



ALLAN N. DERAİN

MGA NAUNSYAMING KWENTO NI LOLA BASYANG

Lalaki si Lola Basyang. Na aksidenteng natuklasan nang hilahin ng nanghaharot na si Efren ang nakatuwaang kulot sa buhok ng matanda. Hindi akalain ng sutil na peluka ang kaniyang nahablot. Kaya hindi rin maipinta ang gulat na gulat nitong mukha na halos panawan noon ng kulay.

Parang eksena lang sa mga pelikulang katatawanan ang dapat na nangyari nang mahubaran ang paboritong lola sa harap ng mga batang lisyang-lisyang nakikinig noon ng paborito nilang kuwento tungkol sa mahiwagang makintab na pulang bota. Pero biglang nag-iyakan ang mga takot na takot at gulat na gulat na tsikiting. Hindi nila maintindihan kung bakit si Lola Basyang ay biglang naging si Ciriaco Magcino na kilala nilang naghahatid ng patis sa mga bayan-bayan. Pero nang malaman ng mga magulang ang lisyang katuwaan ng magpapatis, agad nila itong ipinagbigay alam sa pulisya at simbahan. Simula noon, bawal na ang mga bata sa bahay ng talyadang pusong. Bawal kahit magdaan lang sa harap ng bakuran nito dahil ang taong ito raw ay isang masamang ehemplo.

Hanggang sa lumipat ang matanda sa isang lugar malayo sa dating tinitirhan. Ang usapan sa barberya, naghanap daw ng malayong bayan kung saan ito libreng makapaghasik muli ng lagim sa isip ng mga walang muwang. Sapantaha pa ng ilan, baka nakipagtanan sa binatilyong sakristan na hindi na rin napagkikita sa simbahan ng mga nakaraang linggo.

Hanggang lumipas pa ang ilang linggo, nang isa sa kanila ang magbukas ng radyo, at narinig muli nito ang tinig ng matandang nagsasahimpapawid ng isa sa mga naunsyaming kuwento.



THE ABORTED STORIES OF LOLA BASYANG

translated by B.B.P. Hosmillo

Lola Basyang was really a man. Caught accidentally when at the height of his naughtiness Efren blithely pulled the curly hair of the granny. The stubborn boy could have never fathomed that what he snagged was none more than a wig. O how nobody could paint the immense shock in his paled face, and shock it was that banished almost every colour in it.

It could have been simply a hilarious fragment from a comedy film when the ever favourite granny was stripped off her hair in front of children whose eyes then seemed pulled open by heaven and earth as they were listening to their favourite story about a mysteriously luminous pair of red boots. But they started crying, fear on their mouth, children in their absolute shock. They could not understand why Lola Basyang suddenly became Ciriaco Magcino who was known to sell fish sauce from one town to another. And when their parents heard of his strange pastime, they reported it immediately to the police and to the vicar. From then on, children were not allowed to go to the house of their deviant neighbor. It was even frowned upon to walk by his front yard since the perception that he was a bad example was aspread like air.

Until the old crook flew so removed from his previous domicile. And a rumour gripped every talk of the town: he was actively scouting for a faraway town where he could again freely distill devilry in the minds of the innocent. Some even speculated, perhaps he eloped with the young sexton who had disappeared from the church weeks ago.

Until more weeks slept forever, one of them turned the radio on and heard again the old voice, on air with one of the aborted stories.