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## **The Stories of Aida Rivera: Now and at the Hour**

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are unworthy of imitation: e.g. name-calling; or fighting with someone who had mimicked him (pp. 117, 28). A glossary of words is supplied, which sometimes tries to explain the meaning of a word by giving a more difficult word as an equivalent: e.g. "concern" is explained as meaning "preoccupation."

*Living the Rizal Way* has only a tenuous connection with Rizal. It is really a collection of the proper ideals that an exemplary citizen may be expected to have, with various indications as to how these ideals might be put into practice, and with copious examples from the speeches of Quezon and others (without mention of sources) and from the lives of heroes or prominent people. While the work is quite obviously unscholarly, it is unobjectionable on moral grounds.

GLICERIO S. ABAD

## THE STORIES OF AIDA RIVERA

NOW AND AT THE HOUR and other short stories. By Aida L. Rivera. The Benipayo Press, Publishers. Manila. 1957. Pp. xi, 65.

He was my uncle because he married my aunt (even if he had not come home to her these past ten years), so when the papers brought the news of his death, I felt that some part of me had died too.

. . . I was still being brave all the way down the lengthy eulogies, until I got to the line which said that he was, 'the sweetest lyre that ever throbbed with Malayan chords.' Something caught at my throat and I let out one sob—the rest merely followed. When the girls hurried over to me to see what had happened, I could only point to the item in the front page with my uncle's picture taken when he was still handsome. Everybody suddenly spoke in a low voice and Ning who worshipped me said that I shouldn't be so unhappy because my uncle was now with the other great poets in heaven—at which I really howled in earnest because my uncle had not only deserted poor Aunt Sophia but had also been living with another woman these many years and most horrible of all, he had probably died in her embrace!

Perhaps I received an undue amount of commiseration for the death of the delinquent husband of my aunt, but it wasn't my fault because I never really lied about anything; only, nobody thought to ask me just how close an uncle he was. It wasn't my doing either when, some months after his demise, my poem entitled 'The Rose Was Not So Fair O Alma Mater' was captioned 'by the niece of the late beloved Filipino Poet.' And that having been printed, I couldn't possibly refuse when I was asked to write on 'My Uncle—the Poetry of His Life.' The article, as printed, covered only his boyhood and early manhood because our adviser cut out everything that happened after he was married. She said that the last half of his life was not exactly poetic, although I still maintain that in his vices, as in his poetry, he followed closely the pattern of the great poets he admired.

THESE are the opening paragraphs of "The Chieftest Mourner"—a highly entertaining account of the funeral of a man who was married to one woman but lived with another, and both widows decided to attend the funeral and to claim the honors of "chief mourner." Such a story in clumsy hands could have turned into something either repugnant or ludicrous. But Miss Rivera's hands are not clumsy, and in her deft handling, the story has a charming lightness, like something floating in air, bordering on the comic, with a hint of mischief now or of cynism then, but never really becoming cynical or irreverent.

It is very refreshing, at a time when there is so much dull prose and much duller verse, to come across this type of writing. Miss Rivera is a competent writer: her stories (and especially this one) succeed in fulfilling the essential function of every good story, which is to entertain.

They are, however, more than merely entertaining. Miss Rivera is not a "serious writer" as that term is used nowadays, but there is a seriousness behind the light handling of her stories. Her characters are real. "Miss Rivera's women, incidentally, are the most life-like women I know in Philippine fiction," says N. V. M. Gonzalez in the foreword to the book.

The stories are brief, the book slight, but three of the five little tales in this thin volume (winners of some awards from the University of Michigan where the writer obtained her master's degree) are among the best in contemporary Philippine writing. The first story in the book, highly praised by the critics, seems

to labor from a certain lack of clarity, as does another (on a Madonna face). But the stories are all memorable. A good friend of mine, a good writer of stories himself, told me one night that he remembered every one of these five stories. That is a test of success.

MIGUEL A. BERNAD

### *Grant For Asian Anthropologists*

We are happy to announce a grant made available by the Asia Foundation for the benefit of Asian anthropologists. The grant is for two purposes:

1. To enable Asian anthropologists to become members of the American Anthropological Association and to receive the *American Anthropologist* for three years at a cost to the applicant of only \$1, the remainder of the membership fee to be provided by the grant. Applicants should write directly to Dr. William Godfrey, Executive Secretary, Beloit College, Beloit, Wisconsin. The \$1 fee may be paid in UNESCO coupons or in any other way convenient to the applicant and acceptable under exchange regulations of his country.

2. To provide travel expenses for Asian anthropologists, who are in the United States as visitors or for study or research purposes, to attend anthropological meetings or to visit places of anthropological interest in America. Applicants may write to any member of the committee for this grant, stating: (a) his academic status; (b) nature of his stay in the U.S.; (c) the meeting he wishes to attend; (d) the sum necessary for travel thereto and for living expenses at the meeting. The members of the committee are: Prof. David G. Mandelbaum, Dept. of Anthropology, University of California, Berkeley, California; Prof. Richard K. Beardsley, Dept. of Anthropology, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan; Prof. Cora Du Bois, Peabody Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge 38, Mass.; and Prof. Edward Norbeck, Dept. of Anthropology, University of California, Berkeley, Calif.

Applicants for either of the above must be either graduate students or established anthropologists, and may come from any Asian country from Afghanistan eastward.