

University of Washington  
College of Pharmacy  
Seattle  
M.Y.Orosa

Dec. 26, 1918

Mrs. Juliana Ylagan Orosa  
My dearest and beloved mother,

My first greeting is for a Beautiful<sup>a</sup> Christmas to all of you there. How is everyone doing? Are you having a Happy Christmas? Every day and at all hours, I think of us, but more so during Christmas, because at this time I remember all we've been through year after year.

Over here the Christmas season is a happy one, but the happiness gives way to loneliness among us. Almost all the houses have what they call a Christmas tree, and the tree<sup>b</sup> is surrounded by Christmas presents for their children, relatives and loved ones. It is customary here to send remembrances<sup>c</sup> to friends.

Yesterday (Christmas Day) we were visited by Dean Coldwell, the Dean of Women at the University. She brought us many items – several types of fresh fruit, homemade canned Xmas plum pudding, and two bottles of preserves, which she also made. We also have some American<sup>d</sup> friends who remembered us. Mrs. Nelson gifted each of us silk socks.

Mother, enclosed you'll receive a money order for \$240 from the sale of embroideries. On my next letter, I should be able to send more, because at this time during the Christmas season, Frederick and Nelson<sup>e</sup> has not been able to settle our account. They told me that payment will be after Christmas, so I'll head out there tomorrow. I received your letter saying you had sent the 500 night gowns, but so far I have not received the package. Perhaps you did not mail the letter and package at the same time.

I am repeating, from my previous letter, about the baby yokes I asked you to order. Our agreement here is \$0.75 each, so you will have a net profit of \$0.25. You can send all in one shipment or start with 100, to be followed by 50.

I heard that there has been an outbreak of cholera and influenza. Is the cholera outbreak spreading fast? How many die every day? It is important that you be very careful. Do not eat anything that hasn't been cooked well or boiled, or if flies or mosquitoes have landed on the food, don't eat them either, throw the food out. Don't think it's wasteful. Wash your hands well if eating with your hands<sup>f</sup> or even if using utensils. Working in the store, you'll be touching money. If you are very careful, you won't be affected. You will not get sick with cholera if you don't eat anything containing this germ. The germ is killed by heat, so even if the food has germ, cooking will destroy it. The water that you drink must be boiled. If coming from the faucet and the containers are sterile, then it's not necessary to boil. Water glasses and pitchers must always be clean. The children shouldn't be allowed to attend functions or parties where there is food. Sacrifice a little by staying home while cholera is still going around.

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While sales are slow, refrain from any travel to Manila, but send someone else. During this period, do not trust the cooking of the servants. Either you watch them or ask someone else to watch, to ensure that everything is well cooked before serving to you.

Here, influenza isn't as widespread yet, so don't worry about me. I am really trying to avoid it.

I wish that all of us will be free from harm and will see each other.

Greetings to all, especially you, Ate Tia, Nanang, the family of Ate Piciang<sup>g</sup>, and the children.

One who is waiting for your blessings at all hours,

Maria Y. Orosa

Footnotes:

a - Maria used the word "magandang" meaning beautiful. The greeting we use today is "maligayang" or happy.

b - Maria referred to the tree as "kahoy" or wood.

c - the word Maria used is "alaala" or memories.

d - these friends were female, Maria having used the feminine form "Americana."

e - Frederick and Nelson was the premiere department store of Seattle, the Nordstrom of its day. Maria was dealing with the best store in town!

f - Filipinos love to eat using their bare hands, sans utensils. There are restaurants that encourage this. Today, there's even one in New York City, called Jeepney.

g - Piciang is Simplicia, the eldest of the Orosa siblings, born in 1888. She was already married, with three children.