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## ***You Lovely People:* The Texture of Alienation**

*Victoria S. Rico*



The reissuance after forty years of Bienvenido Santos' *You Lovely People* by Bookmark in the Filipino Literary Classics series offers the opportunity to re-view Santos' masterly collection of short stories.

For memorability, *You Lovely People* has no equal among Bienvenido Santos' many works. Anyone who speaks of Santos, in fact, usually has this book in mind. College students, graduates and professionals in non-humanities fields refer to "Scent of Apples" in particular. They speak of being moved, of the sadness, and the striking detail of the fragrance of apples filling the air around the Fabias' shanty. What Santos has achieved through *You Lovely People*, is not only an interpretation of the concrete social and psychological conditions of the early Filipino exile in America, but the imprint of living characters in stories told with "wrenching power of understatement," as Leonard Casper puts it.

Santos' concern isn't with mere sentiment, though, because of the convincing power, the sense of actuality from both the autobiographical and socioliterary nature of *You Lovely People*. Drawing from personal experience of exile, Santos records the core of the social and cultural deprivation of early Filipino exiles to the U.S. This concern links him with Carlos Bulosan who wrote from a collective, historical perspective of the expatriate's sociopolitical conditions. The difference between Santos and Bulosan, however, is Santos' emphasis on the exile's inner deprivation, i.e., on emotional and psychological loss, and his distinct artistry in expressing these inner conflicts. Santos enlivens his material by imaginative reconstruction and purposeful crafting. This poetic sensibility focuses on the sight of brown

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ragged men, takes their names down and describes their persons: the shy smile, the stained collar, the threadbare tie, the calloused trembling hands of heroism.

### The Characters

Character in *You Lovely People* is drawn from Santos' understanding of what goes on inside these men. He dramatizes the breeziness in contrast to the concealed confusion about war and other ruins ravaging the homeland. Along with this are the strong and basic values of loyalty and courage held by Pinoys married to American wives now wracked by social pressures on interracial marriages. But the central conflict is always loneliness and memories of home after interminable years, the sense of abandonment, of betrayal—sometimes by friends, sometimes by kin.

Historically, these exiles—now subjects of Santos' interpretation—left the Philippines to seek improvement in their way of life. The attraction of dollar-paying jobs was difficult to resist by Filipinos held down by centuries of colonial rule. Pet Cleto's comment on the mythical lure of America applies to these early immigrants to the U.S.:

The promised land, usually America, is a part of every heritage of lack and poverty. It stands, in the imagination of those who have been deprived, for some kind of sacred poetic justice for all the suffering that they have, and still have, to bear. Such escape to freedom becomes the easiest seed to plant while the poisons of deprivation intensify. (Cleto 1980)

From 1903 onward the government sent *pensionados* or scholars to the U.S. for advanced courses in their fields. But most of these immigrants were laborers, farmhands and other low-income employees who took transoceanic boats to the mainland, Alaska or Hawaii, and found jobs in Hawaii's sugarcane or pineapple plantations, in California's fruit orchards, or in Alaska's canneries (Padilla 1977). In 1968, these oldtimers represented the lowest class of Filipinos in economic and social standing in Hawaii (Macaspac 1968). There are many accounts of terrible deprivation for these men. In August 1972, the *Philippines Free Press* reported that the local Philippine consulate in Hawaii received an urgent appeal on behalf of six Filipino citi-

zens, "dying like dogs, and even worse than dogs in abandoned *barong-barong* inside the plantations."

Such suffering is represented in *You Lovely People*, in figures like Nanoy. But the book does not focus on the social or economic oppression of Filipino immigrants. Instead, Santos imaginatively delineates inner conflicts among these exiles. A major theme, aside from alienation, is strength in the Filipino character in the midst of all forms of dislocation. Seeking the Filipino dream of the good life, i.e., material comfort and security, they instead find degradation and disillusionment. In spite of this, however, Santos clearly shows in his stories of exile (including *You Lovely People*), the reality of a people whose moral fabric stay intact. Among most of these Filipino exiles, the capacity for warmth and caring stays unshattered by systems gone berserk, by hearts grown cold.

Critics have mentioned the Filipino woman as another theme or subject of *You Lovely People*. On one level the Filipino woman—the mother in particular—is simply remembered for her endurance, as in Ben's recollection of his mother. She is the stalwart guardian of the home, its quiet and affectionate presence, the loving person to come home to. To older Pinoys like Ambo, Filipino womenfolk in the States stand for solace, for the home they have been missing all these years of exile, so that meeting a Filipina draws out the longing for the companionship of one like her.

Ambo wanted to take her hand. But all he did, all he could do was to look at her, and through his fevered mind, she was his sister, she was his mother, she was his sweetheart, she was his wife, ministering to him, talking to him with love, and he was home again. (p. 113)

Ambo's innocent need for caring is misunderstood because of his desperate efforts in reaching out to his idealized woman. His own wife in the homeland had eventually dropped out from his life. Santos includes this expository detail as part of a realistic picture of Filipino womanhood.

While the aspect of maternal caring is predominant, from certain quarters there, too, is betrayal of trust, from weakness in the face of war or even opportunity. The Filipinas in "Brown Coterie," scholars in U.S. schools, are portrayed ironically in their snobbishness: "All the girls reeked with gray matter and were now trying hard to make it quite obvious . . ." (p. 118). There is too much attempt at modernism when at the very heart of their pretenses is an equal need

for vital, meaningful relationships with Filipino men. Santos presents indirect criticism of their dishonesty to themselves. There are American women who in fact become a strong and brave support to their Filipino husbands, like Ruth Fabia. While Filipinas accuse the men of being "blonde crazy," these American girls are able to see through the alienated attempts to assuage wounded hearts—to see them, in essence, as lovely people.

The general picture of the Filipino woman, however, is positive—not idealized but objective, in Santos' presentation of both her virtues and failings. The most fitting symbol in Santos' portrait is Julia Flores who saves a G.I. in war, bears his child and goes to the States with him but receives only rejection from her in-laws and eventually from the G.I.:

In America, the parents of the boy welcome their long lost son, but they are shocked by the presence of this colored woman, uncouth and unclean, who can only smile like a stupid pagan eager for trinkets, as she extends towards them little Jimmy squirming in her arm. One day Julia finds her husband gone and his family tells her to leave. (p. 161)

The Philippines is war-ravaged, but many lives—like Julia's—suffer greater ruin.

Santos also depicts prejudices and cruelty in reverse, in the rejection of Pinoy's marriages to American wives, or in cases where the latter become the betrayers. *You Lovely People* dramatizes the suffering individuals undergo from social dislocations that impinge on these marriages. This does not add up to racism in reverse, however. Most of the Pinoy's bear their burdens with quiet courage, but their wives break down in mind and spirit. This explains why the Filipino woman is held up as a figure set apart from the ravages of exile—as pure and strong in spite of the very real disillusionments that do come to shatter the idealization.

In the face of varied conflicts, what is seen as essential, however, is what loyalty does to the exiles themselves. Their appreciation of what is genuine and enduring in relationships increases with deepened hurt and inner ruin. The final irony though is that Ambo, the most deeply hurt, must go back to exile for release from a friendship marred by one with "no memories." It is a tragedy that indicts social and individual irresponsibility:

How indeed, Father, rebuild the other ruins? Could old men do it by dying in a land they had decided to call their own? Or was it done

by scattering toys all over the land, rattles and kiddie cars, balloons and electric trains, guns, grimacing clowns and dolls with upswept lashes, that childhood might start with laughter and kindness? Or would it help if the dumb were made to speak at last and the deaf hear and understand? Or would songs do it, wisdom, perhaps? There is a way, but it could not be the way of that woman holding a fatherless child in her arms, dragging a duffle bag by her side, now walking slowly towards the ruins of the city. ("For These Ruins," 167-68)

This is a very strong passage that expresses by means of poetic sentiment the theme of *You Lovely People*. The questions raised in the passage echo those that Job raised, though the diction is straightforward. Such questioning voices the desire of these exiles for the means that can bring renewal to national and personal loss.

## The Structure

Santos peopled his book with "conscience-driven" characters who are not analytical but possess fixed concepts of genuine sentiment which they seek in others but do not find. This emphasis explains the organization of the book. *You Lovely People* uses titles for chapter headings but these divisions do not follow one another in causal sequence and continuity. Several of these chapters are self-contained short stories, the most anthologized of which is "Scent of Apples." NVM Gonzalez, in his introduction to Santos' novel, says he discovered in *You Lovely People* "a unity which the tightness of the short story or the discipline of the novel would have destroyed. With one convention thrown by the board, the book acquired its own."

Such unity is not seen by Casper:

Only a small part of *You Lovely People* has absolute continuity; unique rhythms, in pace and perspective, arranged through mobility of setting and the quick-change artistry of narrators, made a puzzling motion (fit for the wounded, the wondering). (Casper 1964)

Such continuity is indeed difficult to find, if one were to follow the convention of casual development of action and character in a novel. These critics have discovered and expressed aspects of the same reading and evaluation of *You Lovely People*. It recalls Steinbeck's *Tortilla Flat* with its title-divisions, yet the latter has a causal progression of action even with its episodal scheme. Santos

uses structural divisions as a framework "fit for the wounded, the wondering." These accommodate shifting of scene and impression, modulation of tone and varying mood, flexibility of points of view. These techniques develop the variations in Santos' overall theme of disillusionment in the Filipino exile, of existential aloneness. The volume comes across as a neo-impressionist book of portraits, each episode a differing impression cast in the same muted gray and earth brown colors. While the realism of Santos' book enables a reading that reveals the wartime plight of Filipinos in the States, at the same time, aesthetically, *You Lovely People* is a novelist-painter's casebook of impressionist renderings. His most moving pictures here are dramatic moments, highlighted by illuminating detail and incident. There are images of pathos and loneliness, of the heart's coldness and warmth in the brown rags of men like Ambo, Nanoy, Celestino Fabia, the likes of the nameless TB victims, a lover of flowers who died a pauper in a room "full of withered flowers that had blackened on the stalk."

It is this stylistic peculiarity which organizes *You Lovely People*. The nineteen episodes comprising the book focus on some aspect of alienation and courage, sequenced with more purposefulness than is immediately apparent. NVM Gonzalez was right about the distinctive organization of *You Lovely People*. He had to be "bothered" initially by the seeming discontinuity of the work. Yet a rereading reveals an intentional progression of scene, event and feeling.

The first three chapters are "The Wise Man Who Was Not There," "And Beyond, More Walls," and "The Prisoners." Ben the narrator singles out three experiences that establish through pure scenic impact all the quiet desperation of people's lives during the war—both among sensitive Americans and the uprooted Filipino exiles.

In "The Wise Man Who Was Not There" Ben is the university student speaking matter of factly of being alone on Christmas. There are recollected details of him sending home pictures taken in his first snow: "Home to me then was a little rambling house with windows open to the hills and Mount Mayon. There was a porch cool with wind and fragrant with papaya blossoms." After Pearl Harbor these letters and gift packages are sent back. At the start of Christmas vacation, Ben walks around alone, or spends hours in train terminals staring at schedules of trips. When students no longer crowd the terminal, he stops going and "stays home to read the philosophers, what did they say about war and farawayness?"

Through "casual" details like these, the texture of loneliness is woven. It is a fitting backdrop to the central action, the visit with the American couple, Duke and Mary and their baby Mike. Duke, embittered by the war they are forced to enlist for, starts going to waste, neglecting his writing, and turning to alcoholism. "Anchor, anchor," he once wrote a friend, "that's all we say, that's all we are looking for." The allegory is that of Duke as the wise man who has "lost his bearings." A gift to his child becomes, for Duke, "the ashes of an age that died not long ago." Duke's hurt cynicism, borne out through dialogue, is another response to war. Santos shows that the ruins of war come to everyone, regardless of nationality.

In "The Prisoners" Ben encounters German POWs who learn about war in the Philippines and Ben's forced exile in the U.S. They laughingly call him *Gefangener*, prisoner. It is an embarrassing moment for Ben, and his response is objectified with the detail of one German POW who hacks away at a fountain to save the fish underneath. It seems a futile exercise but the man is dead serious: "*Wird leben. Wird leben. Hoffnung. Es besteht Hoffnung.*" ("Will live. Will live. There is hope.") It becomes a graphic message to Ben who says: "I have learned the words since then, trying hard especially in desperate moments to believe in them."

With Ben's visit to a cousin, a bellhop in New York, there is movement outward, a piling up of variations on the exile's plight. "And Beyond, More Walls" depicts Manuel as a type of the early Filipino immigrant who has to take all sorts of menial jobs in places like Fresno, Sacramento and Alaska. He has been away for sixteen years and, like others, had at first written enthusiastic letters home, but eventually stops when he has "nothing more to say." There is, in Manuel's case, a breezy unconcern that covers the fear of knowing outright the truth about his loved ones, of his mother's death and his brother, "looking like a skeleton" in a sanatorium. Yet there are fond and happy memories he keeps. The episode is written with narrative restraint as usual, as Santos relies on telling detail to comment on the undercurrent of pathos, such as Manuel's violin and people's impatience with his erratic playing:

All that mattered was that I wanted to play and there was no place here I could play. Sometimes, no time either—that's it—time and place—work all day and half the night and half the day. There were days I didn't even have a room. Slept in subways and when cops saw



my case, they raised their eyebrows wiselike and said, "Ah, a virtuoso!" Jesus! Those were terrible days. (pp. 17-18)

Another detail is the presence of Helen, Manuel's girlfriend, in his room. She sits on the bed, playing cards the whole time. When Ben is introduced to her she smiles and "Her teeth were not as her lips had promised." It is subtly done, but a hint of sordidness is given with her presence. The general picture is one of waste, of shiftlessness, of being a man without a country.

These first stories are individual sketches of Ben, Manuel and Americans like Duke. The following section comprises the major section of the book: the chronicle of hurts of the brown coterie with whom Ben circulates. After his account of the meeting with Manuel, Santos follows this with a picture of "The Hurt Men" introducing Filipino friends of Ben, mostly university men—brilliant and carefree, but all bearing the same deep hurt inside them. Solace for them are poker games in company of other Pinoy and their American girlfriends. Santos is vivid and pointed in his catalogue of these men, introducing them with wry humor but with unmistakable fondness.

At the start, there is much bantering and no clue is given as to their private griefs. As narrator, Ben first trains his eye on personal quirks, even physical traits that enliven characterization. There is Teroy, Harvard man, bothered by sinusitis "and, yes, charming in a quiet elemental way"; Mike the pale, pimply radio bug; Leo, graduate of University of Chicago and now a Harvard man, ladies' man, dancer, and lover of Whitman: "I dote on myself," he says sometimes, quoting Whitman, 'There is that lot of me and all so luscious.' To which we said, "he was only over-ripe." And the young, wholesome Val of the fair and delicate complexion. Yet always their playful talk is punctuated by some reference to a personal burden. Teroy, a Laurel, speaks casually about the nation's condemnation of his father as a Japanese puppet. Leo's whole family was massacred in the sack of Manila, and their house burned to the ground. Mike's wife divorced him and he wonders about his son; Val's father was murdered by tenants he had treated like family.

These personal tragedies are revealed and there is sudden unease, even embarrassment, at the comfort they cannot give to one another. At the same time there is no sentimentality, no begging for pity or attention among these men. They bear it all quietly and bravely, but the pain is not assuaged except by sympathetic gesture:

Most of us boys kept a smarting hurt beneath our brown skin, a personal tragedy of the war zealously kept, as we walked the streets of the big cities of America, seemingly gay and uncaring, eager for friendship, grateful for the kind word, the understanding look, the touch of love. (p. 37)

Such comments are rarely stated; the entire scenario of Filipino exiles is dramatically rendered, i.e., through dialogue and scene. Language is colloquial, a fitting medium for these students who had stayed for some time in the States and had become familiar with informal usage. Poeticisms and speechifying come with joking and witty exchanges among them. The total effect is one of bright company that makes the existence of very real hurts in them all the more poignant. Restraint and narrative control hold sentiment in check, thus sharpening the reality of pain and loss.

The use of poker games is a clever, useful device for Santos' purpose. There is competitive tension yet there is also playful, laughing camaraderie. In such a setting characters surface. The truth and impact of their desperate longing for company emerges. It is in fact Ben's skill at the game that Val notices as a reminder to him of Ambo. This is how Ambo is introduced.

From the moment Val first mentions Ambo to Ben, some narrative time elapses, which allows further exposition on Ambo. This increases interest in him who becomes the most memorable character in *You Lovely People*. To the others he is "the one and only Ambo in the entire Atlantic seaboard" (p. 39). The boy's regard for Ambo is first given through Val's mention of him to Ben. Facts about him surface casually thereafter: his work with explosives at the war factory, his feeding a household of Filipinos during the depression years, his smattering of English and his "classic" Visayan. Then there is his "sense" of smell about poker and his variety of facial expressions for all kinds of hands. The picture is amusing, yet endearing.

Ben finally meets Ambo at the Manila House. It is an apt setting, a place that has become like other Filipino communities of that time—a "happy painless transition" for men distanced from home and essential others. The place isn't cheap, yet there is a sad urgency about attempts to make the place a happy one, as details reveal: the weedy garden planted to Philippine vegetables, the American waitresses that some of the boys ran away with, the taxi drivers, Pullman boys, and Army men discharged for old age who frequented the place, and the fixtures of "American and Filipino flags, with the

red and white and blue quite faded, and the lustre of the sun and the stars dimmed by the years and dust" (p. 47).

There is a charming compound of comparisons used in Santos' description of Ben's first impression of Ambo. He is the "brother of Rizal," "as old as Rizal himself, but without innocence. This one was weary of martyrdom and grown tired of songs and love of country." Like the other men, the surface impression is idiosyncratic. Ambo uses his atrocious brand of Pinoy English until, to his relief, he finds out everyone speaks Visayan. Then there is the detail of his coaching Pinoy dancers with the shaking of the head or scratching of the nose, etc. Pathos comes in with Ambo's trembling hands, at first a ludicrous sight to Ben. For Ambo, poker is all "trembling and winning, or pretending to lose." Such vulnerability and selflessness disarms the American girl friends of these men. Seeing their qualities, these women repeatedly call the Pinoys "you lovely people." For Ambo, there can only be solicitousness for the rest of the boys, including Ben. Such is grounded on his knowing that, in time, innocence is lost: ". . . these good boys will be like us, monkey-faced and coarse, and unfeeling" (p. 68).

And no one could be more sensitive than Ambo, who goes around collecting money for the burial of Nanoy, who dies a pauper in Washington. In "Lonely in the Autumn Evening," the story of Nanoy is told by Ambo to Ben. The action takes place during Nanoy's funeral, and as Ben and Ambo sit together in Teroy's car, Ambo pours himself out to Ben, wondering about home and the futility of memories about them who had become "nothing but a name." This outpouring is a frame for the story of Nanoy. "All our stories are sad," says Ambo and Nanoy's is typical, "a slow moving towards an end that meant the inevitable gutter and filth." Nanoy's American wife hates having to care for their son, and finally leaves Nanoy. He takes on odd jobs, drives a taxi, but weakens and ends up in a sanatorium. His son, very sickly himself, dies in an orphan's hospital; Nanoy, in his vermin-ridden room near a wharf by the Potomac. The story ends with an enveloped movement: there is a return to the narrative present after the account by Ambo of Nanoy's life. Ben's brief impression of the burial is given. As usual, grief is not philosophized or rationalized away. Allusion is made to the home country. Ben looks down on the mud sticking to his shoes, and he knows "such earth," having seen it in the Sinicaran hills in Albay. But present reality is farthest from home. What he actually sees is smoke from an ammunitions factory set against an autumn sky.

Other stories in *You Lovely People*, critics write, "tell themselves." These include "Woman Afraid," "So Many Things," and "Brown Coterie." These deal with the confusion among ostracized Filipino-American couples and with Filipino men's own longing for ideal Filipinas, here poignantly depicted in Ambo's case. The "brown coterie" is a group of brainy yet conceited Filipinas censured by their Pinoy brothers. These women serve as a foil to their ideals. These episodes deepen the sense of isolation, coming to all strata of Filipino exiles—from the educated groups to the old-timers, exiles anonymous, living on one sordid job after another, then dying often abandoned.

Coming home, one would think, would bring release, some assurance of welcome, of belonging. But in "Letter: That Faraway Summer," Ambo writes of the searing irony of finding out only the "bad breaks" on his trip home. He has to go back to the States, as a result of the hopelessness of his situation here. No loved ones, loss of all his property from a typhoon, no chance for a job due to his age and especially due to the betrayal by the one person who could have helped him. These exiles have no illusions either about the extent of the ruin in the country as a result of the war. Still, the physical ruins are not as crucial as the sense of values and identity that these exiles desperately hope to find still intact, but often find shattered.

Immediacy is not lost even with Santos' use of the epistolary form for Ambo's final story here. The action and dialogue are reported but dramatic impact is felt due to progression in Ambo's account of his visit to Steve's office.

The scene is material for a film episode. Here is a shabby old man in worn-out Khaki waiting in a first-class doctor's clinic. He notices the "beautiful people of Manila" that Steve has for patients, and starts to feel conscious about his looks. Then there is the dull shock of Steve's failure to recognize him, the surprise, then that cold official tone of indifference. Ambo asks for some help in contacting a foreign office so he could go back to the States, but Steve hurries him off. Then the telephone conversation that Ambo overhears:

His voice had not changed, now he was talking: Darling I should have called earlier, but I just got rid of a visitor . . . No, it wasn't a girl . . . a man, a Pinoy . . . I said Pinoy, just one of those Pinoys I had met in the States.

Ambo's account is straightforward, terse. Yet it is a tempered cry of grief and protest. The letter ends with Ambo-like humor, but this time it is grim and biting:

Do you know what I felt like doing as soon as I left his clinic? . . . I wanted to buy an ad in the papers which says, the friends of Dr. Esteban Hernandez, pray for his soul, he died today in his clinic while talking to a girl friend on the phone. He died without memories. Pray for his soul.

But that would be a crazy thing to do.

Well, you write me Bob. Out here in this warm country, you do not remember the faraway summers. You do not remember, period. I think it is better that way.

The last statement is an ironic admission of the defeatist stance that characters typified by Steve choose to take. Ambo, as Casper writes, "embodies" the Filipino Dream, finds it "muddled only in the Philippines" and has to return to the U.S. "where the dream still makes sense" (Casper). Friends of Ben in the final chapter are all set to leave the country, some to go back to the States, a "migration in reverse." This situation broadens Santos' concept of the Filipino dream. There is movement away from a mere romanticized longing for the native land, the way Ben in the first year of exile suffers from nostalgia. In time most of the characters in *You Lovely People* realize the supremacy of Filipino values which preserve their integrity as a people. The primary value is one of *damayan*, a dynamic sense of community. Once this consciousness of Filipino brotherhood is threatened, ironically the only recourse for characters like Ambo is to find some other place for its active preservation.

## Conclusion

*You Lovely People* is Bienvenido Santos' first publication after the prewar stories, samples of which are in *Dwell in the Wilderness*. It took nearly fifteen years. It did take time before Santos had *You Lovely People* published. This hesitation—the uncertainty about returning, here to his reader audience—is characteristic of the Santos who wrote of the exiles who were afraid to go home, to recognize memories, see them changed. In *You Lovely People* there is a section where Ben's friends prod him to write of his tour in the States, expecting

some sociopolitical study probably. Ben, with characteristic modesty, says he has "nothing to tell" that will make a book, beyond "all sensation, all feeling." These arise from things and places, persons and their responses to him, all warmth and longing for home, for the Filipino spirit kept alive in those he had come across. There is ugly reality, too: Filipino pimps, conceited government scholars, propositions from girls. But the prevailing memory is strengthening to Ben. An American college girl married to a Filipino tells him on his leaving Kansas, "Now I know why I love my husband" (p. 74). A Kentucky boy tells Santos,

"You said something yesterday, sir, which I shall remember always."

"Who would publish such things?"

"Nobody," said Mike, "because you remember the wrong things."  
(p. 75)

And yet Santos in this little volume so imaginatively depicts the lives and dreams of early Filipino expatriates. His themes are broadened and deepened thereby. The Filipino dream is shattered as it relates to economic and social progress of most of these immigrants to the U.S. And yet *You Lovely People* enacts how the deprivation draws out resolute qualities of Filipino character: courage, resilience, and selfless caring. In contrast, the book dramatizes the betrayal of commitment to brother Filipinos, bringing irreparable ruin. It is social criticism that is not strident, but governed by sensitivity and humaneness, now established qualities in Santos' writings.

Maturity in style comes with *You Lovely People*. The restraint in *Dwell in the Wilderness* is even more marked here, and more purposeful. The action, dialogue and contributing detail are better organized. Every detail is integral to the story, unlike the early writing of Santos. All of the narrative elements contribute to the general sense of loss, disillusion, and the saving warmth and fortitude of the Filipino spirit.

By using different narrators like Ben, Ambo, a nameless speaker and the omniscient narrator, Santos achieves a wider range of effects for the whole volume. Immediacy and impact are more easily achieved through the first person accounts. Through "objective" nameless speakers, Santos convincingly confirms the shared, common experience among all the expatriates. Bernad says this "quick-change artist of narrators is fit for the burdened sensibilities of Santos' hurt

men." These characters face different conflicts of exile and the shifting of points of view facilitates the depiction of these varied aspects of alienation.

The work is the most successful of Santos' early writings, establishing his predominating concern with the subject of exile and marking a distinctive style embodying alienation.

A successful work may have its accompanying weakness, which need not detract from its cumulative value. *You Lovely People* has occasional lines of sentimentalizing, a Santos weakness. In these instances a note of affectation, a belaboring of emotional moments, occurs. These become a momentary distraction for the reader. But such are very rare instances in this masterful work.

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