

“Do you know that I like you very much? There is reason for that.” he answered.

“You love me, you stupid old dog!” I said.

“Hey! That is dick-less toad to you...Lady,” he replied.

“Insufferable! Inhuman! Toad!” I wrote back.

“There, that’s better...” he answered.

After over 30 years of service, Gabriel is finally leaving the army, something very difficult for men like him to do. The box has been his life; the box has been everything. How do you send a mighty warrior to live a normal life? A man who has commanded armies of men into battle? How does a man who has devoted his entire adult life to fulfilling great missions involving the life and the death of countless men, step into the trivial reality you know? And how can anyone outside of the military world relate to this devil on earth?

There are no accidents in this life. There is only the inevitable. So Gabriel and I met at this point in our lives because we are meant to guide each other. As he mentors me to grow to understand the reality of war, death and destruction, I hope I help him realize that there is a whole world out there waiting for him. And that he will continue to challenge his great mind. Their own spirit does not betray men like Gabriel. Their spirit continues to grow - continues to fight. And

I believe this superior warrior will bring his battle to higher ground. But how do I help him see what the seers foretold, that a new life is to begin for him after the army?

When I saw the old lady seer in March she asked, "There is a particular saint appearing to you in your vision?"

"Yes. I've been seeing him for over a week now, each night before I go to sleep," I answered.

"His bronze figure has been in my home for two years, just sitting there. But his spirit didn't talk to me, did not communicate with me until now."

At this point, the old witch got up and called her male counterpart who is more knowledgeable about Buddhist and Taoist saints. We will call him Mr. Max.

"Describe this saint to Mr. Max," she said.

"He wears the warrior regalia of China during the ancient times. He sits holding a short dagger with his right hand while his right foot steps on a tortoise and the other on a snake," I replied.

"He is Zhong Te Kung," Mr. Max announced, smiling. "He is a Taoist saint who was an eminent warrior in his past life."

"The spirit of this saint awakens now at this point in your life for a very good reason. The time is ripe. The hour has come. He will grant you wisdom and omnipotence above all mankind because you are not human like the rest of us. Go home and do the ritual of acceptance. Allow the essence of this guardian, this ultimate warrior, into your life and he will guide you to greatness."

"You are protected by the spirits of the mightiest Buddhist and Taoist saints who were preminent warriors of the past. Once upon a time you were with these Saints; you were one of them, a significant warrior thrown into this life to fulfill a great mission. Heaven sends you an invisible army of men to guide and protect

you. All those close to you will rise with you. But every person who gets in your path, every person who tries to harm you will perish. All your enemies will fall - for nothing on earth will stop you from fulfilling your great undertaking. It is the will of heaven,” the old lady explained.

That was on Thursday, March 20, 2008. When I came home that day, I didn't feel it was the proper time to do the ritual of acceptance. Friday and Saturday came and I still didn't feel it was right. Then, on Sunday, I had the urge to perform this holy sacrament.

I proceeded to the place where the image of Zhong Te Kung has been enthroned in my home for the past two years. I burned incense and gave an offering to this God, summoning his spirit to my own so that he may bestow upon me wisdom and omnipotence. Then I went into silent meditation, allowing myself to become pure energy. I left my physical form to become one with heaven and the cosmic forces, awakening the spirit of Zhong Te Kung, allowing his soul to unite with mine.

After this ritual, Steve, my partner of ten years, my daughter Maya and I, went to the Starbucks coffee shop down the street in front of the Mormon's Church next to Corinthian Village. I sat down sipping my brewed coffee. It had been less than an hour since my meditation.

I received a text message from someone by mistake. The message simply said, “???????????”

I replied, “Are you a ghost from my past?”

“Ouch! I just pinched myself. No I'm not a ghost,” was the reply I received.

That message was from Gabriel. He arrived within one hour of accepting Zhong Te Kung into my reality. He came into my being

the same hour I embraced the God who will grant wisdom and omnipotence to my soul. Is this an accident? No. There are no accidents in this life. There is only the inevitable. Is there a part of me that believes Gabriel is actually the saint Zhong Te Kung reincarnated in this life? Yes. Definitely.

As I look back now I find it astounding that my relationship with Gabriel began with a series of question marks. And yet later as our relationship grew, he became the answer.

Since that day, after my first contact with Gabriel, this Devil on earth staged a theater of war for us to engage upon, a test of courage and truth, a battleground I had rarely encountered before. I believe that this was a mental game to him, a psychological war. He had to know if I would cross over to the dark side. If I could, then he would want to see how evil my dark side was. Id and aggression go hand in hand. This means your dark side dominates the intensity of your sexual capacity and vice versa.

I also believe that Gabriel had previously done his homework on me. I believe that men with certain high ranks in the military have access to certain files. During the first few days of our contact, he sent me a text message.

“Aren’t you going to be in the newspapers tomorrow?” he asked.

“Yes. But how would you know?” I replied.

“I have my sources,” he answered.

During that time he sent me messages, calling me, “She Devil,” “She Wolf” and “Black Widow.” I wondered if perhaps he knew someone from my past. I wondered if he knew Marcus. Despite my gift of sight, I can’t see through the mind of Gabriel as well as I would wish. He has a mind that is also so complex. And the best part of his psyche is fortified so well that I am unable to see through it. So as I said, he created an engagement for us, a mental test of evil

and darkness. I have played games like this before, although that was another lifetime ago.

The first few weeks of our psyche - war brought back fear, excitement and nightmares. I felt my old life had returned to haunt me. I felt he had invaded my private life. He had invaded my mind, my heart, my spirit, my home. He attacked with such ferocity, I felt dizzy, weak and disoriented.

I have a dear, beloved friend and confidante, Alwin Sta. Rosa. He is quiet and distant, like a silent ocean that runs deep. He is also clairvoyant. On top of this, he has a great mind that can work in and outside of the box extraordinarily well. During the first week of my encounter with Gabriel I called Alwin.

“I have never known darkness like this,” I said.

“What do you mean? Coming from you that must be something,” he answered.

“You and I consider ourselves exceptional with regard to our mental and spiritual strength. We are both very clear headed, very strong mentally, psychologically and spiritually. We can walk into almost any situation “whole” and we will walk out the same. But this man, this man...is a beast,” I explained gasping.

“He can go so low, so low...he can hit the ground, eat the earth... he will humble himself, degrade himself, knowing that he can snap right back and claim his power. Do you understand? He degrades himself to make you think he is weak, so that for one moment and for that one single instant you underestimate him, and he’s got you! He owns you. He has an amazing mind.”

“I don’t know what to do. I’ve never encountered such evil. And I thought I had no equal,” I explained catching my breath.

“Ask yourself this...” he responded. “Do you really want to confront this man?”

“If I do face up to his provocation, I will have to mutate and go through a personality change. Here I go again. Aaaaaahhhh!” I remarked.

So I transformed into a new personality that enabled me to chase Gabriel to the end of hell and to confront him. I became just like him, as evil as he. But I had learned from what happened to Marcus many years back that you can't fight evil with evil. When a predator chases after me, I can't keep running. I refuse to live in fear. The best thing for me to do is face it and deal with it. So I followed Gabriel to the abyss and he led me to the cerebral and spiritual duel he had orchestrated. There we clashed heads on in a battle I believe he had never fought before either. As we struggled for dominance, I had the chance to absorb and embrace the evil of Gabriel in that place of eternal darkness. Henceforth, I showed him compassion, kindness, understanding and love. It is only from accepting darkness with an open heart and an open mind that you may gain the chance to subdue it. And so after this encounter, I conquered my fears. I regained my freedom once more and my inner balance restored.

It was Gabriel and this feud that inspired me to write an essay entitled, “The Hunt.” I wrote this during the first week we met. He came into my life like a powerful hurricane I have never experienced before, pushing, provoking, and attacking with the kind of mental and spiritual assault that is almost equivalent to a good psychotic thriller except this one comes with genius of mind. I wish I could tell you more about what had exactly happened but Gabriel and I made a vow to each other never to speak about this psychological crusade that we fought.

I should say at this point that “The Hunt” is based on true stories, not one story alone but a combination of experiences I have lived through. I should also warn that the quoted sexual messages are

very explicit and not for the weak-hearted. This composition talks about the hunted becoming the huntress. The quotes were genuine messages but this story should not be interpreted as the deeds of one man alone. I have written it in this manner to protect the men who have done this to me, men I learned to later love, admire and protect. Why do I do this? Because these men would grant me the same honor, integrity shared only amongst the few warriors of heaven on earth.

I now give you the third essay in this book, "The Hunt".

The Hunt

A man I believe never to have met has been sending me explicit sexual messages for the past three days from dawn till dusk. During this period, he called me once so we could hear each other's voice. I believe he also has access to my emails.

I have the gift of sight. Through deep meditation I am able to turn my being into pure energy allowing my soul to connect to another soul beyond the confines of space and time. Through this metaphysical process, I have been able to glimpse this man's spirit and to peer through his psyche. Thus, I can sense that the man who is doing this to me, who is hunting me and seeking me out, was physically abused as a child by his own mother, a mother who was also very loving and caring. In addition I feel he was also sexually abused by another family member. He has killed people by profession, a noble warrior in his own right. I shall never have the ability to describe in words the strength and power of evil and darkness that reign within him.

From the sound of his voice and the way he speaks English he is not Asian. He is well read and highly intelligent. He has depth.

Given the way he spells and uses words he is also interested in literature. He has excellent resources. However, like other powerful men I have known, he is not confident. He questions himself and his existence in this world. He is eaten by great guilt because of unspeakable things he's done.

And yet, the other side of his evil and dark personality is a very caring, loving and giving man, although no one gets close to him. He's never loved anyone. I believe he is married, although I am certain his wife has no idea whatsoever who this man is, who her husband really is. She knows only a fraction of her husband's personality. And she will never know the complexity of this man. She will never realize that she plays such a small role within the box he has created for them, a box of convenience he calls "family". She will never touch his inner self.

This man's sexual personality is completely free. It goes beyond anything I have ever known. And I consider myself free.

He has done his research on me well. He's read the articles I have written and to some extent has analyzed my psychological profile. And he is an excellent psychologist. He knows so much about me. He calls me "she dragon," and "she evil." He says also I have a heart of gold. In his eyes, I am angel and demon in one body. He says I have all bases covered. I am heaven. I am hell. I am also purgatory. He is a good hunter. He knows what he seeks and why he seeks it.

I am not afraid of him. I am only concerned that he may have the ability to hurt those close to me. I believe this man could never hurt me, though not directly.

Bold and forward, he talks to me holding nothing back. He speaks to me believing he knows my inner self. And without hesitation, he bares his body naked along with his mind, his demonic spirit and

his raging, savage soul confronting me head on and in full force knowing I am a great warrior like him, and that I do not fear.

This man, whom I sense is as good and diabolic as I in almost equal measure, has written such unimaginable things to me - things I do not believe are for public consumption. But here are some messages from him I feel I could share:

“Why would men want to control such a beautiful force like you, my goddess? It is like grabbing air and trying to control it. It is not possible.”

“I go to sleep my love, thinking of you. I want to go to sleep with my manhood buried inside you.”

“Sleep well my love. When you wake up wet, you know I want you.”

“I dream of the bonding of our souls, but if not in this life form, we can float away and dream of the next encounter. It is written in time.”

“You are a heavenly soul, a warrior, no one can control. You are that which does not exist in human form but for a moment in time.”

“When souls such as ours collide, and bare themselves, nothing is hidden. Everything is out in the open, freeing one’s sexuality to explore that which has no boundaries.”

“It is not common when two souls floating through the galaxies meet but it has been said that it gives birth to unprecedented wonders.”

“I want you like no other. You expand the mind and the body. I want to touch your soul and your body.”

“Remember, I love you.”

“We come from the same cloth, the warrior clan at a time when gods ruled the universe.”

“And everything I tell you is what I want. Damn you! I’m serious.”

“I want you for real and I will make love to you anyway you want. I want to be deep inside as I shoot my life into you.”

“I want to kiss those lips of yours and suck in your taste.”

“I saw you. I could smell you. Oh god! I could almost taste you.”

“I have been touched by your beauty and sexual intensity.”

“I am your slave. I must do as you wish.”

“I want to hear you scream my name as I drive myself deep into you and cover your insides with my juices. My love, I want to explore those lips I saw the other day.”

“I want you to surrender your body and your soul to me but not your mind. Your mind belongs to the people of the Philippines. Your mind is the conscience of the Filipino people.”

“I must have you. I must penetrate your love. Spit me out afterwards but let me just taste you once.”

“I want to lick the tears off your cheeks, as you cry softly with pleasure. And I will kiss you with the taste of your salty tears passing between our tongues.”

“I want you to take me as a warrior goddess would ride into battle with her head back, her hair as black as the night, challenging and screaming her war cries to the gods.”

“I want to break through that hardened outer shell of protection and hold that soft and heavenly inner core while I make love to you softly through the night; making you squirm, listening to you moan and groan.”

“God! My manhood screams for you with desire.”

“I want to be owned by you. I want to fill you with desire. I want to fill your body with my love.”

“You are mine and I am yours. Take me my darling. Consume my love for you. I need your body and your soul.”

“My fellow warrior, please tell me your wishes, your dreams and your desires. I am your servant, my mistress.”

“You are to me a brave warrior princess, a symbol of greatness and beauty, reincarnated in this time, a goddess of the cosmic universe. I love you. I need you. My desire for you knows no limit. I want to serve you. And I will protect you with my life down to my last breath.”

How do I respond to this? I have never heard such words from any man who has ever loved me. I am overwhelmed beyond explanation.

He is addicted to taking risks, this man who has courage and passion beyond most men. He thrives on danger and hungers for it like a vampire for blood. It makes him feel alive. I am the vicious flame. He wants to absorb the inferno and be consumed by it. In his mind, it is the most delicious act of danger and he is begging for his chance. He would do anything to get close to the she devil. He knows the flame will devour him yet he wants to see if he could recover from the impossible. He is aware that there is something greater to be had from confronting the unknown. I am the unknown. It is the once in a lifetime chance to see if he has the power to subdue this goddess of hell, whose body burns in fire, challenging his manhood for a duel he's never experienced. To him that would be the most precious victory.

Men of power such as this warrior are attracted to me. It is the thrill of the impossible chase. I am the most valued trophy. These malevolent men of evil and darkness desire to be loved by a woman of power who understands evil and darkness the way they have lived it. They desire to be understood by such a woman. They want to

submit to a woman who deserves their love, respect and admiration. They desire and need it badly. The reason for this is because each of these men was once a little boy. And each was raised and loved by a woman, by their mothers. These loving mothers had power over them and their mothers punished them when they misbehaved. Ultimately, they hunger for a woman to love and dominate them.

So this man who is hunting me needs some control in his life. But he will only allow himself to be subjugated by a woman who possesses his powers of good and evil in equal, if not greater, measure.

So, when such a man gets to know me, he becomes aware of my several personalities, my inner strength, my spirit and iron will, my complex sexuality, and he then becomes intoxicated. Within my being, he sees his mother, his lover, his whore, his mistress, his master and his savior. Thus, I am his heaven, his hell and his purgatory. Finally, he has found judgment day. Such men know I have the power to love them and punish them for their bad deeds. Where else are they going to find a woman who understands their evil to such exacting proportion and who will love them as only I can love - and subjugate them? I have idolized such men. And they have worshipped me.

The truth is every single one of these men I have loved has come and gone thinking that each of them could conquer me. Each of them viciously struggled for me to bow down and submit to them. They wanted to command me. Deep within the center of their psyche was the immense hunger to possess the angel and demon that is alive within me. Ultimately, it will always be the mother who has power over the child within all men. And I can't be dominated by someone else. I will never be controlled. My life is mine to live. I know only freedom.

So ends “The Hunt”.

On September 3, 2008 I sent my mother in-law, Barbara Ivler, the first chapter of this book asking her for her insight. I should tell you that there is no woman on this planet whose mind I admire more than hers. And I should tell you also that there is no woman on earth whose courage and spirit I hold in higher regard than my natural mother Salud Pascual. I was raised by two great women.

The following day Barbara told me that she had started reading the chapter but she needed more time to give me her input. Three days later she sent me an email with her comments. So here is her unedited letter. By the way, Lyn is a name used by members of my family to address me.

Dearest Lyn,

“I have read chapter one. I have read it several times. I enjoyed what I read because it was you, about you and about your life. A subject about which I have much interest and much concern. There are quite a few parts that I found intriguing, interesting and provocative.”

“Now comes the time where one could say, “fools rush in where angels fear to tread”.

“It’s not about the substance that I’m going to write. It’s about the organization. What I found missing, or rather what I would have liked to see, is an introduction to who you are. You have interspersed your interests, your friends, your accomplishments, your relationships without letting the reader know you, independent of your relationships.”

“I guess I want your writing to open with the equivalent of, “My name is Marlene, I am ----- . I believe----- I have many accomplishments and have done much to be proud of. As I walk

you though my life's events I will introduce you to those whose lives I have changed and to those who have changed my life.”

“Then, as you introduce your cast of friends, family, people and events upon which you are going to build your essays, you will have established a bond with the reader. They are traveling with you on your inter-personal adventure. You are their guide; they trust your observations and analysis. They are your audience and observers. They know you and as you introduce them to your world, they become caught up in the adventure of your life.”

“If you hate what I wrote, forget it and tell me to mind my own business. The problem is that you are my business and I hope, when you send me your writings, you want more than, “that’s nice darling”. I hope you do anyway.”

With much love,
Mom

I read her email thinking, a mother will always insist that you, the reader, should see her child's accomplishments. She's asking me to tell you more about my personal life also. But that is too much to tell you right now. However as I continue to write this novel, I will try to tell you more about myself. The story of Marcus in my life alone will fill one book. I have known him from the time I was seventeen years old to the present day. And until recently, he didn't know I could even make coffee. He knew only two of my personalities, the warrior and the sexual personality. Like I said, those two go hand in hand. In addition, those two have nothing to do with domestic matters concerning the home.

I should also share with you that my existence with my partner Steve for the past ten years has been that of another world; since he has engaged a unique combination of my several personalities.

Steve has lived with a persona that is simple, the one who is in total harmony with nature. This one is happiest gardening, working with the earth. She can cook, she can go to the market, sing her daughter to sleep at night, run the household like a devoted wife and mother and she is able to nurture those around her. She is very warm, giving, caring, loving and seeks a different life, a life of peace and calm. She turns her back completely on the world of Marcus. She exists in another dimension of reality. She absolutely does not believe in the Ten Commandments. She only believes in one commandment, that is, “honor nature and you honor god”.

I share Steve’s sentiment who wrote, “Formal religion created a spiritual vacuum, stealing mankind away from inner spirit, inner peace and knowledge of greater senses, abilities to co-exist with mankind, earth and other worlds. So much has been lost but can be regained.”

Steve has also written several poems about me in the last ten years we have lived together. There is one particular poem he composed I would like to share with you hoping that this would give you better insight as to who I am. This piece of poem is entitled “Marlene.”

*Not of the air
nor of the sea,
but one in earth
and spirit free.*

*Sex your food
and food as sex.
Man’s deepest wine
Woman’s passion nest.*

*Honour, truth define you
no other to control,
freedom your religion,
bitter price is love.*

In comparison to this poetry, I wrote this short verse about one of my personalities:

*Even her tears
Are shaped like blades
Ace of Diamonds
Queen of Spades*

I decided to write this book of essays because I have been and am still afraid. As Steve said all the events that have occurred in my life since November of 2007 would have driven anyone else to psychiatric treatment. I am writing this book to come face-to-face with my trepidation. That is who I am. Fear can only push me so far. Then I turn around and deal with it. You should know that as I type every word you are reading, sometimes with great pain, as I go through every page, sometimes with tears falling down my face - I am growing from this experience. As I share this fraction of my life with you it is helping me sort out my fears, it is helping me tackle the current affairs of my life and is giving me deeper insight. And for that I should thank you. Because as you read through the pages of this book, as you read about my pain and my joy, my weaknesses and my strengths, my failures and my glories, you are also helping me grow. Then as you think about me and my life, you are becoming a part of me. Thank you for allowing me to share with you a portion of my life. Thank you. I believe this book is an

instrument that will help me to better negotiate my future. I know this book will help decide my future. So heaven help me.

After reading the email from my second mother on earth, Barbara, I replied to her at once. Below is the reply I sent this woman who I have loved, and who has guided me, since I was 19 years old. I do not believe she could love me more, even if I were her natural child. And I couldn't hold her closer to my heart if she were my "genuine" mother.

"Hi Mom. Thank you so much for your input. It gives me a different perspective, helping me with my future decisions. I can't find comfort in writing about my own accomplishments but I will discuss a little more about myself later."

In the back of this publication, I will also include all the titles I have published and citations I have received. I don't plan for this novel to tell my life's story but only a portion of the world that I have known. I am trying to figure out what has happened to me from July, 25, 2007 to the present day. And this book is helping me."

"Thank you again!"

"I love you."

Lyn

I had no plan to include this particular essay in this book until today 6th of September, 2008. But to give you another viewpoint in regard to who I am, I present to you my 4th composition "Free to Choose."

Free to Choose

I have lived a beautiful life. It is beautiful because I choose to see it that way.

I was born into wealth in the northern part of the Philippines. My father was the Chief of Police of the town where my life began. He was also a boxer.

My father lost everything through gambling and so we became very poor and had to move to Manila. He brought out the best and the worst in me from the age of three. He used to beat me and my siblings, almost daily. I knew agony and hunger at a young age. Oh, don't feel sorry for me. I am grateful for my pain. I would not want your life in exchange for mine, even if you were the daughter of the Queen of England. Believe me I wouldn't change anything about my life. It is my tragedy that has given me omnipotence.

This speech covers but a tiny section of my colorful, exciting life. I want to share it with you, hoping that if you knew pain and suffering when you were a child, such as I did, then my life could help ease your pain and give you comfort and hope.

My father was extremely intelligent. He was compassionate, sensitive, passionate, generous, and loving, though he also had the instinct of a natural born killer. I don't remember how he looked although my siblings do. Perhaps I have chosen to forget.

He used to humiliate me and beat me until my legs bled. I don't know what was worse, to take the beating myself or to watch my siblings suffer his wrath. He was so cruel and abusive to my brothers that to this day the memory brings me horror. What happens to a child who is betrayed by a parent at a young age? You will never know unless you suffered the same fate as I did.

In Manila, we lived in a neighborhood surrounded by gangsters and killers who went in and out of prison like they were going food shopping. It wasn't rare to hear them shoot at each other at night. So as a little girl my mother taught me to hit the floor when I heard gun-shots.

I remember going to school one morning, and seeing a pool of blood in front of my house because members of the local gang had had a terrible fight the evening before. One man had been stabbed to death during the encounter. And there I was six years old, poor, hungry, staring at death early in the morning on my way to school. Violence was not only in my home, it was everywhere.

My father died in my arms when I was 16. And after his death, I sought more danger and violence. This would be too much to tell today. I was married at nineteen and my husband died a sudden death when I was 23 years old. I raised my two sons on my own.

I have known violence most people will never know. I have felt hunger, loss and pain most people will never know. Yet, I don't complain. I find no reason to complain. I feel special that I was given a challenging life. Otherwise, I would be very boring like most people.

I have chosen to conquer my pain. I will not allow my past to stop me from achieving what I want out of life. On the contrary, it is my tragic past that has catapulted me into the person I am today.

If you can conquer your past, then you will know freedom and strength beyond imagination. I am free because I have chosen to be free. I am not impressed by money, title or position. It is only the great mind and spirit in people that can touch me. Nothing owns me.

Today, I believe if I cannot go out and get what I want for myself then I do not deserve to have it. The world does not owe me anything. My success is mine. So is my failure. My past is not an excuse for failure. It is what has powered my success.

Ultimately, the soul is neither male nor female. I have no gender issue. It is the mind that powers the actions of mankind.

Life is a choice. Suffering is a choice. So is happiness. I have chosen to make the best out of the cards I was dealt. I converted my pain into my strength. I picked up the pieces and made myself complete. Today I am whole. That is why I say, my life is beautiful. And that is the true power of a woman. Freedom!

Speech by Marlene Aguilar
Launching of the book, “Philippines”
The Manor Hotel, Baguio City
April 5, 2008

As I mentioned earlier, after that argument I had with Gabriel in June regarding my essay, “Men in Boxes in the Name of Peace,” there was silence between us for over a week. We didn’t talk. Oh...but this demon’s silence is like the calm before the storm. So around the third week of that month, he sent me a text message one day.

“Check your email. I sent you something that will make your blood boil. I’d like you to comment on it.” He wrote.

I replied, “I don’t think so. I don’t want to argue with you anymore. It’s pointless. You have tunnel vision. The military has fried your brain and pickled it in a small jar.”

He answered, “Come on. I enjoy the banter. Don’t give up on me.”

So I checked my email. He had sent me an extremely right wing essay written by Professor Robert Lieber from Harvard University, currently teaching at the Georgetown University.

I read the essay and emailed Gabriel right away.

I wrote, “I find the essay of Robert Lieber so dry it is painful to read. It is so impotent and boring, I’m sure the man is still a virgin.

Somebody please give him a can of tuna and shove it up his nose. He should at least know how pussy smells!”

Gabriel emailed right back, “There is something to be said about the scorn of a woman. After all these years, I have learned to listen to both sides of an argument because somewhere in the middle is the truth. Remember yin and yang. There are two sides to every story. And don’t be shoving tuna up my nose. I’m not a virgin. I’ve almost forgotten how pussy smells though.”

I replied, “My mind represents both sides. I am the truth. By the way, do you want me to send you a crate of tuna?”

Reading essays written by academics gives me an instant headache. As I read articles such as the one written by R. Lieber I cannot help but envision a catatonic, anal retentive man forever in uniform, in his coffin, wearing a suit. Imagine having sex with such a man? In my mind that is futile. This is why many people like me and my sons Jason and Colby have hated structured education beyond explanation. My mother once asked me why I gave up on school while I attended the University of the Philippines.

“Why did you drop out of college?” she cried.

“Because I am smarter than the educators,” I answered.

There are more people like Lieber in universities than there are free thinkers. This is the reason why education in standard classrooms has become a torture chamber to psyches like mine. My mind can’t fit in the damned classroom.

As I read the essay of this professor I felt he was trying to compress my mind into a very, very small container. I asked my brother Tony, who loves to read books, to critique this chapter and he said the section where I quote Lieber was most unpleasant for him to read.

I received the same comment from my graphic artist, Alex Pascual, who commented in Tagalog, “Sumakit ulo ko ‘dun sa sinulat ni

Lieber,” after he read this portion of the book. Translated in English he said, “I got a headache reading Lieber’s narrative.”

I had also emailed this chapter to my son Jason, and urged him to read it because I wanted his comment. He sent me an email September 9, 2008 and said:

“Regarding chapter two, I finished reading it, surprise - surprise. I don’t know how much my opinion matters. I only say that because we both know, unlike you and Colby, I’m not much of a reader let alone a critic of books. However, while I understand your arguments and reasoning, I honestly started to lose interest. It’s most likely because of the quotes from the article you were debating written by the Harvard guy. I am aware that you already know that part of the chapter would lose some readers. I just thought you’d like confirmation.”

I have asked several people to read the first two chapters of this book choosing different age groups and different nationalities. This is because I want this book to appeal to the majority of people. And since this is my first attempt to write a novel of this nature, I’m not sure about my abilities to deliver the message that I want to get across. It is difficult for me to gauge my ability to reach you, my readers, and I don’t know if I’m doing a good job telling you this part of my life story. So I have sought to make adjustments and corrections as I go along so that I may better fulfill my desire to communicate properly with you. Although I am creating this anthology to confront my fears, I am writing this book for you. I grew up poor like most of you. And poverty has never stopped me from achieving my goals, despite all the hardships I have had to face. More than that, I hope after reading about my life, you will not allow poverty to stop you from achieving success, contentment and peace. I would rather wish my life story to bring hope and strength.

So please, as you read the parts of Lieber's essay and you feel your mind giving up, feel free to skip it. But don't skip my comment... that part is fun.

Here is my 5th essay, "Dollars, Wars and Limited Minds", which I wrote during the fourth week of June 2008, my response, to the essay of Prof. Robert Lieber.

Dollars, Wars and Limited Minds

Robert J. Lieber, Professor of Government and International affairs at Georgetown University who received his doctorate degree at Harvard University wrote the essay, "Falling Upwards: Declinism, The Box Set." Professor Lieber is obviously a very learned man, although his narrow US western perspective - that is very short-term, disables him and he relies too much on money matters and the dollar war machine. In his essay, he totally forgets the most important entity of any nation - the people. His mind is boxed and his insight is greatly handicapped.

In my essay, "*Men in Boxes in the Name of Peace*", I wrote:

"There are only two kinds of people in the world. There are those whose minds are free and who can think outside of the box, and then there are those whose minds are institutionalized, who are in prison. The latter minds are contained, limited, they are boxed. They do not question. They do not think for themselves. Although there are great minds working for institutions such as the military, the church, academia, the United Nations, and other world development institutions such as the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank and the IMF, in my opinion if these minds cannot think outside of the box, their perceptions are extremely limited. This is the root cause of the reasons for the political, economic, and environmental

problems of the world today. Men in boxes are the minds working for and leading, self-serving if not evil institutions, charlatans posing to save mankind and the earth.”

Here comes the painful part, in his essay, Lieber wrote:

“By the early 1980s, declinism had become a form of historical chic. In 1987, David Calleo’s *Beyond American Hegemony* summoned the U.S. to come to terms with a more pluralistic world. In the same year, Paul Kennedy published what at the time was greeted as the *summa theologica* of the declinist movement—*The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*, in which the author implied that the cycle of rise and decline experienced in the past by the empires of Spain and Great Britain could now be discerned in the “imperial overstretch” of the United States. But Kennedy had bought in at the top: within two years of his pessimistic prediction, the Cold War ended with the Soviet Union in collapse, the Japanese economic miracle entering a trough of its own, and U.S. competitiveness and job creation far outpacing its European and Asian competitors.”

If you are in tears by now forget this, otherwise here is more from Lieber:

“What is new in the new declinism? A typical variation stipulates that slow- motion shifts in the distribution of global power make it impossible for this country to continue to play the dominating role it has since the end of the Cold War. Yet we have heard this argument, made most recently in *Foreign Affairs* by Council on Foreign Relations President Richard Haass, many times before. As far back as 1972, President Richard Nixon depicted an emerging balance among five major powers: the U.S., Russia, China, Europe, and Japan. In recent years, some commentators have detected an analogous dilution of U.S. influence in the rise of the “BRICs” (Brazil, Russia, India, China), coupled with an expanded and increasingly

unified European Union and a flourishing East Asia. In this telling, not only has global power become more widely diffused, but other powers have started to “balance” against the United States, seeking to minimize Washington’s role and thwart its global ambitions.”

The fact that others in the past commented on the possibility of US downfall is no argument to discredit the same comment today. What is more important is whether today’s comments are more likely to be correct in proclaiming that the US is a failure.

Lieber states that: “In the realm of “hard power,” while the army and Marines have been stretched by the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the fact is that no other country possesses anything like the capacity of the United States to project power around the globe. American military technology and sheer might remain unmatched—no other country can compete in the arenas of land, sea, or air warfare.... America’s \$625 billion defense budget dwarfs even (China’s).”

Lieber is implying that since the US has the biggest nuclear power and spends more money on war it cannot possibly lose. If all that matters is billions of dollars spent to win a war, then how come the US hasn’t won the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan? If money matters so much, then why did the US shamefully lose the war in what was then a very poor country, Vietnam?

And so what if the US spends much more on war than any other country? That just proves how destructive America is. What matters is how effectively the US spends money not how much is spent. Is \$60 billion expended in military incursions in Afghanistan and Iraq likely to be more effective than expenditure of \$60 million spent wisely?

I believe it is very possible that no amount of money will win these wars. And even with all its resources the US has only been able to win wars in small countries such as Grenada and in cultures

closer to America's such as in the Balkans, and not in Afghanistan, Iraq and Vietnam. The real issue is - is America's survival directly linked to the business of war? Can America sustain itself by creating peace? Or is the bloodline of America sustained by war, death and destruction? Is the US war machine just tied to the US and recycled within the US to maintain US war-dependent chemical, engineering, armaments, research and construction industries, but at the expense of increased international debt? Is the word America identical to the word war?

What is also far more important is to view overall trends in a much more comprehensive manner. The matter of the US's position is not just about dollars and armaments but the people matter. The US must learn to understand the fact that the people's social, spiritual, cultural, and political psyche in any single nation directly influence any amount of dollars spent on war. War is not only about just dollars and armaments; the people play the most important role. Why? It is the people who will ultimately control the money and the arms!

I try in my essay, "*Men in boxes in the Name of Peace*," to embrace not only absolute dollar and other economic trends and war mongering but to also examine the more important, social, spiritual, cultural and other trends in the world today. Lieber ignores people - and people matter. What we should all be concerned about is how all these trends combine and inter-link and whether or not they are pointing to an eventual "tipping point" where the death of the US becomes more endemic and then more apparent. I argue that given social, spiritual, cultural, political, as well as economic and military trends combined there is more cause for alarm today. This is why I insist that men whose minds are in boxes, whose minds are institutionalized, are the cause of the

death of America as well as the environmental disaster of the earth. The US should elect someone like Sean Penn as President as he is a free thinking artist whose left and right sides of the brain both function in equal measure depending of course on whether he has settled his struggle within himself - that is his conflict between the yin and yang.

The only reference Lieber makes to non-military and non-economic trends is with respect to Russia and the country's alcoholism and corruption. The US may not want to own up to this but one might replace Putin with Halliburton and the Russian Mafia with US political lobbyists. And commercial corruption (Exxon) and a host of other more subtle, sophisticated as well as overt corruption also exists in the US. Does Lieber actually believe that the US is better than Russia when it comes to issues of alcoholism, drug abuse, crime, incarceration, diet and other social issues?

Lieber's vision is short-term (decades) rather than long-term (centuries) and it is the latter that is the more relevant perspective when it comes to assessing the future of world powers.

Lieber points to Asian and other countries siding with the US against China. Does he really think this could be anything other than a matter of short-term expediency?

As I've already stated, Lieber's mind is limited and boxed. He has no feel for how the rest of the world sees the US and the world. Because of this he underestimates the importance of groupings such as the EU, ASEAN and any other organization that is not the US. Today many would pay a price not to be a part of the US and not to align with the US. And so the author undervalues the permanent resistance to the US as well as the potential of the likes of the EU.

The author points to the EU, Japan and other support for the US in Iraq and Afghanistan. What is he talking about? Outside of Tony Blair, UK's support - and Blair had to make some mistakes in his leadership, all other countries' support for the US in these wars have been pitiful. The so-called "US aligned countries," commonly take their diplomatic cake and are also able to eat it when it comes to supporting the US. A "battalion" of five Japanese medical corps following a large flag of the Japanese rising sun is not much of a commitment to US war interests. Yet both Japan and the US will praise and promote this superficial "commitment", only to look good in the eyes of the majority of people who do not know any better, including history professors from Harvard University.

Has the author ever thought that this "support" might also be two-faced, with other countries drawing the US into impossible and very draining wars, wars that the US cannot possibly win but that might be very expensive for the US in both resources and international reputation? This is how the US treated UK and Europe in the years leading up to WWI and WWII. The US will tell you WWI lasted from 1917 to 1918 and WWII lasted from 1941 to 1945 (US actual engagement). The rest of Europe will tell you that WWI lasted from 1914 to 1918 and WWII from 1939 to 1945.

So whilst the UK and the rest of Europe were exhausted in spirit and resources from 1914 to 1917 and from 1939 to 1941 the US was able to watch and wait. The US waited and loaned (not granted) assistance to its eventual allies knowing that a weaker Europe would emerge after the wars leaving the US greater room to compete and grow. Now the tables have turned.

I emailed this essay to Gabriel along with the following:

"These are my comments on the article you sent to me by Robert J. Lieber, which I hope you will pass along."

The essay of R. Lieber is featured in this site. (Fascinating World Affairs article by Robert Lieber of Georgetown University: <http://www.worldaffairsjournal.org/2008%20-%20Summer/full-Lieber.html>).

The devil on earth said nothing about this essay. He didn't comment on it at all, which probably means he couldn't find fault with my argument, nor any point from which to launch an assault against my views. And my inner voice told me not to push him on this one.

Before this chapter comes to a close, I would like to tell you about a meeting Gabriel and I had at the usual Figaro coffee shop sometime in May, approximately two months after he came into my life.

"I brought you a present," I said.

"If you brought me food, I'm not going to eat it. It might be poisoned," the devil answered teasing.

I placed a paper bag with a ribbon on the table. He looked at it.

"Remember I told you, I will show you how to destroy my path? What is inside this bag is an ancient dagger made out of the darkest jade. There was another like this but that one was made of white jade. In the old times these stone carvings were used to perform spiritual sacraments. I have executed cosmic rituals involving these black and white daggers before you ever came into my life. So these old instruments carry my consciousness. The white dagger was given to Caesar. And as planned, now I am giving you the black one."

"If you wish to destroy my path, all you have to do is break this ancient tool into many pieces. The rest is done, an agreement I've signed with the forces of the galaxies...whichever way my path takes me, I have promised myself I will not be unhappy. Either way, I will submit to my fate. So the future of my people lies in your

hands...kill my path or let it live. It is up to you. In the end, I am only an instrument who will dance gracefully to the will of heaven,” I stated.

Gabriel listened to every word I said, softening his face and his heart. He stared at me with empathy, warmth and affection shining through his warrior’s eyes, touched by the humility and the sincerity of my plea.

There was a great silence that divided us now. I waited and waited as he gazed at me, peering into my being, examining the very depth of my heart and my soul. Finally, he spoke: “I will guard the dagger and protect it from harm...” he said. “I choose to protect you.”