

Working Title: "IKYAS" (Feature Length)
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Logline: Abandoned hospital child grows up in an abusive foster family. Finding refuge in the family's in-house maids, they plan for her escape.

STORY LINE:

Occupying the middle seat between Patrinada and Nicolo - a couple in their 30s, is Adelina, 15 years old, an orphan child adopted by the *Cabellas*. Adelina wakes up with pain on the wounds of her feet. They're on a bus while on their way to the pier - hoping to catch the ship that will leave to Bohol at midnight. The bus has the other side of the aisle open - the kind that we can only see in the **1960s** while it rushes down to the highway of Davao City.

It's a chaotic scene in the mansion lawn as the Cabella sons, headed by the eldest, Ben Jr., 19. "*Adopted ka!*" they are ganging up against the small Adelina, 11, who is already cowering in the corner. The housemaids and other drivers observe the scene. No one dared to stand up against their bosses' children.

Jolio - the family driver, comes over after fixing the truck. He is the only one who has the guts to stop the chaos.

Ben Jr. couldn't stop Jolio as the driver guides Adelina to the maid's quarter. When Ben Jr. comes inside the house, he heard his parents arguing over their collapsing business and dragging along with it, their marriage. Their fragile marriage that is only based on business pursuit is slowly disintegrating. Neglecting Ben Jr., who desperately wanted to beg for his parent's attention.

In the maid's quarters, the housemaids and drivers gather around. Although everyone is not on their ideal state, it seems to have a warmer atmosphere than the scene earlier. Petra - also an in-house maid and Jolio's wife, tends Adelina's wounds. Here, Adelina finds refuge. Jolio recalls how Doña Regina brought her home from the hospital, saying that she was an abandoned hospital baby. It was a time when the Cabellas wanted a daughter but couldn't bear one.

Growing up, they treated her like one of them; until they had their own biological daughters. Don Benedicto doesn't want to keep Adelina, but the only thing stopping Doña Regina from giving Adelina away is the judgment that she may get from her church friends.

The bus stops for check-point. The army comes up and searches the bus from front to end. Nicolo passes a jacket to Patrinada to cover Adelina, afraid that they might be searching for her. Adelina clings to Patrinada, both for her dear life and for the emotional support that she seeks in a mother.

After saving up enough money from working for the upper class, Nicolo and Patrinada decided to go back to Bohol to work as farmers for good. Hearing the story about Adelina from their cousins, with their prior knowledge of how brutal the upper class can be, they can't help but take pity on her. They accepted the favor knowing that they're not coming back to Davao anymore.

At 13, Adelina was transferred to the maids' room. It didn't mind Adelina at that time because she's already close with the in-house maids, especially with Jolio and Petra.

With Jolio's father's debt growing rapidly, he has to work for wealthy families like the Cabellas. While Petra couldn't get an education because her family prioritizes her older brothers, now she has to find a job that can support them. They didn't have a choice back then when the *Cabellas* hired them and provided them a roof over their heads, the other in-house maids and drivers have distinct but similar origin stories.

Living with the *Cabellas* for a while now, they have seen how badly her foster family treats Adelina. They couldn't directly defend Adelina against her abusers, but they help her in secret, especially when the *Cabellas* are not looking.

When the *Cabellas* further alienate Adelina, they welcomed her with open arms. They tell her stories about their hometown, Bohol - how the Malunggay leaves are as big as a 5 peso coin and how the sea shines so bright back in that island.

Adelina hides her face on the bus by lying down in Patrinada's lap, pretending to sleep. Patrinada, still starting to warm up to Adelina, awkwardly pats Adelina's head. One of the armies demands to lift the jacket, grabbing the jacket from Adelina's face.

On the reveal, she's not the one they are searching for, and they moved on. Adelina feels a pang of disappointment, expecting that her foster family would at least look for her. The bus then starts to move.

Rage grows on Ben Jr. knowing about his father's disapproval of Adelina. He then lashes his frustrations on her. He commands his siblings to do the same, justifying their mistreatment towards her by saying that she did not belong to their family.

Jolio and Petra always talk about going back to Bohol, but their debt is holding them back from freedom. Going back to Bohol will just make them additional burdens to their own families.

Adelina, not being able to stand the abuse and mistreatment anymore, and with her fondness of Jolio and Petra, Adelina decides that she wants to come with them back to Bohol - no matter how long that will be, she is determined to wait.

Jolio and Petra, with guilt and pity, promised her that they would take her with them to Bohol, away from suffering and alienation, away from her foster family. Adelina now clings to her new hope.

Back on the bus, they arrive at the pier. Buying their tickets for the ship, Adelina, still limping from the wounds of her feet, second-guesses her decision, and refuses to say her name to the ticketing counter. The couple reminds her of their chance to escape, away from her foster family; she just has to bear it a little longer.

Adelina is not sure if this is what she really wants. If she steps to that boat going to Bohol, there's no going back. She might not see Jolio and Petra again; she might not survive out there, she might die of loneliness, she might regret this decision later - thoughts and doubts swirling around, making her dizzy and weak.

The couple steps up for her and registers Adelina's name as Adelaida Castillon, naming her as their daughter.

One day, when Adelina is left by her foster parents again with the maids, Ben Jr. comes to molest her. Jolio catches the act and teaches the boy a lesson.

With a chance to get his parent's attention, Ben Jr. confines back to his parents. Overprotective to their own kind, the *Cabellas* threatens Jolio to be arrested by the police if he will lay his finger again to their son. Afraid, the driver doubts their plan for Adelina's escape, fearing that they might be arrested.

Adelina heard Jolio's troubles and her foster parent's threat. Adelina didn't want to cause trouble for Jolio and Petra, so she runs away by herself. Adelina didn't get away too far. She finds herself stuck in the gasoline station that is owned by her foster family.

Boarding on the ship, Adelina tells the couple that she has to use the bathroom. Limping, Adelina runs away again, but now for what? Doubts are sinking in. She's not sure if she can survive the outside world independently, with no one to lean on to, especially now that Jolio and Petra are not with her anymore. She worries about them back in the City, about her parent's reaction, about the mess that she left behind.

Surely if her parents wanted to look for her, they could've found her already - with all of their resources and riches. So far, the authorities paid her no attention, no one's looking for her, it's probably because she's not worth finding for - that's the thought that's swirling in her head when a stranger's hand grabs her shirt.

Because of Adelina's attempted escape, her foster parents lock her up to a room. Jolio and Petra blame themselves for Adelina's punishment, considering her as their daughter, they find another way to help her. Adelina has to be away from the cruel hands of the *Cabellas*; they have to do that no matter what.

In planning for their escape plan for Adelina, this news comes swirling around the rich neighborhood of Davao City. Nicolo and Patrinada - their cousins, reach out to them. Planning to go back to Bohol for good, they agree to their plan.

On the ship, Nicolo and Patrinada found their seats, while Adelina hasn't come back yet. They promised their cousins to look out for Adelina. Now, they failed. Worried that they scared her away, they search the whole ship.

The maids steal the key from the family to let Adelina out from the room. At this moment, they know that this is their chance to get Adelina out of this mansion.

The steward caused a commotion in the ship when he grabs Adelina, warning her that she cannot board the ship without a guardian.

Nicolo and Patrinada follow the noise and commotion, they run to her worried, telling her that they searched the whole ship for her.

The steward still demands to see proof of their relationship. Nicolo stands up from the steward, stating that Adelina is their daughter - showing him their ticket registered as a family. He told the steward that he should leave his family alone, with Adelina still wounded and tired, he has to protect his family. Patrinada's maternal instinct kicks in; she holds Adelina close to her, embracing her protectively, ready to attack whoever dangers them.

Jolio calls Nicolo and Patrinada to wait by the gate while Petra guides Adelina out from the mansion. At the gate, Adelina struggles to open it.

The maids hear a familiar sound of their family's truck. Adelina hurriedly climbs the gate and jumps to the other side, wounding her ankle in the process. Together with Patrinada and Nicolo, they run away from the mansion.

The steward decided to walk away from the scene. Adelina is comforted by the couples' actions, she hasn't experienced being defended before like that. Being with them makes her feel like she's part of a family.

A couple of hours pass by; they arrive in Bohol. To cover up and to seal her escape, she changes her name and identity to Adelaida. Adelaida is now welcomed by the couple's family in Bohol, finding refuge in the family that helped her escape.