

“Maswerte Talaga Ang Naka-Upo”

Lucky To Who Owns The Throne

(The Significant Individuals, History, And The Lavish Life Of The Marcoses.)

This essay will be able to debunk the other side of the history that the film claims to be never seen by the public eye and the media until after its release.

One of the most controversial Historical Films based on the life events of the Marcoses before flying to the United States of America in Hawaii, showed in the 2022 Philippine Cinemas worldwide, **Maid in Malacañang**. It was produced by VivaFilms and VinCetiments while written and directed by **Darryl Yap**, also a well known social media personality. The movie starred **Cecar Montano** as the late President Ferdinand Marcos Sr., **Christine Reyes** as Imee Marcos (eldest daughter of the late President Marcos Sr.), **Ruffa Gutierrez** as Imelda Marcos (the wife and first lady of the late President Marcos Sr.), **Diego Loyzaga** as BongBong Marcos Jr. (son of the late President Marcos Sr.), and **Ella Cruz** as Irene Marcos (daughter of the late President Marcos Sr.).

A piece in history that was never seen in the public, a piece of history that no one has ever seen with the bare eyes of no one. The film, Maid in Malacañang speaks more to the volume of the unsaid story of the Marcos Family who reigned for approximately two decades in the Republic of the Philippines. The Marcoses were loved and cherished over how they were able to better the country, the economy, for the Filipinos, for who they serve. But like any other regime in the Government and any other presidency, they were loathed by the people who do not see

them as THE tool for the better. In this movie the Marcoses faced the harsh reality of what becoming a Government official is. They were stabbed in the back by the people they trust, and their trust towards the people who are close to them had broken up. The crisis over the Marcos Family's life piled up, as the head of their family and the Philippine country had fallen sick, while some of the people were already planning over how to oust the late President Marcos Sr. off the chair of Malacañang because of how corruption and blood crippling abuse of power they associate with the President.

Imee Marcos, the eldest daughter of the family, was known for her 'strong independent woman' built personality. She was an authoritarian that would always find a way on how to get anything she wanted, and was known for being so much like how her father dealt with things in his way. In the film, Imee was the one who encouraged her father and mother to immediately escape the palace as the Aquino supporters were barging inside the white house, the Malacañang Palace. It was Imee who led and planned on how their staff would escape the palace without being recognized as a servant of the Marcoses. Imee was able to save and protect her family as well as the loyal people who served them throughout their reign. A woman with a strong image and affirmation with a soft heart as a family woman.

The title of the text is derived from the last line stated by a portrayal of Cory Aquino in the film. *Maswerte talaga ang naka-upo*. Every elected official, be it as a President of the country or a Barangay Chairman of a purok, an official will always be given a significant amount of power that is designated to support and serve the people. This power will be up to them if they want to use it for evil or for the betterment of their *nasasakupan*. In the film Maid in

Malacañang, it was stated by the late President Marcos Sr. that he could not never hurt the people of the country that he then long protects from harm as a public servant, and for what we know, Ferdinand Marcos Sr. was known as a public servant even before becoming the President of the Republic of the Philippines. He has been serving his people who he vowed to protect.

Maswerte nga talaga ang naka-upo. Because of the supposed unlimited power and wealth, most of the time, it is inescapable to be tempted over its amount the officials can handle in their hands, wherein the money of the people who pay taxes to the government, go to ill doings of the electeds. The movie showed the daily life that the Marcoses had. It started on Imee leaving for Singapore for a check-up with her family, and by the end, during the escape of the family in the palace, the famous luxurious and lavish shoe collection of the first lady Imelda Marcos was shown. People would say that it was a fruit of their labor that is why they were able to afford that kind of lifestyle, but if you dig down the history and investigations of what their life could be from, you will see how the expensive and highly maintained lifestyle of the Marcoses was sustained from the ill gotten wealth.

According to a GMA Public Affairs Documentary Special, *Marcos had a lot of power but Imelda had a lot of Ambition.* The documentation also featured how the Marcoses allegedly snatched properties under different names of their trusted people and how they steal the money, bit by bit. As stated by F. Rodrigo Jr., there was an envelope gathered under the Marcoses' assistant name in New York, Fe Gimenez, the one who allegedly keeps the Marcos Family's money. He said, "They would withdraw \$10,000 in the morning and another \$10,000 in the afternoon." to buy paintings, jewelry, and many other luxuries. In 2003, the Marcoses were

found guilty of ill-gotten wealth by the Supreme Court linking the 25 Billion PHP of the Marcos Family's Assets while the PCGG or the Presidential Commission on Good Government estimates that a portion of the plundered money was \$10 Billion. The Marcoses were uncontrollable because no one had to check on them because they were the most powerful in the country at the time. The money that the family would spend for their *luho* can feed many families, children, and cities, but it was just nothing to them and they behaved as if the Philippines were theirs as their own. And how would the economy upswing if their own government robbed them in front of the face of the *mamamayan*?

In the Chapter VIII of the film, Maid in Malacañang, Imee was assuring his late father, *Pilipinas ang nagtagumpay*, followed by a statement that they made his father look like the monster in his regime. Now, let's debunk how the Filipino People won during the so-called *Golden Age*. According to an article, it was true that the first time Marcos Sr. was elected as the President of the Philippines, in the 1960's, the economy of the country was actually doing great as seen in the statistics. But then, the growing depth of the country also arose from \$600 Million when Marcos Sr. was elected as president to \$26 Billion in 1986 when he was ousted to the chair. The inflation rate during his entire regime also climbed the ladder from 1.6% in 1961, 8.2% by 1964, 21.4% by 1971, and 50.3% by 1984. And in just a blink of an eye, your PISO could no longer buy a single piece of candy. On the other hand, the administration had done some projects for the country... with a questionable amount of budget per say, as some historians and journalists say. The Marcoses have clearly tainted the *pagkatao* of every Filipino citizen by this massive amount of money used in projects and infrastructures that was not even prolongedly used. The funds that most of the Marcoses used in the infrastructures during the regime was

recorded by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) that it was from a bunch of loans, the reason why after the ousting of the Marcoses, the country's depth has risen more than \$20 Billion by the end of the run. It made the Filipino People stuck in a chokehold. And born or not, everyone has to pay the depth that the Regime had left.

The movie Maid in Malacanang has become a good instrument for the Marcoses that was silenced for as many decades as they disappeared from the frame of their truth. The casts chosen for the film were veterans in the scene and the one who chose them did not go wrong for that decision. Especially for Christine Reyes as Imee Marcos, she really gets that emotion and act wherein she can be depicted as the actual person she played, it was so natural and genuine. As well as the cast for Bonget, Diego Loyzaga, gets that *conyo* vibe who studied in America, though his acting was a bit average, compared to the actors and actresses he was with in the film. The story line was alright, it was not fast nor slow, since it was filled with fillers from past recorded news, it did not seem as boring as other films would be. And to add, the cinematography was what made the film better. The 1980's filter, mellow and grainy, the soundtracks, and how the way 1980's fashion was indulged in the scene. On the other hand, Maid in Malacanang would have been better if the Film did not only focus on the bad side that was thrown on them, so that it could showcase diverse opinions about the film and not as one sided as it is. I would recommend this film to those students, historians, and researchers to conclude what is right and wrong in history.

History will never be just a *chismis* that people hear and say to another. But in this film, it was not just a hear and say of the others, they are the one who tells their own story in the

movie portrayed by veteran artists in the show. It was their story rewritten and organized by the productions of the film. Wherein history lies in one sitting.

For many decades, the independence of the Filipino people under the hands of Martial Law of dictator Marcos Sr. has been celebrated. Millions, billions were plundered, robbed, over the *kaban ng bayan*. The same taxes of the people who still support the corrupt as the *maswerteng naka-upo* in the presidency. The *Golden Era* never existed in most of the Filipino People's lives, well maybe it did, but for some, that era was just a mere imagination, a filler, to what is there to come next.

While writing this paper, the constant question that ran over and over again was how are there still people who entrust their life to the Marcoses despite all the cases and legal mandates towards their name. When the Supreme Court found the Marcoses guilty of ill-gotten wealth in 2003, people were mad when the government did their job, but silent when the Marcoses Regime damaged not only the activism in the country, but the entire Republic of the Philippines itself. That is why, this movie could lead to confusion to those who cannot access or those who are in denial of the truth that the Marcoses did well on their chair. This could lead to misunderstandings because of what Marcos has said in the movie where he could not never hurt the people he longs to protect, when he himself put the lives of the Filipinos in danger.

At the end of the day, their version of truth does not mean the truth to everyone.

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