



Asteria

Arnold Cañusa

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Early Life and Family Background

Asteria was born on May 18, 1948, in the quiet, picturesque town of Boljoon, Cebu. Her parents, Amancia Vequilla and Maximo Antiporta, lived a humble life on their family farm. Raised in a large, close-knit family with two brothers and four sisters, Asteria's childhood was defined by the hard work and love that flowed through every corner of their farm.

Growing up surrounded by the beauty of nature, Asteria learned early on the values of hard work, simplicity, and strong family ties. The fields and rice paddies were her playground, and the early morning sounds of farm life became her lullaby. She was raised with conservative values that centered around respect, faith, and community—a foundation that would stay with her for the rest of her life.

Education and Youth

Asteria's formal education began at Mahay Elementary School, where she discovered the joy of learning. She later attended Urios High School, where she began to develop a fondness for subjects related to farming. However, like many in rural areas, Asteria was unable to attend college due to the demands of farm life. Despite this, her dream of becoming a teacher remained alive in her heart for many years.

Though she never entered a formal classroom as a teacher, Asteria became a teacher in her own way. She taught her children the values that she had learned—patience, respect, and the importance of hard work. Her greatest lessons were not found in books but in the way she lived her life.

The Sweet Love Story of Asteria and Boy

In the neighboring village of Bayanacon, Asteria's life would change forever when she met Antonio "Boy" Cañusa. Boy, her neighbor, captured her heart with his gentle nature and unwavering respect. Their relationship began with shy smiles and simple conversations, but it wasn't long before their connection grew into something more profound.

Their courtship, while quiet and simple, was full of love and devotion. After church services, Boy would walk Asteria home, and they would talk about their dreams, their families, and their futures. The bond between them grew stronger with each passing day, and soon enough, they were married. Their love story was not a grand one, but it was deep and lasting, built on a foundation of shared values and a strong commitment to one another.

Boy and Asteria's marriage was not just the union of two people but also the joining of two families. Together, they raised three children—Anna Liza (Giging), Arnold (Boyet), and Annie Rose (Ann-Ann)—while working the land side by side, creating a home full of love, laughter, and mutual respect.

Career and Work Life

Asteria's career was centered around her home and her family. As a housewife, she worked tirelessly alongside her husband on their farm, tending to the crops, caring for the animals, and ensuring that her family had everything they needed. Though she never ran a business or held a job outside of her home, Asteria's contributions were invaluable.

Her true legacy, however, was in the lives she helped shape. Asteria's role as a mother was central to her life. She nurtured and cared for her three children, teaching them the importance of family, faith, and perseverance. Her nurturing spirit extended beyond her own home—she was a pillar of support for her extended family and the community.

Personal Life and Family

Asteria's life with Boy was a partnership in every sense of the word. They shared the responsibilities of their household and farm, and through their combined efforts, they created a loving and stable home for their children. Together, they taught their children the values of respect, love, and the importance of family.

Asteria's deep love for her children was matched only by her devotion to her faith. She was an active member of her church and served her community with the same generosity that she offered her family. It was in the church where she truly found peace, dedicating her time to God and helping others whenever she could.

Her children, Giging, Boyet, and Ann-Ann, have carried the lessons she taught them throughout their lives. Each of them holds a piece of Asteria's spirit, whether it's in the way they raise their own children, the way they serve their communities, or the love they show to those around them.

Asteria is fondly called *Mama Aster* by her children, and even her neighbors affectionately refer to her as *Mama Aster* or *Nang Aster*. Her kind and nurturing spirit have earned her the respect and love of everyone who knows her, and her name has become synonymous with warmth and selflessness.

A Special Tribute: Casa de Asteria

As a lasting tribute to his mother, Boyet (Arnold) named his home *Casa de Asteria*. Located on a hill overlooking a lush rice field, the house offers a serene view that mirrors the peaceful nature of the woman it honors. Boyet's decision to name his home after Asteria was a beautiful gesture, one that reflects the profound love and respect he has for his mother.

Casa de Asteria is not just a home but a testament to Asteria's legacy—her love for her family, her strength, and the profound impact she had on the lives of her children. The house stands as a symbol of the deep bond between mother and son, a tribute that will continue to honor Asteria for generations to come.

Challenges and Strengths

Asteria's life was not without its challenges. Growing up in a time and place where resources were limited, she learned the value of hard work from a young age. Life was often difficult, and money was always tight, but Asteria faced these struggles with resilience and grace.

She worked long hours on the farm, ensuring that her family had enough to eat and that the house was always warm and welcoming. Despite the hardships, Asteria never allowed her circumstances to define her. Instead, she used each challenge as an opportunity to teach her children the importance of perseverance, patience, and optimism.

Her greatest lesson to those who knew her was simple: "Be patient, get along with others, and always do what you can to help." These words of wisdom are a reflection of Asteria's own life—one of service, selflessness, and love.

Passions and Hobbies

Though her life was filled with work, Asteria found joy in the little things. As a child, she enjoyed playing with her siblings and cousins, creating memories that would stay with her for the rest of her life. She also had a deep love for music, especially the oldies and traditional Tagalog songs that reminded her of simpler times.

In her later years, she enjoyed listening to radio dramas, particularly Bisaya dramas like *Handumana sa usa ka awit*. These stories, full of emotion and drama, captured her heart and became a way for her to unwind and enjoy a moment of peace.

Asteria's hobbies may have been simple, but they were meaningful—whether she was working the land, enjoying time with her family, or listening to her favorite music, she found joy in the small moments of life.

Legacy and Reflections

As Asteria looks back on her life, she is filled with pride not for material accomplishments but for the love and devotion she showed her family, faith, and community. Her greatest achievement was not measured in wealth, but in the lives she touched and the hearts she nurtured.

Through her unwavering service to her church and her family, Asteria left behind a legacy that continues to inspire those who knew her. She taught her children the importance of dreams, respect, and service to others, always encouraging them to never give up on their goals.

Her message to future generations is simple but powerful: "Do not give up on your dreams. Always respect your parents and serve God and the church."

Asteria's legacy lives on through her children, her grandchildren, and the community she loved so much. She will be remembered not just as a mother but as a woman who dedicated her life to service, love, and faith. Her story is a reminder that greatness is not defined by fame or fortune, but by the love we give and the lives we touch.