



Boy Medalla

## AKO SI BOY MEDALLA

by Boy Medalla

In 1989, I was hired by Ma'am Bingbing Juarez to drive for *balikbayans* who had arrived for their Laico Family Reunion. I was only 23 years old, and very unsure of the direction of my life. My job was simple... to drive back and forth from BF Homes to Ayala Alabang, and sometimes Makati. The salary and the food were *puede na* (good enough) but I got to see the tourist places.

I wanted to show the *Balikbayans* I was *astig* (macho) so I would drive twice the speed limit, without them knowing. This was especially enjoyable for me as we drove to the resort in Punta Baluarte, where I raced through the narrow, winding highways of Tagaytay averaging 120 km/hr. The looks on the faces of the frightened Fil-Ams were priceless! *Nakakapit sila sa pinto!* (They were hanging on to the doors!) Also on that trip, I was able to see one of Imelda's former homes, which had been converted into a movie set for my idol, Chuck Norris. After visiting that mecca of martial arts movies, I took up Kung Fu, and even earned a green belt.



My idol: JJ Flores

One of the Amboys (American boys) became my idol. He was from Chicago and his name was JJ. His hair had heavy gel and stood perfectly straight up, forming a flat top of stiff, sharp spikes. Like a porcupine. Then he had a long thin ponytail that grew from his nape. *Walastik, pare.* (Cool, man.) When they were walking in Quiapo, *si tin-derang Tasya* saw JJ's hair-style and exclaimed: *Naku, pagnahulugan ng butiki yan, siguradong patay!* (If a lizard fell on his head, he'd surely die!) Shortly after, I began to grow a "tail" out of my hair. I wanted to spike it like JJ,

but the cost of gel was too much.

Another Amboy was a very *payat* (skinny) 14 year old kid called Paolo from New Jersey. His voice was *alanganin* (in between) and he liked reading all the billboards, especially the ones for the Tagalog movies like "*Kung Kasalanan Man*" (If It Were a Sin), *Impaktita* (Impaktita), and "*Ako Ang Jujusga*" (I Will Be The Judge). He read signs like *Bawal Magtapon ng Basura Dito* (Do Not Throw Garbage Here), *Bawal Umihi Dito* (Do Not Pee Here) *Bawal Umistambay Dito* (No Standing By (Loitering) Here). In Quiapo church, he asked why the people were walking on their knees to the altar.

I also really enjoyed driving the Juarez girls, Bambi, Lia, and Bubbles, and their cousins to the discos of Makati. While waiting in the parking lots, I was the envy of all of the other drivers, who would comment on how sexying-sexy and *sosyal* (glamorous) my passengers were. They were jealous because they would be stuck driving Japanese tourists, and *matatabang mga donyas* (fat matrons).

I remember the car breaking down. We were on the outskirts of BF Homes, and the streets were dark. The Laico *balikbayans* decided to take a tricycle home from the gate. Oddly enough, I was able to fix the car and drove home before they got there. They were quite impressed with my mechanical abilities...but in actuality, we were just out of gas.

I especially enjoyed the reunion itself. After sneaking in, I was able to catch the Laico band perform songs by the Cure and the Ventures. There was a game of Laico trivia emceed by Lia and Paolo. The show-stopper, of course, was the big musical number by Pedrito Los Banos. The slick crooner's rendition of "I don't know why I love you like I do" captivated the audience (as well as himself).

Since that month so long ago, I there have been many changes in my life. After driving for several families, dabbling in martial arts, and *bold* films (semi-porno), I decided to clean my act up and run for Congress. I lost, just barely, and decided that politics was not for me. I ended up stowing away on an oil tanker and landing in Los Angeles. There, after dabbling in martial arts and bolder films, I finally pursued my true love, and became – you guessed it – a driver for Snoop Dogg.

Thank you to the Laico family for providing such inspiration! My life would have never been the same without you.

(translated by Paolo Villaseñor)

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Mga Sosyal – Disco-bound Paolo, Lia, JJ, and Bambi