

University of Washington
College of Pharmacy
Seattle
Office of the Dean^a

April, 16, 1919

Mrs. Juliana Ylagan Orosa
My beloved mother,

I received with pleasure, your letter, which I loved. I gather that you received the money that I sent via Money Order. Regarding the other sales, I sent the proceeds too, as I know you are in need of the funds. I thought at this time that you had received already since I dropped it off last January. I cannot truly remember the exact amount but it will not exceed \$900, or perhaps \$850. If you have not received, I have the receipt, which I can find.

With regards to Pepe^b coming here, if you ask me, I don't like it at this particular time. Because first, he is still very young and has not finished high school. Secondly, because of his youth and due to the presence of a large number of Filipinos here, he might neglect his studies and participate in what they call "good time^c." Here in Seattle, there are 1,000 Filipinos, and of this number, only 20 have thought of continuing their studies. All they can think of is earning a salary, and as soon as they accumulate some cash, they start gambling, spending to dress up and chase women. This is the life of many Filipinos here. A lot of them, although earning good wages, end up broke before the end of the month due to all this foolishness. During winter, due to their laziness and not wanting to get up and work in the cold weather, they sometimes don't have enough to eat, resulting in their asking for money or groceries from their fellow Filipinos. Many come to America with the intention of studying but have not been able to and wind up with other Filipinos who have been here a while. After Pepe finishes high school, that would be good. At the same time, I could stay here longer and with him staying with me, I could guide him and assist in many possible ways. I could desist him from joining other Filipinos at their gathering places. It is difficult to both study and work at the same time. It is better for me to be around while Pepe is here, but if he is by himself it would be very difficult. It would be a lot better if he waits a while longer then I will have the opportunity to come home, earn a little and I could help him. Best of all is for him to study at other places where there are few Filipinos, such as Chicago or New York.

However, mother, if he insists, then you should allow because he might go off on his own. If and when he arrives here, I will be responsible and insist that he attend to his studies and studies alone. If still insistent, write me immediately with his arrival information and I'll meet him where the ship docks. Tell him not to leave the port area until I arrive. I can leave the office at any time, I can welcome him unless I'm ill.

Through the mercy of God I am well, gaining more and more weight from my eating, so when I come home you will be surprised at my appetite. Until now, prices are still high – food, clothing, rent, everything^d. How is it over there, have prices come down? How is our store? How come we didn't make a profit last year? What happened? Who could be ruining our merchandise? Are Colaching^e and Paeto^f able to help at the store?

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Have you been sick at all? Don't stress your body too much, it will make any illness worse. Don't wait until you are too hungry before eating or stay up late; your life is the most valuable above all things. Through the mercy of God, you don't have to worry about me. I am finished and all I wish for is to help you and the younger children. I dream frequently, about myself, with me looking at our house. I wish I could happily come home very soon so we could see each other, that I will find all of you robust^g and strong.

How are the children? I thought they are with you even during vacation. Is Feling on vacation too? Is she continuing to study dentistry? Is she having any difficulty? Does Cesar^h frequently visit? How is Nanang and Ate Tia? Is it true that Ate Tia is always sick? What is she sick with?

Around here it is springⁱ and not as cold. The sun is always shining, and plants are flowering. Young children as well as school children are playing, the same kind of sports that we play at home. This is the only time they play outdoors are they are unable to play during the winter months.

My studies are going well, as is my work at the Food Laboratory. I'm learning a lot. Please do not worry about me, through the mercy of God, I am well situated. The Dean of the College of Pharmacy (Charles Johnson) treats me very well, strongly wants me to learn and be the best.

All the way from here, I wish you are all well, just as I fervently pray to God for, and that I will see you all when I return home, hopefully soon.

Your daughter, who is waiting for your blessings at all hours, respecting and loving you,

Maria Y. Orosa

Footnotes:

a – Maria is using the Dean's stationery!

b – Maria's younger brother Jose, who was 18 at the time this letter was written.

c – "good time" was the actual phrase used by Maria.

d – the period during WW I and subsequent years were marked by very high inflation, in the double digits.

e – Colaching is her nickname for Nicolas, who was 16.

f – Paeto is her nickname for Rafael, the youngest sibling, who was 14.

g – Maria used the word *taba*, which literally means fat. Filipinos like to use the term in an affectionate way.

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h– I'm not sure who Maria is referring to, but the Cesar I know in the family is Cesar O. Ylagan, the oldest son of Maria's elder sister Simplicia, then 6 years old.

i – Maria used the word *tagarao*, which refers to summer. There are only two seasons in the Philippines, the other being *tagulan*, or rainy.